

JOINT EVENT

24th International Conference on **PSYCHIATRY & PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE**
&2nd International Congress on **FORENSIC SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY**

October 12-14, 2017 London, UK



David Truswell

PLIAS Resettlement, UK

The phoenix project – Assisting women involved in the criminal justice system into work, education and training

The presentation is a summary overview of a three-year project delivered by PLIAS Resettlement, a UK not for profit organization working with offenders and ex-offenders. The Project was designed to address some of the shortcomings in the services and support for women in the criminal justice system identified in the *Review of Women with Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System* by Baroness Corston in the UK in 2007. This involved developing and delivering a programme of personal development, vocational and soft skills for women who had criminal convictions, mental health difficulties or substance abuse issues and who originated from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background. The project worked with 20 women per year with the goal of achieving a 75% success rate in getting programme graduates into paid work, education or training or voluntary work. The project worked through building confidence, skills and worked to improve family relationships. Group workshops, individual goal planning sessions and personal mentoring was central to the operation of the programme. The development of network links with a wide variety of local organizations helped to provide a wide range of work and training opportunities for the programme candidates. The presentation explores the factors that contributed to the programmes success in achieving its goals and identifies recommendations for further progress using the Phoenix Project approach.

Biography

David Truswell has worked in community based mental health services in the UK for over thirty years developing services for people with complex care needs and enduring mental health problems including a forensic history in a career spanning the Voluntary Sector, Local Authority Services, and the NHS at a senior level. He has two Master's level degrees, including a distinction level MBA. He is currently Chair of PLIAS Resettlement, a not-for-profit organization based in London working with offenders and ex-offenders to help improve life skills and self-confidence and reduce re-offending. He has written several articles on the issues faced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in the mental health system.

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