

NORTHERN IRELAND APPROPRIATE ADULT SCHEME

**BEEN ARRESTED?
IN A POLICE STATION?
FRIGHTENED,
CONFUSED, ALONE?**

IF YOU ARE A YOUNG PERSON
UNDER 18 OR A MENTALLY
VULNERABLE PERSON YOU
WILL NOT FACE THIS ALONE.
AN APPROPRIATE ADULT CAN
BE THERE WITH ADVICE,
SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE.

APPROPRIATE ADULTS
ARE PEOPLE TRAINED TO HELP
YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS
AND WHAT HAPPENS IN A
POLICE STATION, TO BE THERE
WHEN POLICE QUESTION YOU
AND TO ASSIST YOU THROUGH
THE PROCESS.



NIAAS

BECAUSE SUPPORT MATTERS.

Annual Report 2014-2015

to the Department of Justice
the Northern Ireland Appropriate
Adult Scheme (NIAAS)
Delivered by MindWise

Introduction

The Department of Justice is accountable for ensuring the effective provision of the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme (NIAAS). The Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme is managed by MindWise who are responsible for delivery of the service.

Reporting

The statistical information is drawn from a data base which provides an insight into trends and patterns of service delivery. Records of the NIAAS are retained for inspection and audit purposes. This report is in respect of the period 1st July 2014 - 30th June 2015.

MindWise

MindWise is a leading membership charity which supports those affected by severe mental illness and other mental health difficulties and promotes early intervention. Our mission is to transform lives and develop new visions for mental health by challenging stigma and discrimination, and by providing quality services and support. We believe in dignity and respect for each individual, fair treatment, partnership working and most importantly, in recovery to achieve a quality of life for those affected by mental illness.

NIAAS Manager's Introduction

As the Manager of the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme I am pleased to present our 2014-2015 Annual Report.

Service delivery

Appropriate Adults are described by the National Appropriate Network (NAAN) as people who achieve a fairer justice system by safeguarding the welfare and rights of children and vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by police. This is the function of the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme as delivered across Northern Ireland at PSNI stations throughout this reporting period.

The service delivery described in this report was delivered to the highest of standards with staff focusing on providing a quality service province wide, irrespective of public holidays and unsocial hours. Our staff ensure that young people and vulnerable adults in custody who may be facing a mental crisis are supported and assisted to understand what is happening to them and why, which assists them to make informed choices when helping police with their enquires.

This report provides statistical information of the work carried out by the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme. Confidentiality prevents this report from including specific challenges and case complexities; neither can it reveal how particular vulnerable people were navigated through a series of processes that were intimidating and alien to them. I can however report upon the professional approach taken by the NIAAS team in providing Appropriate Adult support throughout the year.

The NIAAS service was delivered throughout Northern Ireland 365 days of the year between 08.00 hours and 23.00 hours, with an out of hour's call out facility being made available for overnight attendance when a matter cannot wait until the morning. This 'out of hours' call out service was utilised on 85 occasions during this reporting period with staff arriving at a custody suite between 23.00 hours and 08.00 hours when circumstances necessitated attendance.

As the NIAAS manager I can report the staff team responded to 2371 requests to attend PSNI stations this reporting year which was a 9.2% increase on the previous year, being further evidence that police custody personnel have been able to identify a detained person's vulnerability and take the appropriate steps to secure trained Appropriate Adult support, for which the PSNI are to be commended.

We acknowledge the professionalism of the PSNI custody staff, and we have found them to be courteous and compassionate towards the people we are called upon to support. I express my gratitude to all those officers who took time to make positive comments upon our service delivery report forms. I know the NIAAS team appreciate those officers who take time out during a difficult case to record a positive comment about the Appropriate Adult who attended at the station or the scheme in general, and some of those comments are reflected within this report.

Stanley Booth MBE
Manager NIAAS

Risk Management

Strategies to minimise risks are outlined within the NIAAS Risk Management Plan, which is regularly reviewed and updated by the NIAAS Manager who is responsible for all aspects of risk analysis, and is supported by the MindWise Senior Management Team. The Scheme is compliant with the DoJ security framework, reporting regularly against Key Performance Indicators, relating to Governance; Health and Safety and ICT. These form part of specific performance indicators across a range of issues, such as service delivery, health and safety, ICT, risk management and finance. The CEO of MindWise, upon being satisfied the service is meeting the governance directives, provides assurance statements of compliance with HMG standards and DoJ security framework contractual standards.

We provide quarterly reports to our governance board representatives as part of our reporting process. All risks (including information and IT security risks) are assigned an owner. Our governance body are advised that a copy of the MindWise Risk Register is available for viewing on request. Travelling to and from police stations requires both route planning, and the use of 'Guardian 24' which is a lone working support and monitoring system which played a role in staff safety when they become available to attend at another PSNI station.

The role of the Appropriate Adult

The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 Codes of Practice require that a parent or legal guardian is always the first to be contacted. On occasions a Trust may be a legal guardian when a care order exists, or the child is a looked after child (LAC), meaning the Trust is the corporate parent under the Children (NI) Order 1995.

When the PSNI have difficulty contacting a parent or family member, to perform the role of Appropriate Adult they turn to our scheme.

Our Appropriate Adults ensure that Police adhere to the Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989 (PACE) and the PACE codes of practice. This is a complex role which demands and encompasses an understanding of the rights of the detained person as well as a clear understanding of the Appropriate Adult role and its boundaries. Good

interpersonal and communication skills, being conversant with police procedures and fully appreciating the various mental health conditions that can impact upon a person's vulnerability are all important skills necessary to carry out this role.

The Appropriate Adult has specific rights to ensure they can fulfil their role, examples which include:

- To inspect the custody record of the detained person upon arrival at the police station, and at any time during their detention.
- To intervene in an interview if it is necessary in the interests of the detained person to facilitate effective communication with the police.
- To request a break in any interview for the detained person to seek legal advice or consult with the detained person (particularly if the interview is a lengthy one, or if the detained person is distressed or ill).

Periods spent within PSNI stations

PSNI processes and procedures within police custody are identical yet no two cases are exactly the same and some circumstances may be unique; therefore it's important for our staff to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of our service users.

An array of procedures may occur during the detention period which impact on the length of time an Appropriate Adult may be inside a police station. We may be required to wait for the outcome of a detainee's medical examination, or guide a detainee through identification procedures, fingerprinting, DNA sampling, and not least the interview. These and other aspects of the investigation can all impact on the total length of time an Appropriate Adult is in attendance at a police station, and when they become free to attend at another PSNI station.

Within PACE, a person may be detained by police for a maximum of 96 hours, occasionally in the most serious of cases we are called upon to support a person throughout this detention period, but generally the average period inside police stations is 3 hours 25 minutes.

Voluntary Interviews

A voluntary attendee can appear at a station with their solicitor when requested by police to do so, and interviews can be conducted on a voluntary basis. These enquiries are usually short but occasionally they can last for days, with people returning each day to be interviewed until matters are cleared to the satisfaction of the investigators.

Arrival Times

This year we responded to 2371 calls an increase of 9.2% on the previous year. These calls are divided between planned calls and unplanned calls.

Planned calls

These are calls to attend a police station however immediate arrival is not necessary, this is because a particular activity must occur before an interview can take place. For example the detained person must be examined by a Forensic Medical Officer (Doctor) or they cannot be interviewed until they are sober, or the detainees Solicitor is presently in court and will attend once their court business is completed.

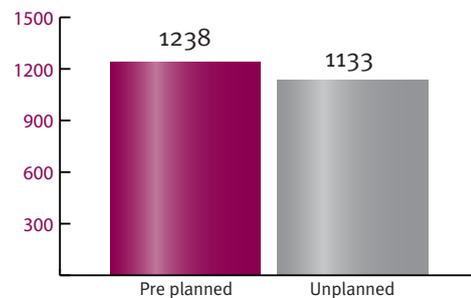
There are a variety of legitimate reasons why an interview may not proceed immediately upon a persons detention and we are required to ensure our availability meets the police requirements. Custody Sergeants in conjunction with investigators routinely arrange for the Appropriate Adult to arrive at the custody suite at a given time which often ties in with the arrival of the Solicitor as part of the efficient running of the custody process, and the Appropriate Adult must be able to respond to a fluid situation where for a number of reasons the timings may change, such as the detainee being taken ill.

We may also be requested to delay our attendance until a specific time. An

overnight call at 3 am may request an Appropriate Adult for 9 am to ensure the detained person has appropriate rest before questioning. Planned calls can also be for future dates, when people are granted police bail to return in the future, or forensic evidence may not be available for many months, therefore the scheme ensures there is an Appropriate Adult available and in attendance at the given time and place, which facilitates the police to continue their enquiries.

This year 1238 calls fell in to the planned category making up 52% of our attendances and resulting in a ZERO wait time for police, which helps the scheme achieve excellent arrival statistics (Table 1)

TABLE 1: PLANNED/UNPLANNED ATTENDANCES

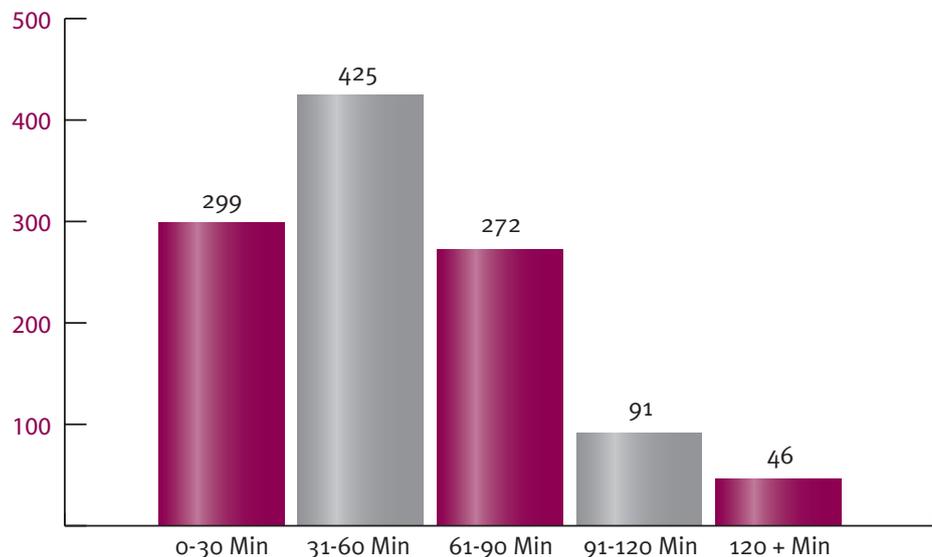


Unplanned calls

Calls which required attendance forthwith created the greatest challenge; when NIAAS staff was required to attend at any PSNI custody suite without advance notice.

These unplanned calls occurred on 1133 occasions being 48% of all our calls where our attendance is an immediate requirement (Table 2)

TABLE 2: UNPLANNED ATTENDANCES ARRIVAL TIMES



Total Arrivals

When both planned arrivals and unplanned arrivals requests to attend are collectively counted NIAAS staff team arrived when they were expected to in 98% of all requests.

In 1087 (96%) of these immediate response requests staff arrived within two hours, and in the majority of unplanned calls staff arrived within one hour.

Arrival outside this time can be due to several reasons mainly because the staff are already fully committed in custody suites elsewhere, and are unable to proceed to the next station until the present matter is concluded.

The Pattern of Appropriate Adult Attendance

The NIAAS service delivery is on a 24 hour per day, 365 days per year basis. We attend at PSNI stations as and when required to do so. Whilst the normal service period is between 08.00 hours and 23.00 hours we can see a pattern of attendance emerge throughout the reporting period.

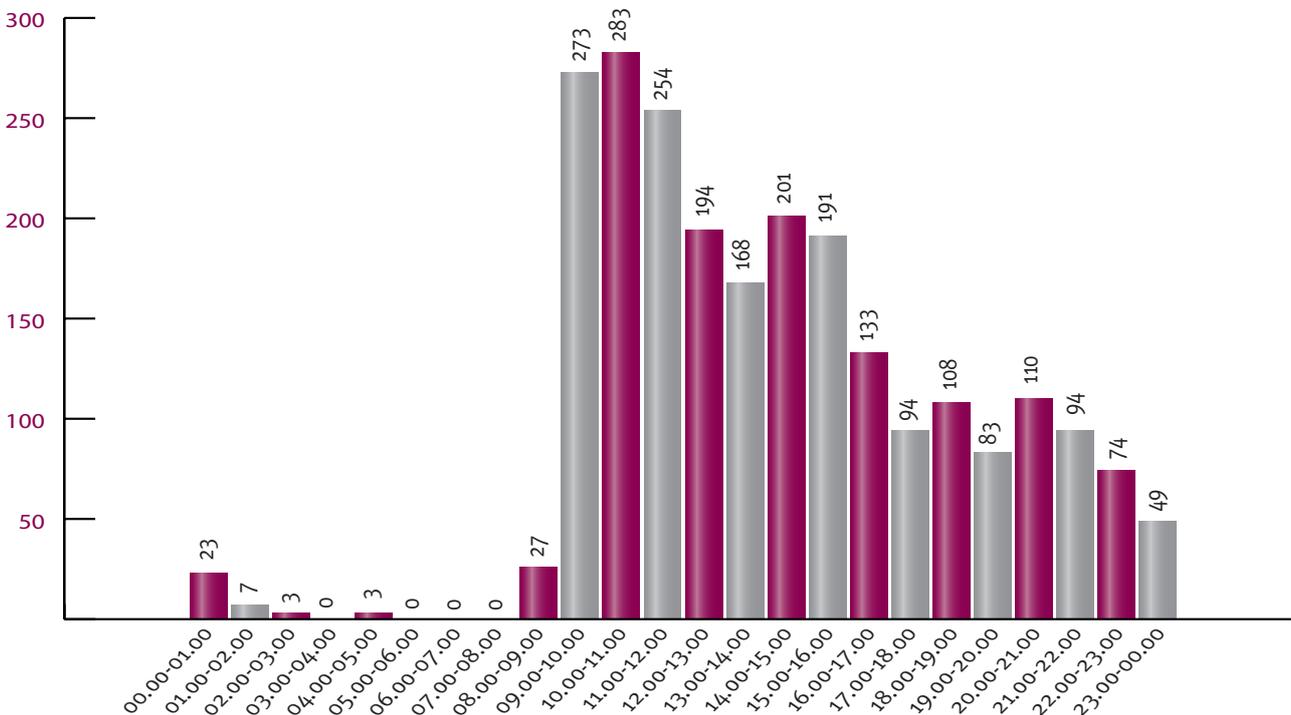
The main attendance period for the NIAAS was the morning period between 09.00 hours and 13.00 hours, which made up 1172 attendances (49%)

with a period that peaks between 10.00 hours and 11.00 hours. We experienced afternoon activity this year around the 14.00-16.00 hours period with an easing off as we approach 17.00 hours which was followed by another peak in attendance after 20.00 hours, after which figures decline towards late evening.

Although an Appropriate Adult's attendance at 22.00 hours or 23.00 hours may take them in to early hours of the morning before a matter is concluded police interviews rarely start after 23.00 hours.

This year we saw the overnight staff being called out during the 23.00-08.00 period on 85 occasions which averages 1.6 occasions per week in order to meet specific PSNI requests (Table 3). This may relate to an interview, or it may be a non interview procedure, such as the urgent need to obtain forensic samples, to compare with samples found at a crime scene.

TABLE 3: ARRIVAL TIMES



Custody Staff Comments

When staff attend at difficult or complex calls, or attend during unsocial hours or public holidays or late at night they value positive feedback from custody staff. We capture written comments in our reporting process, and I'm delighted to copy a sample of these comments in to this report.

*Good
timely response
by AA and efficient
service*

*Most
helpful*

*NIAAS
professional and
polite throughout*

*Prompt
and effective
attendance*

*Thank
you for your help*

*Thank
you for your
patience with a
difficult juvenile*

*Very
helpful and quick
as always*

*This
was a very busy
period and I was grateful
for all the help*

*Excellent
service*

The Mentally Vulnerable

On arrival at a police custody suite a Custody Sergeant is responsible for identifying people as being mentally vulnerable. He/she communicates with the detainee and forms an opinion as to the persons condition assisted by a police computer program for booking in detained people. From this the need for an Appropriate Adult is established. An examination of the detained person by a Forensic Medical Officer (FMO) may also result in the requirement for an Appropriate Adult being established.

Our engagement with Custody Sergeants training courses and the Custody Duty Officers (CDO) training courses has helped enhance the officers' understanding of the Appropriate Adult role and mental health issues. In this reporting period 1722 (73%) of the people we were requested to support were identified as having mental health vulnerabilities, with 27% being vulnerable due to their age in that they were under 18 years of age with no specific identifiable mental health issues.

Vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities can be listed under specific categories, some of which require explanation.

The category 'other' is a loose term referring to a range of issues such as previous head injuries affecting memory, or personality disorders; occasionally we encounter post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in former military personnel. The term mental health issues is a wide all embracing term incorporating depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bi polar disorder.

Learning difficulties includes attention deficit hyper activity disorder (ADHD).

The category 'Nothing Identified' relates to young people who are supported purely by virtue of their age and no other co-existing problem is identified (Table 4).

TABLE 4: VULNERABILITIES

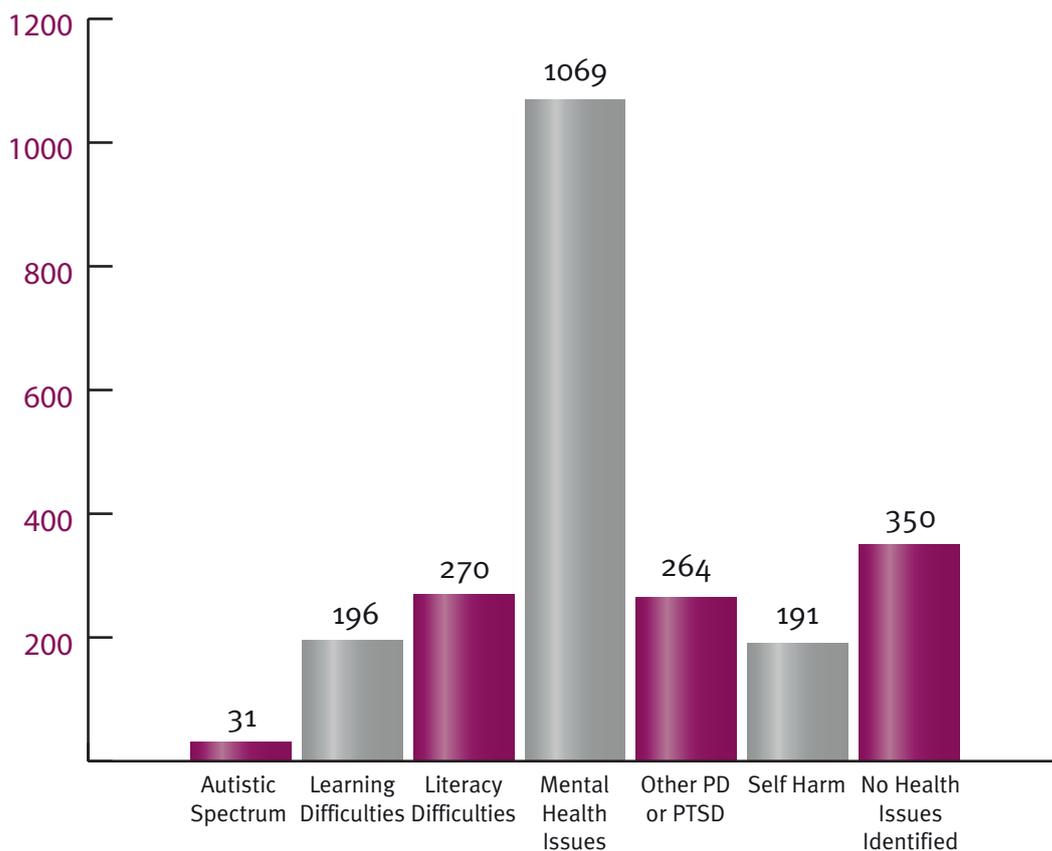


TABLE 6: GENDER

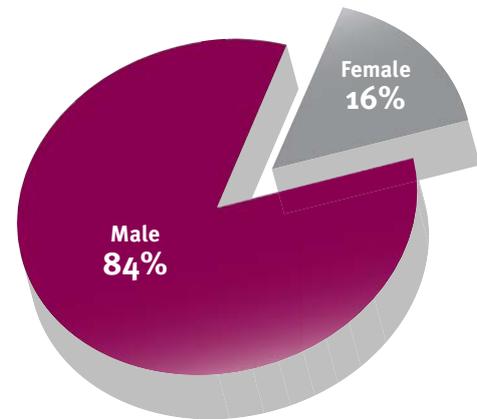
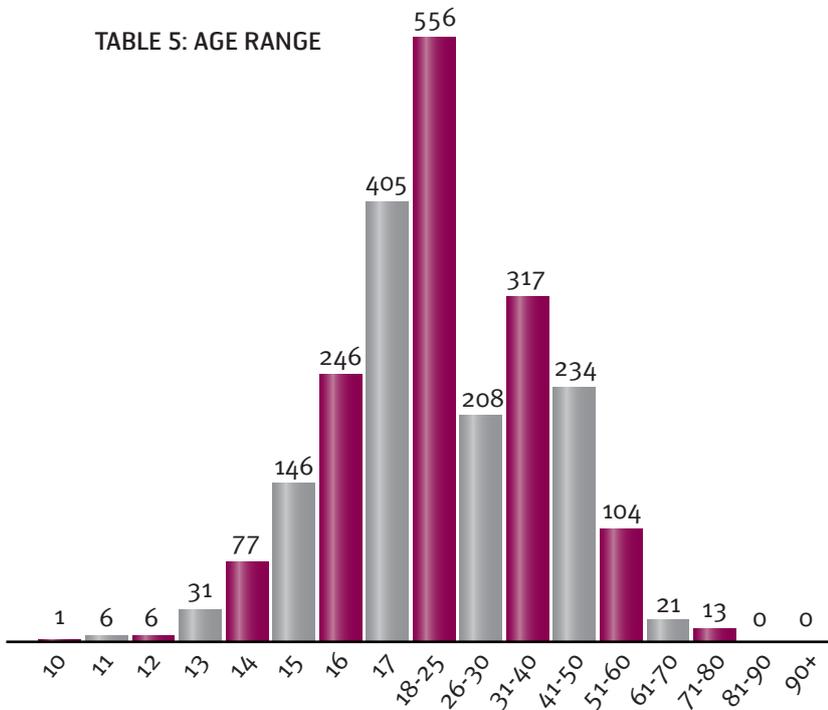


TABLE 5: AGE RANGE



Age

NIAAS capture age data for all age groups we support in police custody, this year we supported 1 x 10 years olds and 6 x 11 year olds. Each year we see the 18-25 year old age band accounting for the majority of all calls, this year it was 556 being 18% of all people supported.

At the other end of the age scale we supported people aged between 71 -80 years of age on 13 occasions (Table 5).

Males made up of 84% of all people supported. The 556 people aged 18-25 years we encountered consisted mainly of young men in their late teens and early 20's with mental health issues.

Juveniles

The juveniles we supported accounted for 918 of our attendances (39%) with the 14-16 year age band within this group accounting for 469 attendances, 19% of all support delivered. The 17 year olds alone accounted for 405 attendances, 17% of all support during this reporting period.

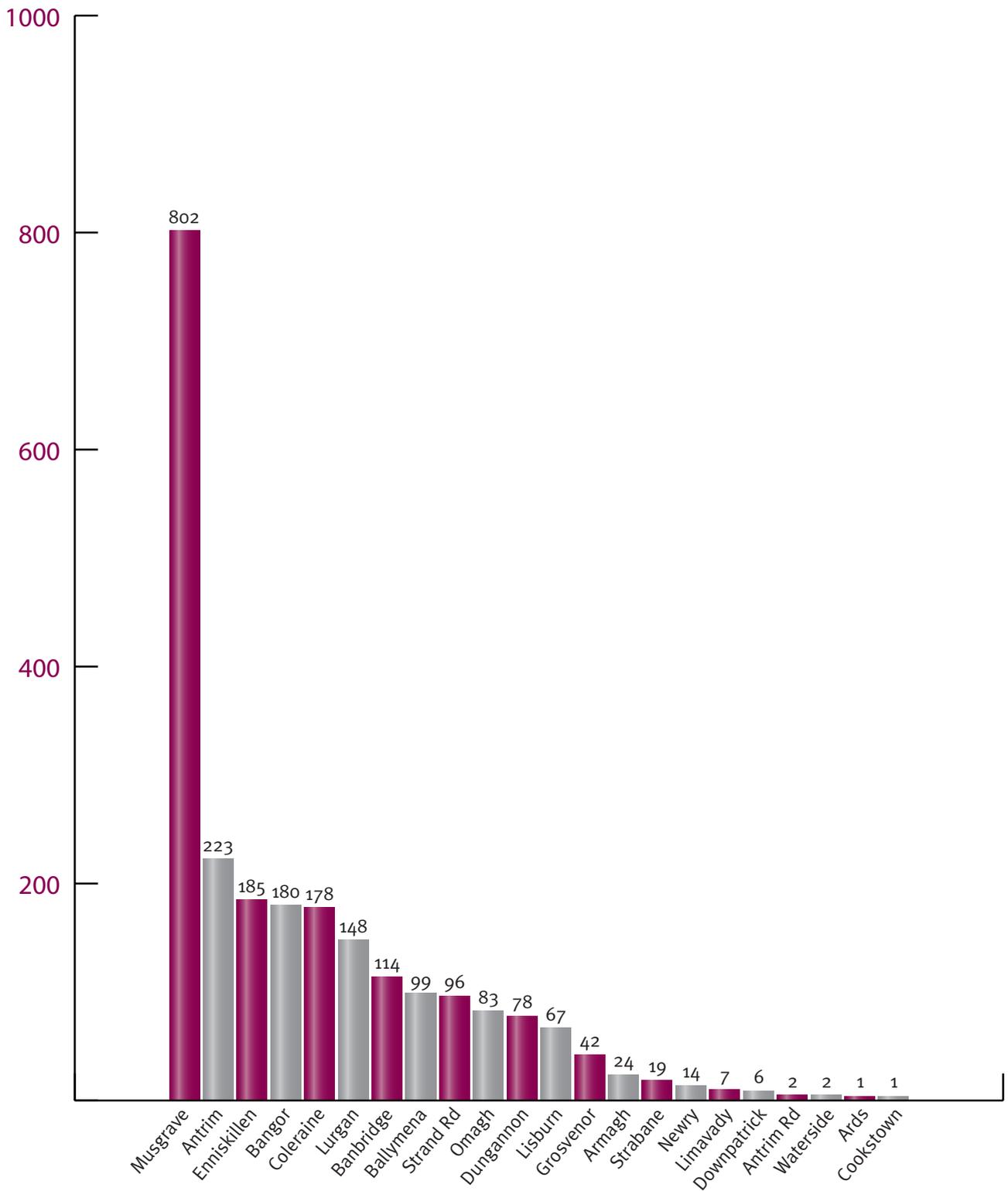
Adult / Juvenile Ratio

This year we supported 1453 adults (61%) and 918 juveniles (39%) which is a steady year on year demand for juvenile support. This requirement arises when a parent cannot attend a police station due to their circumstances, i.e. no transport or they choose not to attend for a variety of personal or domestic reasons, or it may be inappropriate for them to attend such as when they are the complainant or witness in the case.

Gender

The gender figures of 375 female detainees compared to 1996 male detainees show that males made up 84% of all people we supported during this reporting period. When this figure is read in conjunction with the age chart, it becomes evident that young men in their late teens and early 20s are a specific group in need of our services (Table 6).

TABLE 7: STATION ATTENDANCE



PSNI Stations

The attendance at particular PSNI stations depends entirely upon police requirements, the NIAAS staff team attends as and when they are requested to attend.

Musgrave Street station as the main holding centre for the greater Belfast City area is by far the busiest station for the scheme. Staff experience daily attendance there and often find that before completion of one requested attendance, another detainee has arrived or is already in custody that is in need of the support of an Appropriate Adult. We have experienced three Appropriate Adults being present in Musgrave custody suite at the same time, all being engaged in different matters, running concurrently within the suite.

The PSNI 2014-2015 statistical report regarding PACE detainees lists 18 custody detention stations therefore many provincial towns may

not have an operational custody suite; this can inflate attendance figures in another area whilst providing no figures for that particular area. An example can be seen in the provincial towns of Newtownards and Downpatrick, which do not have onsite custody suites so a person detained in those areas is transported to Bangor PSNI station, as a result this made Bangor the fourth busiest station for the scheme during this reporting period whilst Newtownards shows virtually no attendances.

Attendance figures at PSNI stations should not be seen as a reflection of crime figures for that area, as station custody suites may close periodically with detained people being redirected to other custody suites; therefore the pattern of scheme attendance may fluctuate to comply with these changes, (Table 7, page 8).

Alcohol and Drugs

Whilst staff are consulting with a detainee and examining the police custody record, they have the opportunity to discuss a person's personal difficulties and capture data beyond mental health issues such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs prior to arrest. (Table 8 & Table 9)

Police interviews are not conducted whilst a person is under the influence of a substance; however many of the offences that police were investigating were related to or resulting from the misuse of 'drink or drugs'. Many detainees including juveniles are quite frank with staff and acknowledged that drink or drugs played a part in the events that lead to their arrest, and some are agreeable and appreciative of a staff referral to other support such as the 'Linked-In' project (LIP) which is a MindWise initiative providing an early-stage intervention approach to post custody support for young people aged 13-20 years old.

This year staff identified alcohol or drug use in 773 (32%) of people they supported.

TABLE 8: ALCOHOL TAKEN

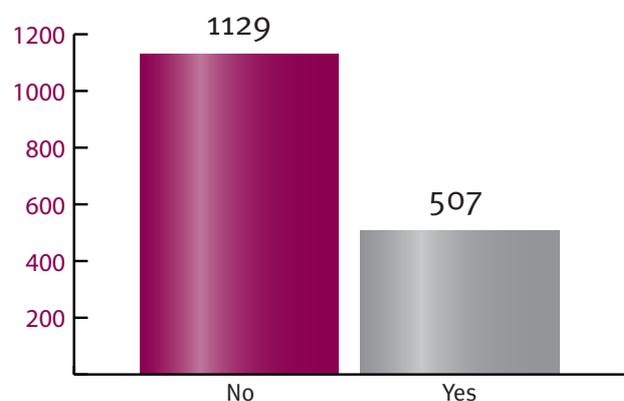
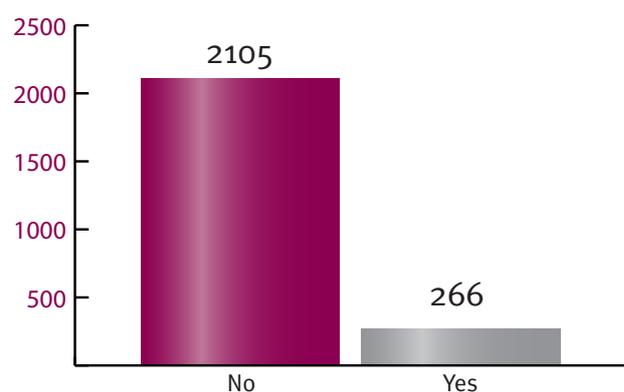


TABLE 9: DRUGS TAKEN



Days of the Week

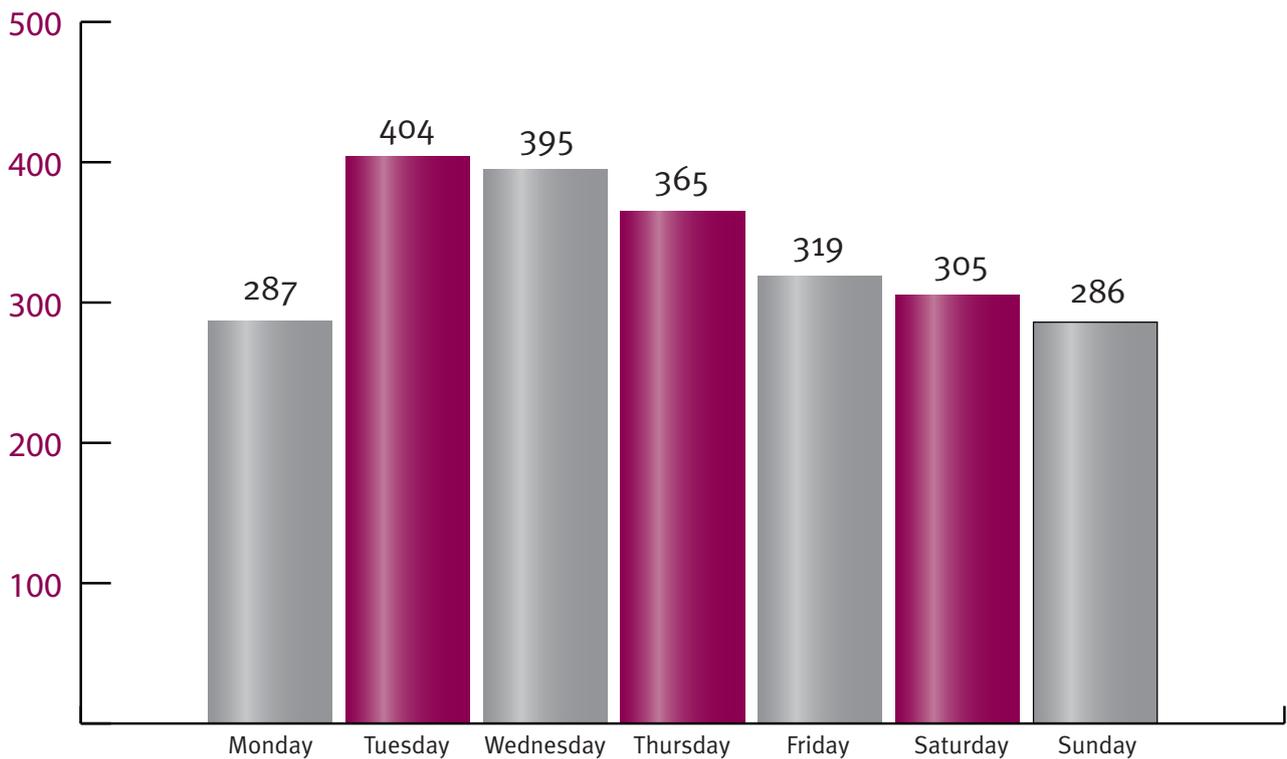
Throughout the year we saw the midweek periods of Tuesday to Thursday as being the busiest periods which accounted for 1164 (49%) attendances. The service demand is continuous and whilst Sunday and Monday had the lowest figures throughout the year, our quarterly reports reveal that this is not a constant and peak days can vary depending upon a range of factors such as holiday periods and events taking place.

We deliver the service continually seven days per week and whilst particular days such as Tuesday and Thursday may be seen to have a higher

volume of calls annually as they do this year, there is still a requirement to maintain sufficient staff availability to meet the day to day fluctuations that occur in service demand.

The report does not specifically highlight public holidays such as Christmas and Easter when there can be a dip in call outs however the days of the week statistical table encompasses these periods as the service is delivered continually through the year, (Table 10).

TABLE 10: DAYS OF THE WEEK ATTENDANCE



Conclusion

This was a busy and successful year for the scheme with 2371 attendances at PSNI custody suites through Northern Ireland as well as non custody suites with voluntary attendees. These figures clearly indicate an increase in service demand which we believe is due to a greater understanding of mental health issues within the PSNI for which as mental health charity we congratulate them.

The offences encountered by the NIAAS team whilst delivering support can range from the most minor of offences to very serious criminal matters, which exercise our staff's patience and sensitivities as some of these issues can be disturbing. However we are organisationally proactive and have access to counselling support as part of our risk management strategy.

Some complex enquiries can take many hours to bring to a conclusion. This year we recorded one matter which required 59.5 hours of station attendance time to bring the matter to a close.

However this needs to be balanced by the huge number of minor matters requiring the briefest of interviews, which result in the average period spent in a custody suite being 3 hours and 25 minutes.

The excellent figures were a direct result of staff flexibility in responding to PSNI requests regardless of location and time of request, this was the culmination of the NIAAS staff's dedication to service delivery throughout the year, for which I express my gratitude.

I wish to express my thanks for the organisational support we received from the MindWise Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Board of Trustees, and Senior Management Team; I wish to particularly thank the MindWise administration and financial staff, for their support.

I believe that the scheme has shown year on year that MindWise as an organisation can deliver professional services within the Criminal Justice environment and will continue to do so.

Stanley Booth MBE
Appropriate Adult Scheme Manager

Transforming lives and developing new
visions for mental health by challenging
stigma and discrimination, and
providing quality services and support.

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