Reboot evaluation mobilisation: Process study report

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youth futures FOUNDATION

THE BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TEAM

Contents

Executive summary

Background

The Reboot programme aims to support care-experienced young people in the west of England to obtain and sustain employment, education and/or training (EET). This report sets out the findings of a process study conducted by the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) in early 2022 to understand the delivery of the Reboot programme and any actions that needed to be taken ahead of an impact evaluation of a future iteration of the programme. It was updated for publication in September 2023.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 13 members of coaching and managerial staff across Reboot I and Reboot II. The interviews were designed to investigate the effectiveness of Reboot II's delivery and processes, with follow up work conducted to obtain further information when needed.

Findings

Elements of the programme work well: referrals seem appropriate, coaches feel well-supported in their roles, and the recruitment process works well to ensure that staff share the values of the organisation. However, some changes are needed to allow an impact evaluation to take place and improve the effectiveness of the programme:

- **Referral process:** Staff felt that there were significant delays progressing referrals so that young people can start on the programme. This may affect the length and complexity of an impact evaluation, as delays to onboarding to the programme could increase attrition for the intervention both prior to and following randomisation, disproportionately impacting the treatment group.

- **Management capacity:** Capacity at a managerial level is limited. A future impact evaluation is likely to place additional burdens on management staff, this will need to be addressed to ensure that the programme is ready to support an evaluation.

- **Induction process:** In some cases, coaches felt unprepared for the practical aspects of their work such as how to apply the coaching model in practice, or what issues might occur in the first few months of their work with young people. Important knowledge is also sometimes shared informally, and this risks being lost if key members of staff leave the programme. This would have implications for the consistency of programme delivery, which could weaken the ability of the evaluation to detect programme effects.

- **Working with young people:** Some coaches struggled to articulate how non-EET activities helped young people to take steps towards EET, and subsequently appeared to find it difficult to navigate the tension between balancing these (which would ensure their continued engagement with Reboot) with EET support they were also intended to provide.

- **Administration burden:** Some coaches appeared to struggle with their administrative workload and thought that there may be opportunities to streamline these processes and improve the training provided. This is an important insight in the context of evaluation delivery, which will add further administrative burdens to the delivery teams. Minimising additional work in this case would be essential to the effective delivery of any evaluation.

Recommendations for 1625iP

1. Use referral data to conduct targeted engagement with LA single points of contact and PAs to encourage referrals from those who do not already refer, and to increase the quality of referrals for those who do. Develop materials to support this process.
2. When working with BIT to design and assess the feasibility of a revised recruitment process that enables randomisation, consider ways to shorten the recruitment window for a future impact evaluation.
3. Work with young people's Personal Advisors (PAs) to identify how best to obtain key information to enable case planning to proceed.
4. Review the allocation system (in which coaches are matched to young people) to increase the efficiency of matching and create more opportunities for ad-hoc allocations.
5. Work with BIT to explore ways to reduce the failure to attend (FTA) rate by young people during initial appointments, and particularly during the case planning phase.
6. Review the management structure of Reboot II to ensure that there is sufficient managerial capacity to support a future impact evaluation.
7. Consider delegating responsibility to team leaders for work streams that would benefit from their experience as coaches.
8. In consultation with coaches, consider how the induction process could better address the more administrative and operational aspects of coaches' roles and how key information can be captured and shared
9. Gather feedback from coaches after training sessions and their induction, and adapt the sessions and induction process accordingly.
10. Consider asking staff to come into the office more regularly when new coaches are going through their induction.
11. Ensure that the planning coaching handbook provides a single agreed definition of the purpose of coaches' roles, and provide consistent messages about this to staff.
12. Consider introducing a simplified theory of change for coaches to help them understand how their support helps a young person to obtain and sustain EET.

13. Consider developing a formal policy about how to decide when a young person is no longer appropriate to continue with the programme.
14. Ensure that coaches feel supported to have conversations with their young people about the appropriateness of the programme, and when and how to discuss EET outcomes with them.
15. Consider reviewing current administration processes to identify opportunities to streamline processes or reduce duplication.
16. Consider how paper processes can be phased out of the programme.
17. Ensure that the current InForm guidance or the planned coaching handbook explains the rationale for different administrative tasks and incorporates best practice examples.
18. Give new coaches more opportunity to record case notes and outcomes during their induction, particularly when shadowing.
19. Use management supervision to regularly assess how well coaches are managing their administrative tasks and explore ways to support them in this.

1. Background

1.1. Programme overview

The Reboot programme works with young people aged 16-25 who are (or have been) looked after by statutory care services in the west of England, and provides them with coaching support for up to three years to help them obtain and sustain employment, education and/or training (EET). The frequency and type of support varies, but it is based on a youth version of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, called DNA-V. DNA-V is a psychological intervention that uses acceptance and mindfulness, together with commitment and behaviour change strategies, to help young people understand and take steps toward their goals.

The programme is delivered by a charity based in the south west of England - 1625 Independent People (1625ip). The first iteration of the programme, Reboot I, started in August 2018 and was funded through the Department for Education's Social Care Innovation Fund. It worked with 237 care-experienced young people, all of whom were not in education, employment or training (NEET), or were at risk of NEET, at the start of the programme.

When this process study was conducted, the programme was in its second iteration, Reboot II, which had been operational since 2021 and was still taking referrals at the time of writing. To enable the programme to continue while the potential for an impact evaluation was explored, funding for Reboot II was provided by Youth Futures Foundation (YFF) and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). YFF is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established to improve employment outcomes for young people from marginalised backgrounds. WECA is a combined authority in the west of England, consisting of three local authorities (LAs): Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath & North East Somerset which - in addition to North Somerset - are the LAs from which young people are referred to the programme.

1.2. Research objectives

This report sets out the findings of a process study conducted by the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) in May 2022 to understand the delivery of Reboot II and any actions that need to be taken ahead of an impact evaluation. This impact evaluation would cover the third phase of the project, Reboot III, which would be funded by YFF and intended to begin in 2023.

The process study was designed to identify changes that could both support the consistency and quality of the programme's delivery, and address any concerns about the feasibility of a future impact evaluation.

The findings of this report link to a number of implications for evaluation feasibility;

1. **Reaching the required sample size:** Robust impact evaluation is dependent on the recruitment of a sufficiently large sample of young people to the programme. Where it is possible to make recruitment procedures more efficient and increase on-flow to the programme, the viability of impact evaluation increases.
2. **Realisation of outcomes:** The recommended primary outcome for the evaluation is a variable that indicates whether a young person is engaged in employment, education and training (EET) toward the end of their time on the programme. The greater the impact of the programme on this outcome, the more likely it is to be detected in an impact evaluation. Given this, it is important both to strengthen the delivery of the programme and to ensure that any outcomes realised are captured.
3. **Evaluation implementation:** To execute an evaluation, implementation may need to be tailored to accommodate evaluation procedures. This includes the possibility of tailoring implementation to enable randomised or quasi-experimental evaluation designs (e.g., randomising certain programme elements; adjusting timelines or participant recruitment; varying programme delivery or intensity across participants). These procedures can create additional administrative and practical burdens for operational teams.

2. Methodology

Following initial scoping work by BIT (which included reviewing programme documentation and co-developing a theory of change), we interviewed Reboot I and Reboot II staff to understand their experience of the programme and the effectiveness of different aspects of the delivery model.

In total, we conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with 13 members of staff across Reboot I and Reboot II. This included;

- six Reboot II coaches;
- four Reboot I coaches;
- the Reboot II project manager; and
- two Reboot II team leaders who were each interviewed twice: once in their managerial capacity, and once in their coaching capacity.

As some Reboot II coaches had only worked with young people for a short period of time, Reboot I coaches were included in the study so that we could gather insights from more experienced coaches. We also sought to understand details about the previous iteration of the programme that may still be relevant to Reboot II.

Interviews lasted up to an hour and were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were then used as part of a thematic analysis to identify major themes, sub-themes and variation within the findings. Follow up work, such as requesting data or written guidance and processes, was conducted following the interviews as needed.

3. Findings and recommendations

3.1. Headline findings

Elements of the programme work well, but some changes are needed to address important risks ahead of a potential impact evaluation. The main findings are summarised here and described in more detail under each of the subheadings below.

Priority issues

The priority issues which - if not addressed - would have a significant impact on the feasibility a future impact evaluation, include:

1. **Referrals** - Reboot II currently experiences significant delays between young people being referred and starting on the programme. If not resolved, this could have detrimental effects on the length and complexity of a future evaluation, particularly if conducting a randomised controlled trial, as delays to onboarding to the programme could increase attrition for the intervention both prior to and following randomisation, disproportionately impacting the treatment group.

2. **Management capacity** - The programme lacks capacity at management level, and this causes delays in more strategic areas of work, particularly when unexpected absences occur. An impact evaluation would place additional burdens on management staff, and if not addressed, it may be difficult for the programme to support an impact evaluation.

Secondary issues

The secondary issues which - if not addressed - would hinder the effectiveness of the programme and the potential for an impact evaluation to detect a statistically significant effect, include:

3. **Induction process** - some coaches expressed uncertainty about the more administrative and operational aspects of their work with young people, and some found it difficult to arrange shadowing opportunities and to go through the induction while working from home. Induction issues are likely to hinder the effectiveness of the programme in achieving EET outcomes with young people by delaying the support the programme is designed to deliver, and increasing the risk that they may drop out in the interimThe process is likely to benefit from better recording and communication of some important information e.g. common issues that may occur in the first few months when working with a young person.

4. **Working with young people** - some coaches found it difficult to balance the tension between EET and non-EET outcomes, particularly when they did not have a clear view of how their work supported young people into EET. Continued difficulties are likely to make it difficult for some coaches to effectively balance the EET and non-EET aspects of their work which, in turn, would negatively affect the impact of the programme.

5. **Administration burden** - some coaches struggled with the level of administration required in the role, and felt there were opportunities to streamline these processes and improve the training offer. The current burdens represent a significant opportunity cost for the programme that is likely to reduce its impact.

3.2. Programme strengths

There are a number of areas where Reboot II performs well and has clearly used learning from the first iteration of the programme to adapt and improve different processes.

Appropriateness of referrals

Reboot I staff felt that the number of inappropriate referrals had been far higher for the first iteration of the programme than it was for Reboot II. As Reboot I was a new programme, both Reboot I and LA staff were less knowledgeable about which young people were appropriate for the service, and this made it more difficult to screen out young people who were unlikely to benefit from the programme's support, such as those with severe mental health issues or substance abuse problems. Reboot II staff felt that, over time, LA staff have come to understand the referral criteria better, and changes to the process - such as having the Reboot II manager screen all referrals - had helped ensure that referrals were more appropriate in Reboot II.

> *"LAs know what Reboot is now [...] and [...] know which young people Reboot has worked really well for[... We're also] doing the referrals a little bit differently this time. The criteria is a bit clearer, [... and] the referrals are being managed more centrally, by one person." - Senior Reboot II staff*

Support for coaches

Reboot II coaches feel well-supported in their roles. Given the nature of their work, coaches can sometimes find their jobs difficult or emotionally draining, and some Reboot I coaches mentioned that they had felt a lot of pressure about the level of commitment required from them to support their young people.

However, some coaches who had worked across both iterations of the programme felt that this was no longer the case within Reboot II, because managers had listened and acted on coaches' feedback about the issue. Instead, Reboot II coaches spoke highly of the professional development and support available to them, and felt that managers had helped to build a culture that prioritised staff wellbeing and supported coaches to reach out for help.

> *"there's a culture of openness and [...] kindness [in the Reboot II team]. I think I've experienced almost, yes, everywhere else, how stress can impact working relationships between colleagues. I really get the sense [that] in Reboot [...] that's not around." - Reboot II coach*

Coach recruitment

Reboot II coaches also spoke highly of the quality of their colleagues and the informal support they received from them. They felt that the recruitment process worked well to ensure that coaches shared the values of the organisation and that they were all working for the benefit of the young people they supported.

"I think the hiring process is pretty rigorous because they're looking for people who really get [the Reboot II model]... my personal values are just really aligned with what we're doing here. As soon as I heard about what ACT is, and what it is that we're trying to support young people with, I just thought, 'I don't need to be convinced of anything here'. It's a no-brainer for me. I think, actually, [the programme is] very consciously building a team of people who get it. Yes, we're being trained and supported, [but] also if we [were] asked, off the cuff, why do we do what we do? I think all of us could [answer] that very easily." - Reboot II coach

3.3. Areas for improvement

3.3.1. Referral process

Issue

Within Reboot II, referrals pass through a four stage process before a young person is considered to be an 'open' case on the programme:

1. **Referral** - LA leads and the Reboot II manager identify and agree suitable young people to be referred to the programme
2. **Allocation** - Project support staff obtain the young person's pathway plan from the LA, and Reboot II team leaders allocate the young person to a coach within their team.
3. **Case planning** - The allocated coach and the young person's personal advisor (PA) meet to discuss and agree Reboot's role and responsibilities within the young person's pathway plan.
4. **Assessment** - The coach and the young person meet, ideally with the young person's PA present, to conduct an initial assessment with the young person and agree Reboot's role with them.

Senior Reboot II staff commented that the first stage of this process had significantly improved since Reboot I due to the involvement of the Reboot II manager, but they also felt that later stages of the process took too long. As a result, the progression of referrals can sometimes be delayed by a month or more.

Reboot II staff mentioned that, given the time pressures for both coaches and PAs, it was sometimes difficult to arrange case planning meetings and obtain pathway plans. Staff who had experienced both iterations of the programme mentioned that in Reboot I, coaches worked within LA offices and so were able to have informal conversations with LA staff more easily. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Reboot II coaches have been based mainly at home or in the Reboot office space, and staff felt that this made it more difficult to generate referrals and coordinate with PAs.

"[...] in Reboot I, we were co-located, so [...] at this stage of the project, the coaches would be sat in the local authorities, and so getting referrals, you'd just go up to the PA and be like, 'Yes, that young person looks appropriate.' Whereas, because of COVID, we're not doing that and consequently, we're not getting the necessary referrals. [...] I think the slow

> *part of it actually is where the coach has to go and have a conversation with the PA, because the PAs are so busy that arranging a meeting can take weeks." - Senior Reboot II staff*

Finally, our own deep dive of the referral process suggested that there are opportunities to streamline the allocation process, and that the failure to attend (FTA) rate is higher for initial appointments if the young person's PA is not present.

Impact

For a future impact evaluation, these difficulties are likely to extend the recruitment period, and this would extend the length and complexity of an evaluation.

A longer referral period would complicate an evaluation in two ways. Firstly, young people start the programme under slightly different conditions (e.g. different economic climates) depending on when they are referred, and these differences are exaggerated if the recruitment takes longer. For an evaluation, if there are large differences in starting conditions within a treatment group, this makes it more difficult to attribute any outcomes to the intervention unless this factor is also accounted for in the design of the control group.

Secondly, if conducting a randomised controlled trial, randomising young people into treatment and control groups becomes more difficult if there is a longer recruitment period. Ideally, participants need to be randomised all at once - or at least in a minimal number of batches - and a longer recruitment period therefore extends the amount of time that young people may need to wait to be randomised after they have been referred. This in turn could lead them to withdraw from the evaluation and would therefore reduce the available sample size.

Recommendations

1. Use referral data to conduct targeted engagement with LA single points of contact and PAs to encourage referrals from those who do not already refer, and to increase the quality of referrals for those who do. Develop materials to support this process.
2. When working with BIT to design and assess the feasibility of a revised recruitment process that enables randomisation, consider ways to shorten the recruitment window for a future impact evaluation.
3. Work with PAs to identify how best to obtain key information to enable case planning to proceed.
4. Review the allocation system (in which coaches are matched to young people) to increase the efficiency of matching and create more opportunities for ad-hoc allocations.
5. Work with BIT to explore ways to reduce the failure to attend (FTA) rate by young people during initial appointments, and particularly during the case planning phase.

3.3.2. Management capacity

Issue
At present, the programme appears to lack capacity at a managerial level. In our interviews, one senior manager cited this as one of the largest challenges for the programme, and staff mentioned that some important pieces of work, such as an introductory handbook for coaches, had been repeatedly delayed due to a lack of capacity. This matches our own experience; finding time to meet with Reboot II managers has been difficult and, when managerial absences have occurred (both planned and unplanned), our work is sometimes delayed due to a lack of cover for key managerial posts.

Impact
An impact evaluation is likely to place additional burdens on management staff, both in terms of direct support for the delivery of the evaluation, and also to implement any changes that will ready the programme for an evaluation. This may lead to significant delays in the start and/or completion of any future evaluation. It may also mean that the programme has a smaller impact on young people's EET outcomes if there is a lack of capacity to deliver service improvements.

Recommendations
6. Review the management structure of the programme to ensure that there is sufficient managerial capacity to support a future impact evaluation, consider putting together a business case for additional management staff if needed.

7. Consider delegating responsibility to team leaders for work streams that would benefit from their experience as coaches, such as the improvements suggested to the induction process, the proposed coaching handbook, and a review of coaches' administrative burdens.

3.3.3. Induction process

Issue
When coaches start with Reboot II, they undergo a 1-2 month induction to equip them with the basic skills and understanding they need to start working with young people on the programme. For most coaches, the induction generally involves a mix of formal training sessions, shadowing, role play, and more informal conversations with their team leader.

Coaches felt that, as a whole, the induction process worked well, but some coaches felt that when they started working with young people they did not know enough about some of the more practical aspects of their role. This included things like which local organisations offered good EET opportunities, how to apply the DNA-V model in practice, or what issues might crop up in the first few months of working with a young person.

Several coaches spoke highly of the support and advice they had received from their team leader when discussing these issues, but some felt that more formal guidance or training on the practical aspects of their role would also be helpful.

Since our interviews, Reboot II has rolled out project-specific training on the practical application of DNA-V to all of their coaches which is likely to address some of these gaps, but it may be helpful for the programme to systematically collect feedback from coaches so that they can monitor these kinds of issues and adapt the programme's support and training for coaches as needed.

> *"[When I started working with young people] I feel like I had learnt a lot of theory and there was a lot of quite comprehensive learning around the DNA-V model, which is amazing, but the actual practical application with it I felt a little bit lost with. [I think it could have been quite helpful to have] some training bolstered on to that [like] 'here's an example of a session taking place where a youth worker is using elements of the DNA-V model'." - Reboot II coach*

Finally, some coaches mentioned that, at times, they found it difficult to go through the induction while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some struggled to concentrate for long periods of time or missed the more informal contact that comes from an office environment, while others found the process too long and wanted to start working with young people sooner than they did, despite finding the training useful overall.

> *"I found [my induction] really tricky. The office environment isn't there in which [...] we can just spontaneously have discussions about various aspects of the role. I did find that difficult." - Reboot II coach*

Impact

Without comprehensive training and guidance on the practical aspects of their role, it is likely to take longer for coaches to start working effectively with young people. For a future impact evaluation, this could lead to greater drop-out rates among young people being supported by newer coaches (which lowers the sample size), and it may lessen the impact of the programme if some coaches do not have all the skills or knowledge they need to work effectively.

In addition, if important parts of the induction rely on experienced individuals verbally passing on information and guidance, this knowledge risks being lost if those individuals leave the organisation, and this could severely hinder the induction process.

Recommendations

8. In consultation with coaches, consider how the induction process could better address the more practical aspects of coaches' roles before they start working with young people, and how key information can be captured and shared. For example:

    - A coach- and/or young person-led guidance document or video about what coaches should expect in the first few months of working with a young person, and tips for addressing common issues.

    - Mandatory role-play of important coaching activities e.g. meeting young people for the first time, conducting initial and review assessments, using values cards.

    - Short introduction guides or collated links to key practical topics such as how the children's social care system works or how employment affects benefits.

9. Gather feedback from coaches after training sessions and their induction to understand how well they meet coaches' needs and adapt them accordingly.

10. To facilitate more informal information sharing and relationship-building, consider asking new coaches to come into the office more regularly during their induction and asking other coaches to do the same.

3.3.4. Working with young people

Issue

Young people voluntarily take part in the programme on the agreement that they are interested in getting into EET. However, some young people require substantial help to prepare them for EET, and we heard from coaches that, because of the long-term nature of support, young people's engagement and interest in EET outcomes is likely to wane over the course of the programme.

This means there is an inherent tension in the programme between achieving EET outcomes and directing young people towards those outcomes, versus providing more holistic and young-person-directed support that will keep a young person engaged with the programme and help prepare them for EET.

Coaches liked having the flexibility to tailor support for their young people, but some Reboot I coaches said they found it difficult to navigate the tension around how strongly they should be directing their young people toward EET outcomes, and felt that they received mixed messages from the programme's leadership about this; at times, some coaches felt that they were given lots of freedom to take things slowly and allow a young person to direct the work, while at other points, they felt more pressure to direct a young person toward EET outcomes and achieve measurable results.

> *"[One] supervision you're told, 'okay, concentrate on the relationship, [...] introduce things slowly, let's see how it goes.' Then the next supervision you're asked, 'okay, what are you doing [about EET] then?'. [...] I guess there was a push and pull of, okay, you're all spending loads of money and you're out all day, but I'm seeing no results. [It] eventually happens." - Reboot I coach*

We also found this tension among Reboot II coaches, as some of them were hesitant about presenting themselves as EET coaches to their young people and felt they had to approach EET outcomes more indirectly or slowly to keep some young people engaged with the programme. At times this meant not mentioning EET outcomes at all. In particular, one coach felt that based on how they framed their work, some young people might describe their role as "just [taking] me for a cup of coffee every now and again".

Reboot II coaches who appeared to struggle more with the tension around EET outcomes seemed less able to describe how their work led to EET outcomes, and were more likely to describe EET outcomes as something that simply "happens". More experienced coaches were able to clearly articulate how their broader work supported young people into EET, and so appeared to struggle less with the tension. These coaches could rationalise why they occasionally might need to take more indirect approaches to EET outcomes, and how this would eventually support their young people into EET.

> *"[For one young person] coming out to town to meet me is in itself an achievement, [...] because it's a step towards being able to go to work. [...] One of the pieces of feedback that sticks in my mind the most is a couple of young people have said something along the lines of… 'If my coach had pushed me, they'd have pushed me away.' That really stayed with me." - Senior Reboot II staff*

Impact

If coaches are uncertain about how to navigate the balance between helping young people to achieve EET and non-EET outcomes, it may make it harder for them to make decisions about how best to prioritise the support they provide which in turn, may reduce the impact of the programme.

For example, a coach may (rightfully) prioritise building up a good relationship with a young person who is not engaging well with the programme initially, but at some point they will need to make a decision about when and how to discuss EET goals with that young person. If they see the relationship as the main goal of their work, or frame it in that way for the young person, then they may delay these conversations or miss opportunities to help the young person take steps toward EET outcomes.

Recommendations

11. Clearly define the purpose of coaches' roles within the forthcoming coaching handbook so that there is a single agreed definition that coaches can refer to, and provide consistent messages about this through the induction process, team meetings, case reviews and supervision sessions.
12. Consider introducing coaches to a simplified theory of change for the programme to help them understand their goals and how the support they provide helps young people to obtain and sustain EET outcomes.
13. Consider developing a formal policy for coaches about how to decide when a young person is no longer appropriate for the programme or sufficiently engaged to continue receiving support.
14. In case reviews, ensure that coaches feel supported to have conversations with their young people about the appropriateness of the programme for them, and that coaches feel able to decide when to discuss EET outcomes with them.

3.3.5. Administration burden

Issue

Coaches use administration software named 'InForm' to record information about the young people they work with. Coaches who were digitally-savvy, or had relevant experience from previous roles, found the administrative elements of their role relatively simple to manage.

These coaches had good systems in place and were clear about the purpose of the recording and the level of detail that was needed. Their systems included setting reminders on their calendars and setting aside dedicated blocks of time to focus on administrative tasks. Coaches also felt that project support staff helped reduce the administration burden because they were able to remind coaches if they had forgotten to record important information.

However, some coaches struggled to keep up with their administrative tasks, and for some it was a considerable source of stress and anxiety to remember everything they needed to record and fit this in alongside their other tasks. One Reboot II coach estimated that, even without factoring in travel time, a two-hour appointment with a young person would require at least an hour of administration, particularly when this involves scanning paperwork.

One Reboot I coach found it difficult to make time for administration when the direct work with young people felt like a bigger priority, and they also mentioned finding it difficult to record case notes efficiently as they felt they had to record "everything that is happening with these young people".

> *"I find that our [admin] processes are very long-winded! We're just constantly being asked to 'Do this. Do this. Have you done this?' It feels like there's a checklist. You work all the way through it. By the end of the month, you've got through it. Then, it just starts again! It's a lot. There is always a lot to do." - Reboot II coach*

Some coaches also mentioned that the training for the administrative parts of their role could be improved, as they felt that it was difficult to follow the training and retain the information when it was delivered virtually. However, we are aware that since our interviews the programme has now published guidance for recording information on InForm which should help to supplement the training to some extent.

Impact

High administration burdens - or difficulties managing them - limits the amount of time that coaches can spend supporting young people (whether directly or indirectly). Given the level of anxiety it can provoke for some coaches, it may also affect their work performance. In combination, this issue could reduce the impact of the programme.

Recommendations

15. Consider reviewing current administration processes to identify opportunities to streamline processes or reduce duplication.
16. Consider how paper processes can be phased out of the programme so that coaches can upload documents to InForm directly rather than needing to scan them.
17. Within the new InForm guidance or planned coach handbook, explain the purpose of different administrative tasks and incorporate best practice examples so that coaches understand the level of detail that is required in their case notes and any other recording.
18. During inductions, give new coaches greater opportunities to record case notes and outcomes when they are shadowing so that they can get used to InForm and learn from more experienced coaches who can guide them through this process.
19. Regularly ask coaches about how well they are managing their administrative tasks during management supervision, and explore ways to help them manage this more effectively. This could include sharing best practice examples of case notes,

supporting them to develop better systems to manage their administration time, or helping coaches to understand which information is essential to record (and in what detail) so that they can better prioritise their time.

Annex A - Updated table of recommendations

This report was originally drafted in May 2022. Ahead of publication, we asked 1625IP to provide an update on each of the recommendations, shown in the table below.

Recommendation	Update from 1625IP - July 2023
1. Use referral data to conduct targeted engagement with LA single points of contact and PAs to encourage referrals from those who do not already refer, and to increase the quality of referrals for those who do. Develop materials to support this process.	The onboarding process has been reviewed with each local authority SPOC to identify a process that works for them, whilst maintaining consistency and fidelity to the model. A clear and simple eligibility criteria has been created for a point of reference and ensure quality of referrals across four LA areas. Using the eligibility criteria, the SPOCs can approach PAs and notify them of who on their caseload is eligible instead of relying on individual PAs to identify this for each of their caseload.
2. When working with BIT to design and assess the feasibility of a revised recruitment process that enables randomisation, consider ways to shorten the recruitment window for a future impact evaluation.	Each LA SPOC has been provided with referral target numbers broken down by month so that they can prepare in advance for the referral numbers they need to meet, which will help speed up the process to meet the target on time. Coaches and team leaders will regularly be attending team meetings with the PAs so as to encourage referrals and ensure that they can have a ‘touch point’ monthly to complete case planning, and arrange joint meeting times for initial appointments with young people, reducing the time it takes to communicate, and consequently shortening the recruitment window.

3. Work with young people's Personal Advisors (PAs) to identify how best to obtain key information to enable case planning to proceed.	The case planning document has been revised. The changes were made following running a focus group with the Reboot coaches, and with the LA SPOCs to identify what is most useful to know, how to get this information most efficiently whilst reducing any duplication. For example, any data points have been included in the data sharing agreement and included on the master referral spreadsheet. Anything that is ongoing or qualitative is included for an initial discussion with the PA in case planning. The other addition is to have a conversation around establishing roles of all professionals involved from the beginning in attempt to work cohesively and effectively with all professionals.
4. Review the allocation system (in which coaches are matched to young people) to increase the efficiency of matching and create more opportunities for ad-hoc allocations.	Referrers now have an opportunity to recommend the preferred coach and identify any needs or preferences the YP might have for a worker, i.e. can't work with a male.
5. Work with BIT to explore ways to reduce the failure to attend (FTA) rate by young people during initial appointments, and particularly during the initial assessment phase.	Reboot coaches will have a £25 voucher to give to YP on first appointment as an incentive. Young people will be matched to coaches with more consideration with the intention the YP people will be more included to meet with their coach. Finally the case planning document includes asking the PA for any tips for the first meeting, i.e. meeting in a place that the YP is familiar with, or at a time of day that is more convenient for the YP.

6. Review the management structure of Reboot II to ensure that there is sufficient managerial capacity to support a future impact evaluation.	Along with the original Reboot operations manager, an additional 0.8FTE role was created specifically to implement the service improvements to reduce inefficiencies across the project, as well as launch the trial and stay in post to cover any teething issues. In addition to the above, the Programme manager role was increased from 0.8 to full time, and instead of working across three project in the organisation, being full time on Reboot.
7. Consider delegating responsibility to team leaders for work streams that would benefit from their experience as coaches.	The team leaders have taken on speciality roles, so that they don't need to all be involved in every workstream, this creates capacity and encourages team leaders to develop skills in their area of interest.
8. In consultation with coaches, consider how the induction process could better address the more practical aspects of coaches' roles and how key information can be captured and shared	The induction checklist has been revised following focus groups with existing coaches. Practical aspects have been addressed and guides have been written up, which now all exist in the handbook so can be referred to easily. There is a rota system in place so that existing coaches take it in turns to induct various aspects of the process so that new coaches can hear live and real examples. This was in place for the induction of all the new reboot 3 coaches, and will continue to develop based on their experiences.
9. Gather feedback from coaches after training sessions and their induction, and adapt the sessions and induction process accordingly.	As suggested above, the induction process will be dynamic, and will develop with every additional induction of a coach. The feedback from the latest recruitment is that whilst lots of training is useful, it's better to have it more spread out and once a coach has a caseload so that it's tangible and the coaches can apply the

	learning to current examples as opposed to hypothetically.
10. Consider asking staff to come into the office more regularly when new coaches are going through their induction.	In the latest recruitment round, coaches made the effort to be in the office more days in the week, this is only possible where existing coaches have the flexibility for this. The new coaches named that this was beneficial. The new coaches have also stated that working together on a Friday is something that they look forward to, helps to build connection, learn from different people to embed knowledge, and develop team culture.
11. Ensure that the planning coaching handbook provides a single agreed definition of the purpose of coaches' roles, and provide consistent messages about this to staff.	The handbook has guidance around a coach role, what it involves and the boundaries that come with it. As the definition, and model of support, involves having an element of flexibility, it is hard to define exactly what a coach should and shouldn't get involved with when supporting a YP. For example in some cases supporting a YP to a doctors appointment might be appropriate, but in another case it might be more appropriate for a different professional to do this, therefore it is important that within the handbook it is clear that the role is dynamic and does change on a case by case basis, and instead a coach should use the support mechanisms that are in place, such as case review and supervision, to become clear in each scenario the boundaries of their role.
12. Consider introducing a simplified theory of change for coaches to help them understand how their support helps a young person to obtain and sustain EET.	A simplified theory of change has been created and included in the coach handbook.

13. Consider developing a formal policy about how to decide when a young person is no longer appropriate to continue with the programme.	Closure guidance has been written and included in the handbook. As each YP journey is unique there is no strict rule, for example if a YP doesn't engage for 2 months, in one scenario this might lead to a closure, but in another it may not. The coach would also need to engage with their team leader via case review to make a joint decision on when a case closure is appropriate.
14. Ensure that coaches feel supported to have conversations with their young people about the appropriateness of the programme, and when and how to discuss EET outcomes with them.	Guidance in the coach handbook has been included regarding engaging with young people and when and how to introduce EET. There is also an ongoing EET training programme for coaches, as well as peer learning spaces, which covers this.
15. Consider reviewing current administration processes to identify opportunities to streamline processes or reduce duplication.	A focus group was held with various coaches who felt strongly about this, along with the administrators. Following this, various processes were streamlined, for example inform recording was changed to reduce the amount of duplication. Furthermore, an additional administrator was employed, and each coach has been assigned an administrator to support them.
16. Consider how paper processes can be phased out of the programme.	The only mandatory paperwork is right at the beginning to cover off confidentiality and ensure that the YP sets clear boundaries for the coach around which professionals the coach can contact and what they can discuss. Beyond this, there are optional worksheets that the coach can choose to use should they feel it is appropriate. All other paperwork has been turned into card packs, or interactive tools that feel more accessible and attractive to use.
17. Ensure that the current InForm guidance or the planned coaching handbook explains the rationale for	The inform guidance and paperwork has been updated to explain the rational for

different administrative tasks and incorporates best practice examples.	different administrative tasks and includes best practice examples.
18. Give new coaches more opportunity to record case notes and outcomes during their induction, particularly when shadowing.	Coaches were given opportunities to input case notes and outcomes during their induction, despite shadowing opportunities not being as available as hoped for.
19. Use management supervision to regularly assess how well coaches are managing their administrative tasks and explore ways to support them in this.	The supervision process has been revised following focus groups and has been more streamlined to the ACT model. The team leaders are better supported through the structure to support any weaknesses regarding administration.