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‘CONNECTING WITH YOUNG MEN’

Engage Unit 6 - National Men’s Health Training Programme: An Evaluation

REPORT NO. 2: ENGAGING YOUNG MEN PROJECT

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Foreword

Building the capacity of service providers to engage young men around mental and emotional wellbeing is an essential component of mental health promotion and suicide prevention strategies in Ireland. The majority of people who die by suicide in Ireland are men, and there are specific risk factors for different population groups, such as young people, middle-aged men, unemployed people and men living in rural communities.

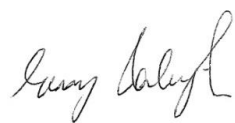
In 2015, the Government launched Connecting for Life, our national strategy to reduce suicide 2015-2020. Connecting for Life sets out a vision of an Ireland where fewer lives are lost through suicide, and where communities and individuals are empowered to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Goal three of the strategy outlines a targeted approach to reducing suicide and improving mental health in priority groups, including men.

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) is a partner organisation in the delivery of Connecting for Life, and aims to enhance the health and wellbeing of men and boys through research, training, networking, practical health initiatives and advocacy. MHFI has a long-standing interest in the mental health and wellbeing of young men.

We are pleased to introduce this evaluation of MHFI's Engage Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training, developed in 2015. This training specifically focuses on the engagement process - the why of and how to build relationships with young men - and was delivered to a broad range of service providers via a Training of Trainers (ToT) cascade model. This evaluation was funded by the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention and assesses the relevance, usefulness and impact of the training.

It is clear from the evaluation that the training has been received positively by service providers. The findings demonstrate the importance of supporting service providers to engage more effectively with young men, and offer a clear roadmap for future delivery of training tailored to the needs of different service providers.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this evaluation, and wish to acknowledge the work, time and energy given by members of the Advisory Group, the Drafting Sub-Group, the Research Team and the Workshop Facilitators.



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Executive Summary

Building capacity among service providers to engage with young men (defined as 18-30 year olds within this report) is essential to addressing their mental and emotional wellbeing needs. It is imperative that services respond to the particular needs of young men and develop gender-sensitive strategies to curb the current suicide rates among this cohort which have become a major global public health issue.

It is evident from the mapping exercise that preceded this report ('Engaging Young Men Project', Grace et al., 2015), that engaging young men in services that may support their mental and emotional wellbeing poses unique challenges to service providers. Many service providers are unsure of how to effectively reach young men, and are unclear about the type of services to which young men might respond. The 'Engaging Young Men Project' report identified a need for more gender-specific training and, also, a need for training in relation to awareness of the specific issues that young men encounter today. The findings suggested that there is a need for a greater understanding of what is of interest to young men and how they can be most effectively approached using appropriate language. It was suggested that the training should offer service providers a more holistic understanding of masculinity by reflecting upon their own gendered identities and emotional intelligence before delivering programmes to young men. Such an approach was seen as an integral part of developing empathy with the world of young men.

The findings from the 'Engaging Young Men Project' informed the 'Connecting with Young Men' training that is the subject of evaluation in this report. As recommended in the former, Trainers underwent the training themselves and were selected on the basis of having past experience of engaging young men. Training was delivered in small groups and participants had opportunities to explore the content of the training from a personal perspective. There was a strong focus on gender and the training was supplemented by innovative and accessible resource materials that contained guidelines for action.

Engage Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training aimed to assist a broad range of service providers to effectively engage with young men on mental health and wellbeing issues and was diffused via a Training of Trainers [TOT] cascade training model. Trainers [n=17], who represented a variety of organisations from the statutory and community sectors (Appendix 1), underwent a comprehensive 2-day residential training. A formative evaluation was integrated into the TOT and this was allowed to shape the final 1-day training for service providers. Subsequently, from October 2015 to March 2016, this cohort of Trainers, with the support of two TOT Facilitators, delivered a total of 24 training events over 26 days to 367 service providers.

This evaluation investigated a subset of these training days (n=18) and a subset of these service providers immediately post-training (n=206; via questionnaire). Three pairs of Trainers were asked to target specific groups of service providers for Unit 6 training; namely, sports coaches, youth sector workers and social, personal and health education (SPHE) teachers. The training experience and needs of these specific service providers was also investigated up to 1-month post-training (n=17; via interview).

Overall, the training was received very positively from both Trainers and service providers alike. Trainers left the TOT with a high level of confidence [7.94; range 4-10; where 1 was not at all confident and 10 was very confident] and competence [7.65; range 5-10] in their ability to deliver the 1-day training to service providers. Both the formative evaluation and specific training factors (e.g. the safe climate created by the facilitators, the venue and the residential component, the power of the group dynamic, the opportunity to network with peers, the training methodologies used and the opportunities created for reflection) were key to building capacity and confidence among Trainers.

There is strong evidence that the 'Connecting with Young Men' training met the needs of service providers. Service providers were highly satisfied with the training [8.43±1.43 out of 10] and, immediately post-training, improvements were found in: level of knowledge (5.84 to 7.92 out of 10; $z=-10.809$, $p=0.000$), skill (6.08 to 7.70 out of 10; $z=-9.966$, $p=.000$), success in identifying priorities for engaging young men that could meet the need of their organisation (3.32 to 3.39 out of 5; $z=-7.178$, $p<0.001$), success at improving capacity to engage young men in their service during the next year (3.89-4.11 out of 5; $z=-2.944$, $p<0.003$), and success at convincing other service providers within (3.65-6.93 out of 5; $z=-3.418$, $p<0.001$) and beyond (3.12-3.59 out of 5; $z=-3.939$, $p<0.000$) their organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year.

'Connecting with Young Men' training was particularly effective at building confidence among service providers to integrate their learnings in practice to the benefit of the young men with whom they worked; 57.3% of service providers said that they would integrate the training into their work practice as a result of attending the training. Indeed, it was evident that some service providers had begun to do so at 1-month post-training. The strengths-based approach to working with young men, the focus on understanding gender as a dynamic construct, the use of experiential and interactive workshops, the integration of ongoing reflective practice, the opportunities for peer networking and support, and the creation of a positive group dynamic, were all highlighted as critical components that contributed to the effectiveness of the training that should be upheld in the future.

Specific gaps in the training were identified by service providers. There was a call for practical tips on 'how' to initiate and build relationships with young men; service providers believed that citing evidence of what has worked elsewhere would have been beneficial to give a greater insight into the 'how' of working with young men which, they felt, would have given them more tangible ideas of what to try in their own practice (as distinct from bringing back a 'glossy programme'). Ambiguity about the focus of the training and incongruence between the training content and the focus on mental health and wellbeing was also identified. Consensus about whether the focus should be on how to engage and build relationships with young men generally or around mental health and wellbeing specifically was not achieved. However, all felt it important in the future that the training be reframed to accurately reflect its aims and objectives, so that service providers are in a position to self-select appropriately. There was also a call for greater diversity of young male voices and for an increased focus on more engaging and relevant statistics for service providers that would be more aligned to the strengths-based approach underpinning the training.

These findings provide a strong rationale for upscaling the delivery of training and making sufficient resources available to facilitate a broader roll-out of the programme in the future. The sustained delivery of 'Connecting with Young Men' training requires a dedicated Co-ordinator, ongoing opportunities for support and professional development for Trainers, and ongoing quality assurance procedures that underpin the development and adaptation of the training to meet the needs of specific service providers. A training fee may be necessary to support future delivery.

Building capacity among service providers to engage young men around mental and emotional wellbeing is an essential component to mental health promotion and suicide prevention strategies if the current outcomes for young men are to be appropriately addressed. 'Connecting with Young Men' has been shown to be an effective mechanism for building such capacity and a plan to sustain its delivery and integration to the professional development of front line service providers should be developed.

The following recommendations arose from this evaluation ...

- *Recommendation 1:*
Include a formative evaluation in the development of future TOT programmes as a general principle for programme development.
- *Recommendation 2:*
Continue to use TOT methodologies that build Trainers' competence and confidence.
- *Recommendation 3:*
Make provision for the wider roll-out of training in the future.

- *Recommendation 4:*
Maintain an explicit focus on the ethos and innovative methodologies that are inherent in the 'Connecting with Young Men' programme.
- *Recommendation 5:*
Provide increased and tailored resources to service providers that offer practical and tangible examples of best practice on engaging young men.
- *Recommendation 6:*
Provide a greater diversity of young male voices and statistics that will be engaging and relevant for service providers and in keeping with the strengths-based approach underpinning the training.
- *Recommendation 7:*
Adopt a flexible and targeted approach to programme delivery to ensure it continues to meet the needs of service providers.
- *Recommendation 8:*
Ensure that the title of the training is aligned with the objectives and content of the training.
- *Recommendation 9:*
Provide ongoing support to Trainers to ensure continued diffusion of training.
- *Recommendation 10:*
Consider charging a fee to future participants in the programme.

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Abbreviations

ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
EYMP	Engaging Young Men Project
MHFI	Men's Health Forum in Ireland
NMHP	National Men's Health Policy
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TCA	Thematic Content Analysis
TCI	Therapeutic Crisis Intervention
TOT	Training of Trainers

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1.0 Background

The core aim of Men's Health Forum in Ireland's (MHFI) Engaging Young Men Project (EYMP) was to develop a training package to increase the capacity and confidence of service providers and practitioners to effectively engage with young men in relation to programmes which promote mental health and wellbeing.

There were four key objectives to the EYMP:

1. Conduct a **mapping exercise** to identify the training needs of a wide variety of organisations, seek feedback on how the training might be delivered most appropriately, and shape the focus, content and structure of the training package.
2. Create a dedicated **Unit 6 on Engaging with Young Men** within the Engage National Men's Health Training Programme. This Unit will, primarily, be offered to qualified Engage Trainers as a top-up module, as well as being rolled-out to service providers and practitioners throughout Ireland as a workshop.
3. Apply a **gender lens** to organisations by developing an audit tool and a self-assessment classification system to help agencies to ascertain how male-friendly they currently are.
4. Act as a **portal** for information on young men and mental health in Ireland.

The first objective was the subject of a report (Grace et al, 2015) and a peer reviewed paper (Grace et al, 2016). The findings from this study have informed the training that is the subject of evaluation in this report. As recommended in that report (Grace et al., 2015), Trainers underwent the training themselves and had experience of engaging young men; training was delivered in small groups and participants had opportunities to explore the content of the training from a personal perspective; there was a strong focus on gender; and the training was supplemented by innovative and accessible resource materials that contained guidelines for action. Specifically, this report relates to the second of the key objectives cited above, that is to:

'Create a dedicated Unit 6 on Engaging with Young Men within the Engage National Men's Health Training Programme'

1.1 Engage, Ireland's National Men's Health Training Programme

Ireland's National Men's Health Policy (NMHP) specifically recommended developing training programmes tailored to the needs of those working in health and allied health professions (Department of Health, 2008; R7, p65). 'Engage', Ireland's National Men's Health Training

programme (Richardson et al., 2013), was developed to meet that recommendation. The Engage training programme is a comprehensive 1-day training that aims to increase service providers understanding of best practice in engaging men with health and social services and ultimately seeks to address, what has been highlighted at a research and policy level as a deficit in gender sensitive service provision for men. A 'Training of Trainers' [TOT] cascade model of delivery was adopted to maximise the diffusion of Engage training; individuals from key organisations were recruited to the TOT training to become Trainers of the Engage 1-day training programme for service providers. Trainers committed to deliver three Engage training programmes.

In keeping with best practice [Onion et al, 1998; Grol et al, 2003; Prior et al, 2008] experiential and interactive methodologies were used to deliver the five Engage units which are as follows:

Unit 1: Overview of Men's Health (including Gender and Social Determinants)

Unit 2: Men's Health and You - Practitioner Values and Support

Unit 3: Guiding Brief Interventions with Men

Unit 4: The Rules of Engagement

Unit 5: Establishing a Men's Development Group and Sustaining Engagement

With respect to diffusion, from 2012-2014, a total of 57 Trainers were trained in three cohorts. At the end of September 2015, 62 training events had taken place and a total of 810 front line service providers were recipients of Engage training. Both the *process* of developing and delivering Engage and the *impact* of the Engage training up to 5-months post-training were evaluated. The process paper is currently *in press* [Lefkowich et al., Health Promotion International] and the outcome paper is currently under review with the same journal.

1.2 Delivery of Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men'

It was agreed by the EYMP Advisory Group that the 'Connecting with Young Men' training would adopt a similar training model (TOT) to Engage and be integrated into the Engage training as Unit 6. Therefore, existing Engage Trainers were invited to expand their Engage training portfolio and be upskilled to deliver a sixth Unit that focuses on engaging young men. The advantage of this approach was that the existing Engage training programme has previously established networks and credibility amongst the Trainers and many service providers. It was believed that this would, therefore, add traction to Unit 6 in terms of its delivery in conjunction with other Engage Units and also as a stand-alone module in itself. In addition to existing Engage Trainers, staff from other relevant organisations were invited to become Unit 6 Trainers.

Trainers [n=17], who represented a variety of organisations from the statutory and community sectors (Appendix 1), underwent a comprehensive 2-day residential training on the 23rd and 24th June 2015. The content of the Unit 6 1-day training that the Trainers were charged with delivering, was developed via a formative evaluation process [see Section 2]. The content and layout of the 1-day training can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: 1-day workshop for service providers

Time	Session	Focus
9:00am	Arrival / settling in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group arrives Registration / room allocation Tea / coffee Pre-training evaluation
9:15am	Welcome and scene setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and thanks for coming Housekeeping announcements Background to EYMP and 'Connecting Young Men' Model of working together Visual group contract
9:40am	Why focus on young men?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group discussion PowerPoint presentation 'Why Focus on Young Men?'
10:00am	Young Men: A positive force rather than a problem to be solved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young men as people of worth rather than a problem to be solved Strengths-based and salutogenic approaches Images of young men The light and the dark in young men's lives Empathy and starting where young men are at
11:00am	Break	Tea / coffee
11:25am	Bags and baggage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to working with young men Sharing the information generated
12:15pm	How are you smart?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple intelligences Learning styles Finding your mojo
		OR
	Journey into manhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in groups, draw the life map of young men's lives highlighting key moments / events / occasions that are a significant transition between childhood and manhood
1:15pm	Lunch	
2:00pm	Tuning-in to young men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges and barriers to help seeking Coping strategies Opportunities for support
3:00pm	Top tips for engaging young men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compilation of a Top 10 list of dos and don'ts when working with young men
4:00pm	Bringing it all together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final round of training Post-training evaluation
4:30pm	End	

1.3 Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men'

The overall aim of Unit 6 ('Connecting with Young Men') was to assist a broad range of service providers to effectively engage with young men on mental health and wellbeing issues. The training specifically focused on the engagement process i.e. **why** and **how** to build relationships with young men, rather than offering a new or revised mental health programme i.e. **what** to offer them (Fowler et al, 2015). The key objectives of this unit are to:

- Demonstrate why we need to work with young men as a specific group.
- Help participants to reflect on their own value base, experience, attitudes towards, and expectations of young men.
- Explore the world of young men, the issues that they face, and the opportunities that exist to engage with them.
- Model and offer practical suggestions on what works.
- Increase the confidence of participants in relation to working with young men, and help them to believe that 'it can be done'.

The training reflected upon and used a broad range of learning methods and styles, for example, interactive, experiential, personal reflection, group discussion and creative pursuits. Modelling these diverse approaches is relevant to effectively engaging young men – as they are not a homogenous group with identical learning needs. Time was also dedicated over the 2-day TOT training to a number of practical considerations that were deemed important to operationalising the delivery in a way that would model the creation of safety that is paramount when working with young men:

- Trainers, who were not Engage Units 1-5 Trainers, or who had not previously attended Engage Units 1-5 training, had to attend Engage Units 1-5 training before delivering Unit 6 training;
- It was agreed that all training would be co-facilitated, therefore all Trainers were paired geographically;
- It was agreed that Trainers would work with mentors [3 available] for their first delivery or until they were confident to co-facilitate together;
- Trainers were strongly encouraged not to deliver training until they felt confident and competent to do so and to connect in with the Facilitation team for support;
- Promotional fliers were available to support recruitment;
- Workshops were self-contained with all handouts and verbal inputs and each section was timed appropriately.

As evidenced by the experience of delivering Engage Units 1-5, mentoring and support is essential to ensuring that the training cascades to front line service providers (Lefkowich et al., *in press*). Mentoring involves teaching the role to and supporting the understudy and contains benefits such as personal growth and security for the understudy (Jakubik et al, 2016).

Building capacity, as well as confidence, among Trainers was crucial to the success of Engage Units 1-5 (Lefkowich et al., *in press*). At application, each Trainer committed to delivering three 1-day programmes. Three pairs of Trainers were asked to target specific groups of service providers for Unit 6 training, namely: sports coaches, youth sector workers and social, personal and health education (SPHE) teachers. From October 2015 to March 2016 a total of 24 training events were delivered over 26 days to 367 service providers. This evaluation investigated a subset of these training days (n=18) and a subset of these service providers (n=206).

This evaluation sought to investigate the following research questions:

1. How have Unit 6 Trainers experienced both the TOT as well as the process of delivering training to service providers?
2. What was the impact of the 1-day training on the service providers who attended e.g. knowledge, skills, competencies, confidence, and organisational change with respect to engaging young men?
3. What are the training needs of specific groups of service providers (e.g. sports coaches, youth workers and SPHE teachers) to effectively engage young men?

Section 2 of this report focuses on the formative evaluation with Trainers. Section 3 outlines the specific methods used to gather data to answer the above research questions. Section 4 details the findings of the investigation, and conclusions and recommendations are drawn from these in Section 5.

2.0 Formative Evaluation

The EYMP Advisory Group oversaw the development of the Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training module. A drafting group, consisting of five authors, developed the overall structure of the training module and wrote each workshop. In keeping with good practice, a formative evaluation of Unit 6 was integrated into the TOT in June 2015.

The purpose of any formative evaluation is to rigorously test the efficacy of the intervention with a view to improving its design and implementation, and is crucial for trying to comprehend why a programme works or doesn't and what other features are at work during the life of a project (Stetler et al, 2006). The aim of the formative evaluation of Unit 6 was to draw upon the wealth of experience among the Trainers selected with respect to engaging young men, mental health and delivering training to service providers, with a view to critically assessing the programme content and delivery schedule. The 1-day training delivered to service providers was refined based upon feedback from the formative evaluation and the final draft, as per Table 1, was signed off by the EYMP Advisory Group.

2.1 Formative Evaluation: Methodology

Data was collected via a variety of mechanisms over the 2-day residential TOT and these are detailed in section 2.1.1 - 2.1.5. All data represented in this study has been de-identified and made anonymous via the use of pseudonyms.

2.1.1 Facilitator Notes

Three of the authors were present at the TOT and facilitated the training. Each Facilitator took extensive notes throughout the training with the aim of capturing their learnings from the two days. The notes focused on possible adjustments to the 1-day training to service providers and the resource pack. The Facilitators also took notes on the 2-day training itself such as the materials that were used, the content and the timeframe of the training.

2.1.2 Facilitator Reflective Logs

The Facilitators were asked to keep a reflective log over the duration of the 2-day TOT and to use the following points to guide their reflections:

- Take home messages
- Modes of delivery
- Facilitator experience

- Group dynamics
- Divergent opinions among facilitators
- How to translate the feedback into practical workshops.

The guide for the reflective logs can be seen in Appendix 2.

2.1.3 Evaluator Reflective Log

The Evaluator was present for the 2-day TOT in an observational capacity and as a participant among the Trainers so that he could experience first-hand the content and delivery methods used for the Training. Using the same guidelines as the Facilitators [see Appendix 2], the evaluator reflected upon his own experience of the training to inform his reflections of the training.

2.1.4 Critical Review of Proposed 1-day Workshop for Service Providers

Incorporated into the second part of the second day was a 1-hour session dedicated to reviewing the proposed 1-day workshop for service providers that had been prepared by the Facilitators. Working in groups, the Trainers were asked to critically assess the content proposed, the time dedicated to each session, and to make suggestions as to how the proposed day could be improved. Having reflected on the proposed training, each group of Trainers gave their feedback to the wider group and an in-depth discussion took place between the Trainers and Facilitators.

2.1.5 Flip Chart Notes

All information documented on flip charts over the 2-day TOT were typed up and key insights regarding the training were used to inform the evaluation.

Post-training, the Facilitators met and carefully considered all feedback from the Trainers and critically reviewed all reflections and notes. Independently, the Evaluator conducted a thematic analysis of data gathered via reflections and notes and these are presented in section 2.2 below.

2.2 Formative Evaluation: Results

The Facilitators were taken by the intense positivity and enthusiasm that the Trainers had for the training and for engaging young men. This positivity was evident and pervasive throughout the TOT and helped to support the process. The Trainers fully engaged in all the workshops and shared their experiences, insights and reflections. This section outlines the findings from the formative evaluation that informed the 1-day training that the Trainers were tasked to deliver to service providers. The approach adopted, delivery modes used, the training content and the title of the training were the main focus of the formative evaluation.

The formative evaluation gave the Trainers an opportunity to shape the day that they were being asked to deliver. Involving the Trainers was extremely important to them as they felt that they got what they asked for and that their views and opinions were validated and implemented which contributed to their 'buy-in' to the training itself. Full details of the Trainers' experience of the TOT is reported in Section 4.1.

2.2.1 Training Delivery Mode

The importance of the experiential approach to the learning was reinforced by the Trainers and the Facilitators. It was felt that using experiential learning methodologies along with other supportive approaches for engaging the group, was a highly effective approach to reflecting on key topics and issues. Specifically, the delivery methods adopted by the Facilitators appealed to a variety of learning styles i.e. interactive, personal reflection, group discussion and the use of creative modes of exploration. This range of methodologies kept the training 'fresh' and stimulating and ensured that all Trainers got something that suited them. A number of Trainers were participating in experiential learning methodologies for the first time.

2.2.2 Strengths-based Approach

In keeping with the other Engage Units, a salutogenic, or strengths-based approach was adopted to working with young men. The Trainers reported that there was great value in this assets-based approach and that it reiterated the power of salutogenesis when engaging with young men. At the outset, the Facilitators almost expected stereotypical negative portrayals of young men to have been identified by the Trainers and were surprised at the volume of positive representations of young men that were brought up by the Trainers. They felt that a salutogenic ethos underpinned the whole training and supported the Trainers' learning. They reported that it was critical to establish the positives among groups early in the TOT as a key learning.

2.2.3 Training Content

The Trainers enjoyed the various sessions and exercises and found them to be very appropriate and apt in terms of working with and engaging young men. They felt that the sessions and exercises would be thought-provoking for service providers and that they would provide opportunities for them to reflect on their own values and attitudes in relation to working with young men.

Suggestions were made as to how each of the sessions could be used or tailored on training with service providers for young men. The majority of Trainers expressed dissatisfaction with the audio-visual resource 'Voices of Young Men' and requested a more comprehensive audio-visual

resource that included a diversity of young men that could be used with service providers in disadvantaged communities. Other areas for improvement included more time after training for reflection and processing at the end of sessions, the need for input from young men themselves, and the inclusion of some background research on the general health of young men.

The length of the training was also reviewed. Whilst it was initially proposed to develop a ½-day as well as a 1-day workshop as per Engage Units 1-5; on reflection, the Facilitators concluded that it would be too challenging to deliver the material effectively in a ½-day. The Trainers concurred with this sentiment and, so, consensus was reached that a 1-day workshop for service providers would be more appropriate. Trainers were also given the option to choose aspects of the workshop to suit particular groups of service providers. For example, they had the option of using 'How are you smart?' or 'Journey into manhood' and also the option of using the 'walking debate' or the audio-visual resource 'Voices of Young Men'.

2.2.4 Name of Training

Trainers felt that the name of Unit 6 needed careful consideration. The name originally proposed, 'Tune In - Turn On', was deemed inappropriate by an overwhelming consensus; as it implied that young men did not engage and that they were 'the problem' which contradicted the salutogenic approach of the training. It was felt that the name should be changed to 'Connecting with Young Men' where the onus was on service providers to recognise the needs of young men and to adapt their way of working to meet those needs. The EYMP Advisory Group agreed and, as a result, formally signed off on this new title.

2.2.5 Value of the Formative Evaluation

The formative evaluation conducted during the course of the Trainers' training played a key role in the subsequent delivery of training to service providers. The Trainers were encouraged to shape the content of the training in a meaningful and tangible way; feedback from the Trainers was integrated into the final 1-day workshop for service providers and this gave them a sense of genuine collaboration, partnership and ownership over the training. Trainers felt valued and respected for being given the opportunity to shape the 1-day workshop that they were tasked to deliver:

"The diversity of methods used, it was so broad-ranging and the possibility of one or two not working but it was acknowledged and at the end we all shaped the training and our feedback was really taken on board. You just felt that you had an input and you shaped something." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“...it’s good when you see the final product that that’s actually taken in, your feedback was meaningful because it did actually make a difference. I think that’s really good to see.” (Beth, Trainer)

“I think there was a huge amount of respect for the experience and the wisdom in the room, that the listening was really powerful. It was all exploration and curiosity and that was really valuable for me.” (Sean, Trainer)

The Facilitators also identified the uniqueness of the Trainers’ involvement in shaping the delivery of the training. Frank revealed that this was a new experience for him, as previous trainings did not encourage such involvement or participation:

“One thing that stood out from it [the training] that was different to other Train the Trainers I’ve been on was that it [‘Connecting with Young Men’ training] allowed participants [Trainers] to dictate the final outcome or the final programme, which I’ve never seen done before really. Normally you are told this is the programme and this is how to deliver it, exactly like this and these are the modules and so on you know. We actually brought people through the programme and asked them what bits we should leave in and what bits should we leave out. They actually decided the final course.” (Frank, Facilitator)

Leonard felt that the Facilitators’ previous experience of Engage Units 1-5 allowed them to involve the Trainers to shape the 1-day workshop, something he revealed was breaking new ground in terms of overall approach and represented a trust and confidence in the existing partnership between Trainers and Facilitators:

“I just felt as well that we were more informed and confident enough once we were in the space to be able to allow the Trainers to shape the final outcome. That wouldn’t have been the case with Units 1-5.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Frank felt that involving the Trainers in shaping the content of the training has had a positive effect on the delivery of the 1-day workshop. He believed that this has resulted in the workshop being well-received by service providers. Leonard felt that involving the Trainers in shaping the 1-day workshop helped to maintain their interest and enthusiasm and he revealed that, having spoken to the Trainers, that there was overwhelming interest in future training in this area:

“I think that has stood to us because the training is going down so well because we went through that process. The programme itself is much better received with the groups that we are delivering it with.” (Frank, Facilitator)

“I do feel from the buy-in from the room in [named venue] that it helped with the interest and activity afterwards from the Trainers. I phoned around to all of them about a week ago and the level of interest was still very high in wanting to be part of more training going forward. That shows that there is still an appetite for it and I think some of that started as a seed in Tullow, that they felt they had ownership of what became the glossy manual that came back to them.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

The findings from the formative evaluation were integrated into the final 'Trainers' Resource Pack' which was subsequently published. However, given the projected time lag between the end of the TOT and the receipt of the final published resource pack, the Facilitators suggested providing Trainers with an interim pack that would allow the Trainers to see that their feedback had been used. They believed that this would build anticipation amongst the Trainers for the final training pack and get them in planning and preparation mode for the workshops.

Recommendation 1: Include a formative evaluation in the development of future TOT programmes as a general principle for all programme development

Trainers' both valued and felt valued by the integration of the formative evaluation in the TOT model. Not only did the constructive feedback from the formative evaluation strengthen the content and delivery of the 1-day workshop for service providers, it also secured the 'buy-in' of Trainers by honouring their commitment to delivering the training to service providers. It is recommended that future TOT models should integrate a comprehensive and meaningful formative evaluation into the development of training.

3.0 Methodology

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the Institute of Technology Carlow's Ethics Committee (Ethical Application Number 125). Written informed consent was provided by all participants. Information was used anonymously in the preparation of this report. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used for all direct quotations and no identifying information was included. A mixed methods approach using a number of mechanisms to gather information was adopted to answer the defined research questions.

3.1 Sample Population

Three cohorts of participants made up the sample population;

A) Facilitators (n = 3)

The Facilitators represented the academic, health service and community sectors; two Facilitators co-authored Engage Units 1-5 and had previous experience of training Engage Trainers. The third was a mentor to Engage Units 1-5 Trainers and had, along with another Facilitator, considerable experience in delivering Engage Units 1-5 to service providers. The same two Facilitators were mentors to the Unit 6 Trainers.

B) Trainers (n = 17)

The Trainers represented a variety of disciplines from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors. Eligibility criteria for the Trainers were:

1. Be an existing 'Engage' Trainer or an experienced men's health facilitator¹.
2. Have the permission and support of their employer / organisation to attend the training and any follow-up commitments.
3. Give a commitment to deliver three follow-on sessions to local practitioners, and have agreement from their own organisation to do so.
4. Be willing and able to fully participate in all elements of the programme - including the residential dimension.
5. Be able to attend at least one Engage Trainers' Team follow-up meeting.

Some Trainers were existing Engage Units 1-5 Trainers, with experience of delivering Units 1-5 and with a commitment to hone their skills to engage young men. Other Trainers were selected on the basis of (i) having facilitation experience and (ii) representing a strategically important

¹ If the applicant was not already a certified Engage Units 1-5 Trainer, they had to commit to shadowing one of these Trainers while they delivered Engage Units 1-5 before they could progress to delivering Unit 6. It was felt that this would help to create a common understanding of this work.

organisation as defined by having a remit for working with young men and/or mental health. Details of the Trainers are outlined in Appendix 1.

C) Service providers (n = 206).

The details and description of the service providers are outlined in section 4.1.

3.2 Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to address the research questions as per Figure 1 below.

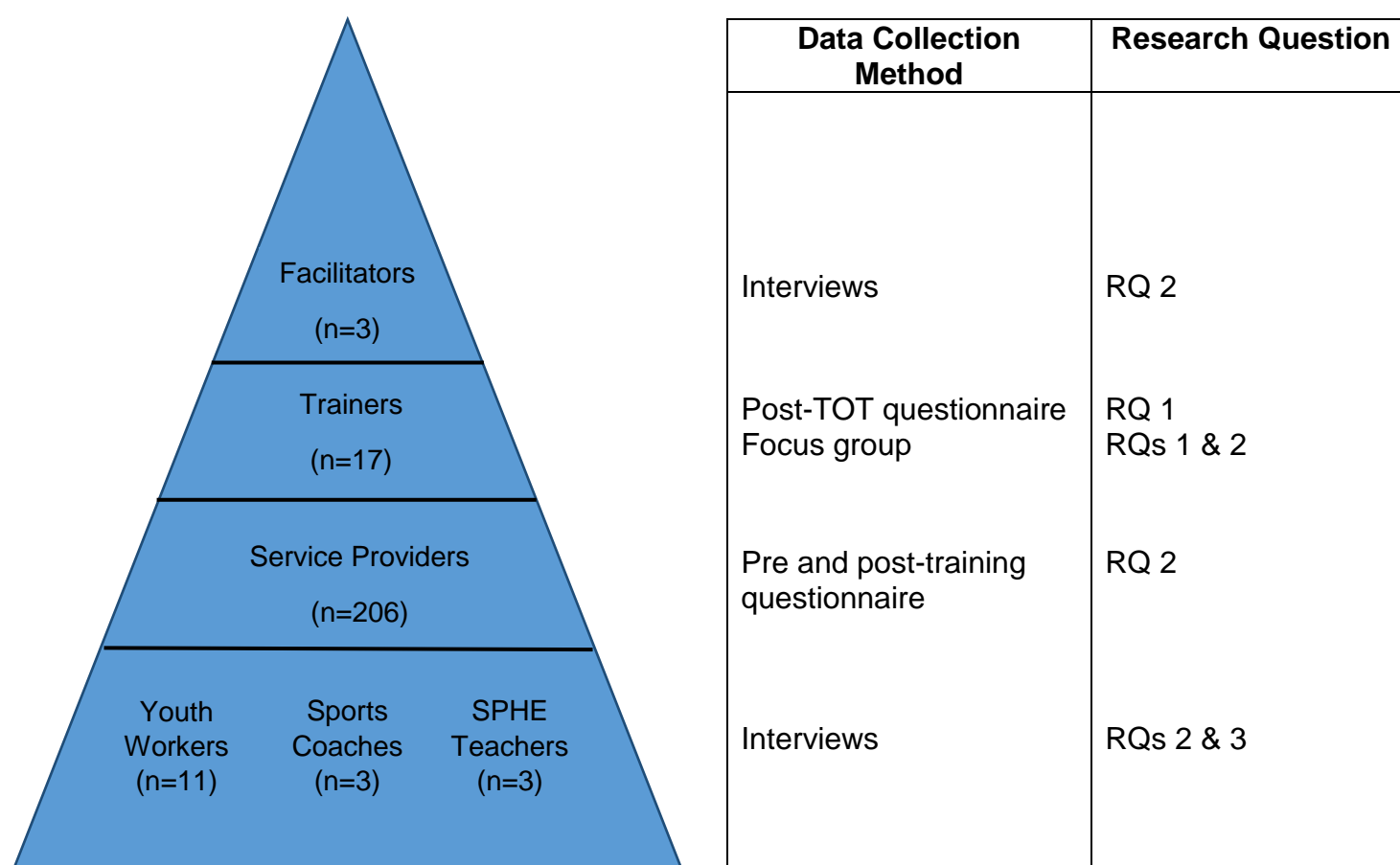


Figure 1: An overview of the diffusion of training via the TOT cascade model from the facilitators to service providers and an overview of the data collected from each group in the model in order to answer RQs1-3.

3.3 Quantitative Data Collection

3.3.1 Trainers

Before the end of the second day of training, all Trainers [n=17] completed a short post-training questionnaire to capture their experience of the training immediately post-training. This questionnaire focused on learnings, gaps in the training content and the resources provided,

barriers to delivering the workshops, confidence in delivering the workshops, and supports required. The post-training questionnaire can be seen in its entirety in Appendix 3.

3.3.2 Service Providers

In order to assess the short term impact of the training, all service providers completed a pre-training questionnaire at registration and a post-training questionnaire in the last 20 minutes of the day. The questionnaires focused predominantly on knowledge, skills and confidence regarding engaging young men, as well as their experience of the training. See Appendix 4 for a full copy of both questionnaires. Given the timeframe of the evaluation, it was not possible to follow-up beyond one month.

3.4 Quantitative Data Analysis

Questionnaires were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the experiences of the Trainers' training [n=17] and the characteristics of the service providers [n=206]. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test was performed to determine if data were normally distributed. As data were not normally distributed Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were performed over two measurement points (pre-training and post-training), to examine the mean difference in how service providers rated: (i) their level of knowledge with respect to engaging young men; (ii) their level of skill with respect to engaging men in their services; (iii) their capacity to identify priorities for engaging young men that could meet the needs of their organisation; (iv) their capacity to engage young men in their services during the next year; (v) their capacity to convince other service providers within their organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year, and (vi) their capacity to convince other service providers beyond their organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year. Cases were selected so that analysis was carried out on the same people who responded in both pre and post-training questionnaires. Some of the scale variables contained a 'don't know' option and these responses were excluded to give a more accurate comparison of those who did rate the question.

3.5 Qualitative Data Collection

3.5.1 Trainers and Facilitators

A focus group [1 hour 45 minutes] was held on the 13th of January 2016 with a number of Trainers [n=6] to gain further insights into their experience of the training and delivering the training. A topic guide (see Appendix 6) was developed to investigate the Trainers' experiences of both being trained to deliver the training and delivering it on-the-ground. Permission was sought from the

Trainers to digitally record the focus group using a Dictaphone. Interviews [28 minutes and 43 minutes] were also conducted with two Facilitators who mentored the Trainers in delivering Unit 6 and who had valuable experience and from which to inform this evaluation.

Qualitative data was collected from Trainers in the post-training questionnaire via some open ended questions to explore, for example, their most significant personal and professional learnings and potential barriers they may experience to delivering the training.

3.5.2 Service Providers

As highlighted previously, three pairs of Trainers were asked to deliver training to three specific groups of service providers; sports coaches, youth sector workers and SPHE teachers. It was intended that one month after the training, representatives from these specific groups would be invited to attend focus groups. However, it became evident that this would not be feasible, mainly due to logistical considerations. Consequently, it was decided that semi-structured telephone interviews were a more feasible method of data collection than focus groups. The telephone interviews explored the medium term impact of the training on practice as well as the specific training needs of these groups. Specifically, interviews explored their motivation for attending the training, their overall experience of having attended the training, how the training could be improved, the most and least beneficial aspects of the training, professional learning and plans to incorporate the training into work practice (see Topic Guide, Appendix 5). A total of seventeen telephone interviews were conducted; youth workers [n=11], SPHE teachers [n=3], and sports personnel [n=3] that ranged from twelve minutes to forty minutes.

3.6 Qualitative Data Analysis

All telephone interviews and the focus group were recorded using a digital Dictaphone and transcribed verbatim. Qualitative data was analysed along with field notes taken during the focus group. Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was conducted to analyse the data. TCA accentuates analysing, examining and recording themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TCA is performed through the process of coding to create recognised, evocative themes, which become the categories for analysis. It involves generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, and reviewing, defining and naming themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Qualitative data from the post-Trainers' training questionnaire were thematically analysed and the findings presented in Appendix 7. Table 2 provides an overview of the data collection and analysis process. Data from all sources was triangulated to address the research questions posed.

4.0 Results

The findings of the evaluation are presented in this Section. The Trainers' experience of being trained to deliver the Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training is presented in Section 4.1 (RQ1, part 1). The short term (immediately post) and medium term (1-month post) impact of the training on service providers is presented in Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 (RQ2) respectively. Findings from the Trainers' experience of delivering training (RQ1, part 2), along with the service providers' experience of the training (RQ2) and their specific training needs (RQ3) are triangulated and presented in Section 4.3.

4.1 Trainers' Experience of the Training of Trainers (TOT) Programme

The Trainers were highly satisfied with the 2-day TOT residential training with one Trainer concluding:

"From my experience of the training, it's way up there, it's five-star, there's very little I did in the past that would compare with this training." (Agatha, Trainer)

Overall, at the end of the two days Trainers rated their level of confidence in relation to delivering the training as 7.94 [range 4-10; where 1 was not at all confident and 10 was very confident]. Similarly, Trainers rated their level of competence in relation to delivering the training as 7.65 [range 5-10; where 1 was not at all confident and 10 was very confident]. These scores give a good indication of the degree to which Trainers felt the training equipped them to deliver 1-day workshops to service providers. It is evident from the scores achieved that the training was successful in achieving its aim of training Trainers appropriately. For example, Beth felt that the training provided ideal preparation in terms of going out to deliver the 1-day workshops to various service providers. She felt that the background knowledge she acquired and the opportunities afforded for teasing out queries or concerns through discussion were particularly beneficial. She felt that she learned important skills in terms of facilitating discussions:

"I felt that training equipped me to deliver the training and that's not often the case when you do a Train the Trainers. I felt I could go and deliver the training. The background knowledge and the fact that we spent so long discussing it, often times they're the things you're not quite comfortable about. Often times it's not the things that you're delivering, it's the discussion that comes up and it's there that you need more information." (Beth, Trainer)

The most significant personal learnings identified by Trainers included being more aware of the issues young men experience, learning about the key life transitions young men go through, and exploring and reflecting on one's own gendered identity before doing so with young men. Some of the Trainers' most significant professional learnings included the rules of engagement, having a salutogenic / assets-based approach to working with young men and being more aware of the

various learning styles that can be used (see Appendix 7 for a list of Trainers' personal and professional learnings).

Trainers attributed their learning to the: (a) safe space created, (b) group dynamic and networking, (c) the training methodologies and reflective practices adopted, and (d) the formative evaluation. As stated above, allowing the Trainers to shape the 1-day training programme via the formative evaluation ensured their 'buy-in' and this contributed to the cascade effect of the TOT model.

Some Trainers, however, felt that due to the volume of material that was covered in the two days, there was insufficient time for reflection and processing at the end of each day. The Facilitators also had concerns about turning the content of an in-depth 2-day TOT programme into a workable 1-day training programme. One Facilitator suggested that training should have mirrored that of Engage Units 1-5 where the training was delivered over four days. The Facilitator felt it would allow more time, not only for reflection, but also an opportunity for co-facilitating a workshop on days three and four.

With the exception of the formative evaluation that has been addressed in Section 2, the factors that contributed to the Trainers' learning experience are presented in Section 4.1.1 – 4.1.3. The impact of the TOT on Trainers' own work practice is presented in Section 4.1.4.

4.1.1 Creating a Safe Space

The critical importance of creating a safe space for experiential learning methodologies to be effective cannot be overstated. Trainers identified the venue and the facilitation of the training as the key factors that created the safety that optimised their learning experience. A number of Trainers went around in their bare feet which was testament to the safe and relaxing environment that was created by the Facilitators.

a) The Venue

The venue was a familiar environment (setting, staff, food, rooms etc.) for the Facilitators and for some of the Trainers, and this familiarity provided a sense of safety and support. For example, Sean, who had previous experience of the venue, expressed his delight at going back to a venue that brought up positive memories in him:

“Going back to [named venue] is always a good memory, it's a safe space and there's lovely energy. It was a big group of people that I hadn't worked with before, it was different but it was really safe.” (Sean, Trainer)

The majority of Trainers felt that the venue for the 2-day training was ideal in that they felt it provided a safe space which greatly contributed to the atmosphere at the training. Nick felt that the

venue added great value to the training and pointed out the overnight stay as particularly beneficial:

“...it’s [venue] quite a powerful place. The training is very full-on and has the potential to be very overwhelming, so I think the overnight stay was very important.” (Nick, Trainer)

Amy was also complimentary about the venue and felt that it provided a safe space to talk about various issues and topics:

“I found it fabulous. I think in terms of the place it was very supportive in terms of having a space to chat about things. [Named venue] is a lovely venue.” (Amy, Trainer)

b) Facilitation

The Trainers were highly satisfied with the way the training was facilitated and believed that this contributed to their sense of safety and security.

“I just thought it was facilitated very well.” (Amy, Trainer)

Sean pointed towards his previous experience with the Facilitators and felt that this guaranteed him a good training experience. He believed that facilitating the diversity within the group took lots of skills and preparation:

“The first time I sat in a training group to be trained by [named Facilitator] was probably ten years ago, so that history was there. [Named Facilitator] trained me as a Facilitator in [named place], so that was the guarantee if you like. It is a piece of work and to make it happen in a diverse group is really powerful. One of my journeys into any group is that ‘how do I belong here?’ and belonging in that huge diversity is quite a piece of work.” (Sean, Trainer)

Sean also felt that the way the Facilitators created safety within the group was a standout feature of the training:

“The work of making it safe was really significant.” (Sean, Trainer)

The Facilitators felt that their own previous experience of facilitating TOT for Engage Units 1-5, and the fact that they knew a number of ‘Connecting with Young Men’ Trainers, was critical to the relaxed atmosphere that they played a role in creating. Leonard felt that the training went well due to the experience of the Facilitators which, he believed, had grown significantly and allowed a focus and support to be brought to all the work to the benefit of the Trainers and Facilitators alike:

“I did feel over those two days and the group we had with us for the training itself, that it worked really well. I just felt as well that, in Unit 6 and the way we worked in the room, I could feel our experience as Facilitators having grown over the years between all of us.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Creating safety was identified by a number of Trainers as an important factor when working with young men to support them to 'open up'. In that regard, the methodologies used by the Facilitators throughout the training, such as reflective practice and group discussions, enabled Trainers themselves to open up and, in essence, modelled how to create the safety required to work with young men.

4.1.2 Group Dynamic and Networking

The creation of a safe space also helped to nurture a positive group dynamic which is critical to effective experiential learning.

a) Networking

As highlighted earlier, there was a wide variety of people from various disciplines present at the TOT (see Appendix 1) and Trainers felt that this positively added to the group dynamic and created opportunities for networking and peer learning, all of which were key aspects of the TOT and contributed to their learning. Nick emphasised that his learning from meeting other professionals positively influenced his own practice, while Beth felt that the diversity of Trainers added greatly to the group dynamic:

"I love that [meeting others] and enjoy finding out what other people's connection with it is. There is always something I bring back to an organisation or a parents' group." (Nick, Trainer)

"You always learn something with that diversity. It just adds such weight to the group. It's very difficult to quantify that but you always come away much better off." (Beth, Trainer)

"What worked really well was that social part, meeting and talking to people because you feel you get to know them and you can ring them and ask things." (Beth, Trainer)

b) Transcending Gender Norms

Jeffrey, Amy and Nick felt that having so many men of various ages at the TOT increased their own learning and they felt that they benefited from being part of a process where men could share perspectives and openly express feelings without the 'normal' fear of being judged or put down by other men:

"I thought it was great too having so many men on the training course. It was quite refreshing in a way because it crosses the age span and you can learn lots of things." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

"Being in a group with men where you're not afraid to speak your mind and say how you feel was great. So often with other men you're not quite sure what the reaction is going to be." (Nick, Trainer)

“...it was enlightening almost to hear it you know, the men’s perspective.” (Amy, Trainer)

Jeffrey revealed that it was a great experience being able to express his feelings and opinions safely amongst other men, something he felt he could not routinely do because of gender norms and stereotypes in his day-to-day work:

“Normally with gangs of guys, well my gang of guys, if you said half of the stuff we said you’d be slagged. It was very different. It was nice.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

He also revealed that the training brought the concept of gender into his consciousness; something he felt was not there before. He disclosed that, since the training, any work he does with young people has a gender lens and that he is now more confident in relation to thinking about and discussing gender:

“It has given me the opportunity now, with all the work I do, to have a gender lens. Before I never thought about my gender or other people’s, they were just people. We now have a gender lens. When we do mental health training I think about young men, when we do sexual health I think about young men. The gender lens for me I now wear and I get more confident wearing it as I go along.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

4.1.3 Training Methodologies and Reflective Space

Many of the Trainers highlighted, as a key learning, the value of the experiential learning methodologies, the open interaction of the group work and the shared experience with others. A number of Trainers experienced this method of learning for the first time and they expressed how profound the experience was for them. It was felt that the key to experiential learning was that the Facilitator does not always have to have the answers but draws on the knowledge already in the group. It was felt that this was done very well. The Trainers felt that the TOT allowed them to reflect on their own beliefs, values and attitudes towards young men and their own work practices. Nick felt that the overnight stay between the two days of the TOT facilitated personal reflection and discussion with other Trainers at the training. By reflecting on his own life transitions, he was able to come to the realisation that he had a good understanding of the world of young men, which increased his confidence to be able to connect with young men in the future:

“There was a lot of processing on the night in between, whether it was in the pub or sitting in the sitting room having a chat, just in casual conversation you’re going through a lot of the day’s stuff and I think that’s important because it sets you up for the second day. The big thing that came out for me was that it brought me through the transitions that I had actually gone through and that I had the knowledge to bring to it and there was quite a lot of reflection. Since then I’ve been able to look at that whole young man area and kind of think I actually do know what’s going on there, I can actually connect with that and it gave me a bit of confidence.” (Nick, Trainer)

4.1.4 Impact on Trainers' Work Practice

In addition to influencing the practice of other service providers via the 1-day workshops they delivered (see Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), the Trainers themselves reported that they had integrated some of their learning into their work practice. Sean felt that the session in relation to transitions ('Journey into Manhood') was particularly useful and that it made him reflect on his own transitions and the many transitions that men go through. He revealed that he uses the concept of transitions in his own work:

"This transition aspect has become part of my arsenal of things to do and literally just last week this transition thing just happened and I was really delighted, it was only afterwards when I reflected back 'where did that come from'. I was trying to transfer masculinity into manhood and that transition exercise was really useful." (Sean, Trainer)

Jeffrey revealed that the training has made him more sympathetic, understanding and empathetic and highlighted his own thinking, beliefs and values in relation to his brother, who had recently become a father. He felt that prior to the training he would have been less patient and understanding towards his brother but that the training allowed him to see things through a different lens:

"It's actually changed my thought process like when we see each other and he has difficulties and stuff. I have more empathy for him because, before the training, I was like 'you're a dad now, grow up' but now it's very different. I realise he is a young dad who is still transitioning into the stuff, the journey into manhood and stuff. My empathy for him now is much more understanding and my thought processes around it." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

Recommendation 2: Continue to use TOT methodologies that build Trainers' competence and confidence

The TOT experience was effective for Trainers and, upon completion, Trainers felt both competent and confident to deliver the 1-day workshop to service providers. Specifically, the factors that contributed to the success of the TOT experience were the safe climate created by the Facilitators, the venue and the residential component, the power of the group dynamic, the opportunity to network with peers, the training methodologies used and the opportunities created for reflection. It is recommended that these components should remain at the core of future TOT models of training, as building competence and confidence in Trainers is key to ensuring the diffusion of training.

4.2 The Impact of the Training on Service Providers

4.2.1 Service Providers

206 service providers aged between 20 and 67 years (median = 38 years; females = 64.1%; males = 34%; no response = 1.9%) attended the workshops. When asked to best describe the organisation that they represented, over half of service providers described their organisation as community (n=104; 50.5%), followed by voluntary (n=40; 19.4%), statutory (n=38; 18.4%) and other (n=5; 2.4%) (n=19 no response; 9.2%). While many service providers promoted health as part of their work, only twenty-five (12.1%) service providers classified themselves as 'health professionals' and these worked predominantly in the statutory sector (n=21) and community sector (n=4). The majority of service providers reported that their organisation worked within a local geographical area (n=105; 51%), with 23.3% working nationally (n=48) and 19.4% working regionally (n=40) (n=13 no response; 6.3%). Table 2 illustrates how long service providers have worked with their current organisation and in their respective disciplines.

Table 2: An overview of how long service providers have been working with their current organisation [n=194] and in their current discipline [n=179]

	Current Organisation		Current Discipline	
	N	%	N	%
< 6 months	26	12.6	11	5.3
6 months–1 year	21	10.2	13	6.3
1-5 years	67	32.5	61	29.6
5-10 years	39	18.9	40	19.4
10-15 years	19	9.2	23	11.2
>15 years	22	10.7	31	15
Total	194	94.2	179	86.9
No response	12	5.8	27	13.1
Total	206	100	206	100

Figure 2 below details the areas of interest represented by the service providers; some 21.4% had a remit for health and health promotion which would indicate that the area of young men's mental health is relevant to a wide variety of service providers with whom they come in contact. The target populations with whom the service providers work are outlined in Table 3.

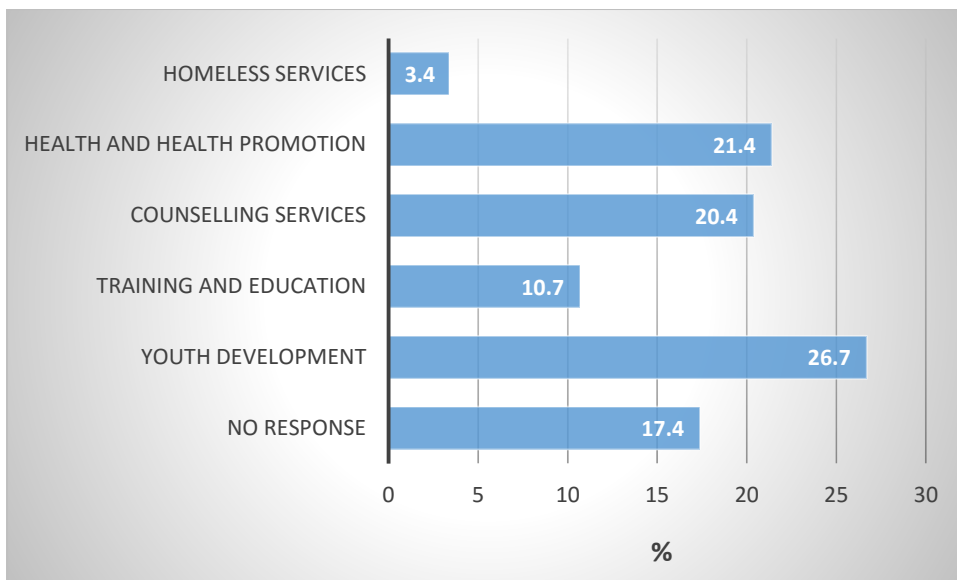


Figure 2: An overview of service providers' [n=170] area of work

Table 3: An overview of service providers' [n=169] target population. NB: many service providers work with more than one of these target populations.

Target Population	N	%
9-17 year olds	158	76.7
18-30 year olds	156	75.7
>30 year olds	72	35
Students	104	50.5
Unemployed persons	111	53.9
Homeless people	10	4.9
Girls and women	157	76.2
Travellers	4	1.9
Families	9	4.4

4.2.2 Prior to Attending the Training

The majority of service providers heard about the Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' workshop directly via marketing from Trainers (letter, email or organisation website) or 'word of mouth' (personal and organisational networks):

"I got an email from [named organisation] because I am a member and I have done some training with them." (Faye, Youth Worker)

"I'm pretty sure it was [named person] who heard about this one, so we kind of swapped information between the group of us you know, so I think it was word of mouth." (Mary, Youth Worker)

"Through my team leader, who put forward one youth worker per team within our youth service." (Robert, Youth Worker)

"I heard about the training through a letter that came to the school. It came to the vice-principal and it ended up on my desk." (Mark, SPHE teacher)

“My principal sent it on to me. I’m one of two SPHE teachers actively teaching at the moment and she thought I would be interested in this.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Facilitators also used their networks to market the 1-day workshop, in particular, among those who had completed Engage Units 1-5:

“I’m working on the [named project] at the moment so from that I would have met [named Facilitators] and [named Facilitator] put me in contact with [named Trainer] who is the Engage Trainer in [named Counties]. I got in contact with [named Trainer] and said we’d be definitely interested in doing engaging with young men workshop in [named County] because we did the Engage training earlier on in the year and there was a lot of interest in that.” (Marie, Sports person)

Many service providers brought a variety of skills, expertise and experiences to the 1-day workshop which they reported having acquired via formal education, training, work practice and life experience. Much of this is transferable to working with young men in relation to mental health:

“I’ve been working in youth work for about ten years now so I would have brought that with me to the training and I have done loads of different types of training myself. I have done some addiction skills and various competencies training as well.” (Faye, Youth Worker)

“I’m bringing twenty years of dealing with young fellas and I suppose you pick up skills and strategies straight way. I’m secretary of the local GAA club as well.” (Neil, Sports person)

“I’m dealing with young fellas every day of my life. I’m dealing with them at home and I’m dealing with them in sport.” (Daniel, Sports person)

“I suppose I would have the counselling skills I was trained in and the different theories from the study I had done in [named location]. I have twenty-two years’ experience in the system with young people and I have done a lot of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).” (Clare, SPHE teacher)

“I have done a lot of work with therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI), especially with young men with a lot of behavioural issues. Young men would have a lot of energy, so I suppose it’s to release that in a positive sense as opposed to negative you know.” (Grant, Youth Worker)

Some service providers were relatively new to their particular area of work and working with young men:

“I’m young and only starting off on this road a couple of months, I’m relatively fresh to the role.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

“I work with young men 18-25, not specifically, but I would encounter them. I suppose in terms of what I brought to it, it’s more experience of alcohol and drugs towards the later end of the young adult spectrum. That would definitely be the area that I would be coming from because I really don’t feel I have enough experience with the younger teenagers you know.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

Service providers' motivations for attending the Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' workshop are presented in Figure 3 below. The majority reported as already working with young men in various capacities, but expressed desire to improve their knowledge and skills to engage young men (59%), to be better able to help young men (39%) and to set up a programme for young men (2%).

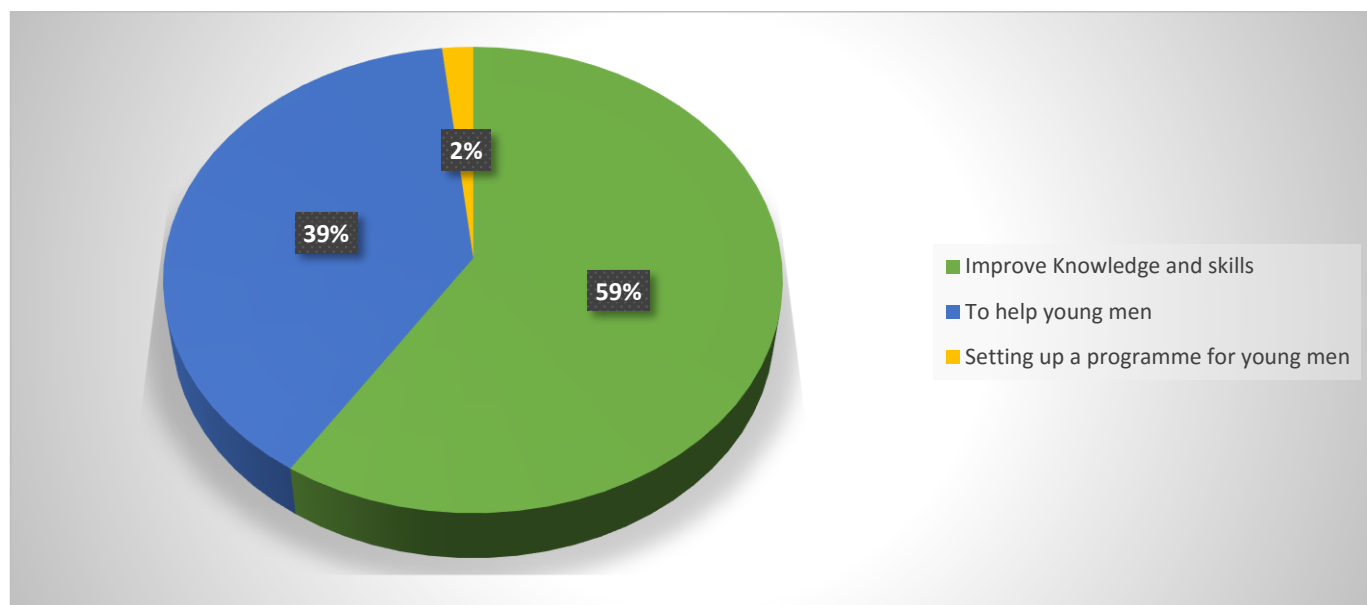


Figure 3: An overview of service providers' [n=174] motivation to attend the 1-day workshop

Most service providers felt that, unlike young women, young men are difficult to engage in relation to matters that concern them - particularly mental health issues - and their desire to engage young men around these issues motivated them to attend:

"I work with a few groups of young men, they are notoriously difficult to get to talk. We do loads of physical activities with them but it's very hard to get at the issues that are going on for them. It takes a lot longer than it does with women." (Faye, Youth Worker)

"Here in the [named project] the majority are males so we thought it [the training] was relevant to us. We have had difficulties engaging them in mental health. Sometimes we are unaware of how certain things can impact their mental health and stuff like that." (Rachel, Youth Worker)

One service provider said she had a natural 'way in' with girls and young women, and cited things like discussions on aesthetics and physical appearance. She believed she did not have the same 'way in' where young men were concerned and named this as her primary incentive for attending the 1-day workshop:

"The one area I felt I was weak in was working with young men in particular because there is always a kind of hook or way in with females you know. It might be something like hair and make-up and I always found in particular working with young men I wasn't always able to engage as well as I would have liked. I suppose in my

own head I saw the training as being some way of helping me get inside the heads of young men.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

Some service providers cited their lack of experience in terms of working with young men and highlighted this as their primary motivation for attending the 1-day workshop. They also mentioned a general desire to up-skill and felt that it would be beneficial to their current practice:

“I haven’t really worked with young males before so I thought it would be good to get more experience and to hear from other people.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

“I feel it’s always important to keep upskilling myself and keep trying to learn more so I can engage better with the men when I’m working with them, with young men in particular you know. It’s very important to be aware of the needs for men in Ireland.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

“I want to try and broaden it [experience] out to engaging with younger men and I wanted to provide the opportunity for people across [named County] to get this training because it’s not very often you’d hear of courses or workshops or training to do specifically with young men. My motivation was that I want to broaden the programmes we offer here in [named organisation] to younger men as well and to provide the opportunity for the people around [named County] to avail of the training.” (Marie, Sports person)

Some service providers highlighted suicides in the community and a desire to change the prevailing stigma and culture of secrecy where mental health was concerned as their incentive for attending the 1-day workshop:

“There has been a number of youth suicides in the community over the past year or two and there’s an issue in terms of engaging young people and maintaining that engagement in mental health services.” (Diana, Youth Worker)

“Well the title drew me to it because it is difficult with young men, particularly Irish men, or from this culture to talk. It’s changing, but it’s been something that I have been dealing with at work for nearly twenty years.” (Clare, SPHE teacher)

One participant had experienced a suicide in her family and blamed what she felt was a prevailing ‘macho’ culture. She believed that this culture made it difficult for men to express their feelings. In her attempts to counteract this culture, she revealed that she encouraged her own children, as well as her students, to talk about their feelings:

“My husband had an uncle who took his own life and he just didn’t talk. He was all you know the real brave lad and bachelor man and never spoke to anyone. I’m always encouraging my kids to talk about it and the kids in school - talk, talk, talk, you know.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

All service providers articulated a wish to help the young men with whom they worked. They named some of the issues that young men experienced such as stress and a lack of coping skills to manage that stress. Various initiatives were adopted by some service providers to help young

men such as a masculinity programme, anti-bullying week and positive thinking week. One participant told of his dealings with young men and the issues he witnessed, while another participant was hoping to get some ideas for a mental health programme she was hoping to implement:

“They come to us, they come to me, they come to the chaplain, so then we end up with lots of students with lots of problems. We work on counselling students and are also looking at different types of scenarios and projects. In the last few months I’ve come across quite a lot of boys who have opted out of school, suffering from stress and difficulties and not coping with life, and that’s the kind of cases that are landing on my plate a lot.” (Mark, SPHE teacher)

“I am working with young people on a daily basis. I recently did a masculinity programme with a group with great success, I felt by attending this training, I may gain some knowledge to implement a new programme in relation to mental health.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

When asked to rate how successful they had been at engaging young men in their services, over two thirds (67.9%) rated their success at 3 to 5, 21.9% rated their success at 1 to 2 while 10.2% of service providers did not know how successful they had been at engaging young men in their services (where 1 represented not at all successful and 5 represented extremely successful).

4.2.3 Short-term Impact of the Training

Overall, feedback on how satisfied service providers were with training was largely positive. The mean satisfaction score immediately post-training was 8.43 ± 1.43 out of 10 (range 2-10; where 1 represented very unsatisfied and 10 represented completely satisfied). This was evident to Trainers and Facilitators at the end of workshop days when they were met with positive feedback from service providers:

“Overall the feedback has been really good... I know when they’re going out of the room they’re saying ‘thanks very much that was really helpful’ and it makes my drive home doable you know. I got a lovely email on the way home from [named venue]. Someone said to me ‘one of my colleagues who is very critical of all training really loved the day’, so that makes the drive home a bit easier.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Immediately post-training, significant increases from pre-training baseline were reported in relation to service providers’ level of knowledge (5.84 to 7.92 out of 10; $z = -10.809$, $p = 0.000$), skill (6.08 to 7.70 out of 10; $z = -9.966$, $p = .000$), success in identifying priorities for engaging young men that could meet the needs of their organisation (3.32 to 3.39 out of 5; $z = -7.178$, $p < 0.001$), success at improving capacity to engage young men in their service during the next year (3.89-4.11 out of 5; $z = -2.944$, $p < 0.003$), and success at convincing other service providers within (3.65-6.93 out of 5; $z = -3.418$, $p < 0.001$) and beyond (3.12-3.59 out of 5; $z = -3.939$, $p < 0.000$) their organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year (see Table 4).

Table 4: Pre and post-workshop scores (mean and standard deviation) of all variables

	Pre-training Mean (SD)	Post-training Mean (SD)
Level of knowledge	5.84 (1.61) (n=198)	7.92 (1.05)* (n=193)
Level of skill	6.08 (1.63) (n=196)	7.70 (1.17)* (n=189)
Success at identifying priorities that could meet the needs of the organisation	3.32 (.884) (n=171)	3.99(.654)* (n=174)
Success at improving capacity to engage young men in your service during the next year	3.89 (.707) (n=179)	4.11 (.670)** (n=177)
Success at convincing other service providers within your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans	3.65 (.829) (n=167)	3.93 (.775)*** (n=158)
Success at convincing other service providers beyond your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans	3.12 (.982) (n=146)	3.59 (.869)* (n=138)

*p=0.000; **p=0.003; ***p=0.001

Over two-fifths (43.7%) highlighted the group discussions and meeting other professionals as the most valuable aspect of the workshop (see Figure 4) while over a fifth of service providers (24.3%) did not identify any part of the workshop as not being of value (see Figure 5). Notably, considerably fewer service providers responded to the question regarding the least valuable aspect of the workshop.

Conflicting opinions also existed between service providers whereby some found the sessions and exercises most valuable (n=40), others found them least valuable (n=12). Similarly, group discussions and personal reflection was favoured by some (n=128) while others did not value this aspect of the workshop (n=9). Such discrepancies may be indicative of training needs and/or specific learning preferences or styles.

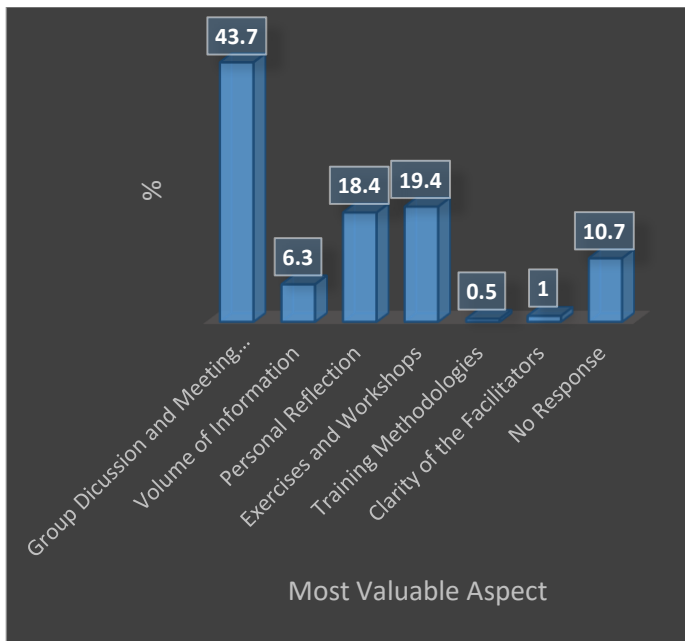


Figure 4: An overview of service providers' [n=184] perceptions of the most valuable aspect of the 1-day workshop

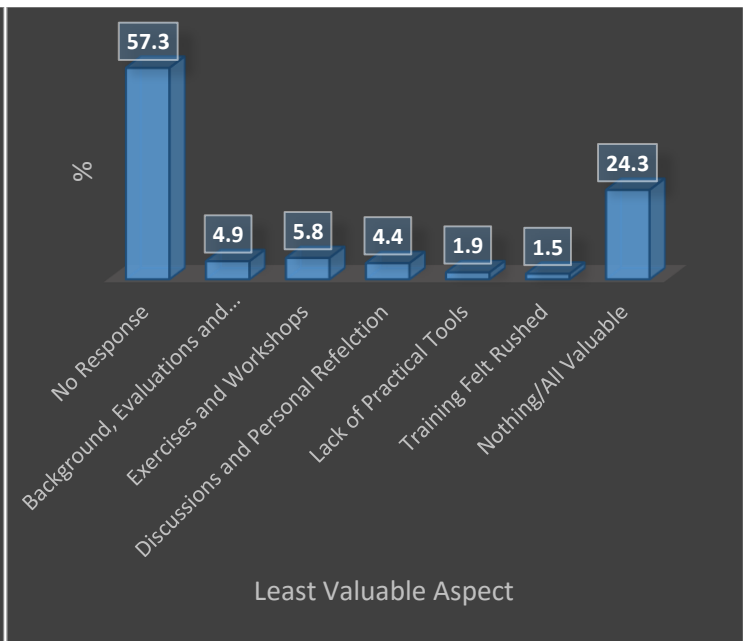


Figure 5: An overview of service providers' [n=88] perceptions of the least valuable aspect of the 1-day workshop

Immediately post-training, 57.3% of service providers said that they would integrate the training into their work practice as a result of attending the training. Some service providers identified specific integration strategies that included targeting young men, reflecting on current work practice and involving young men in service development (see Figure 6).

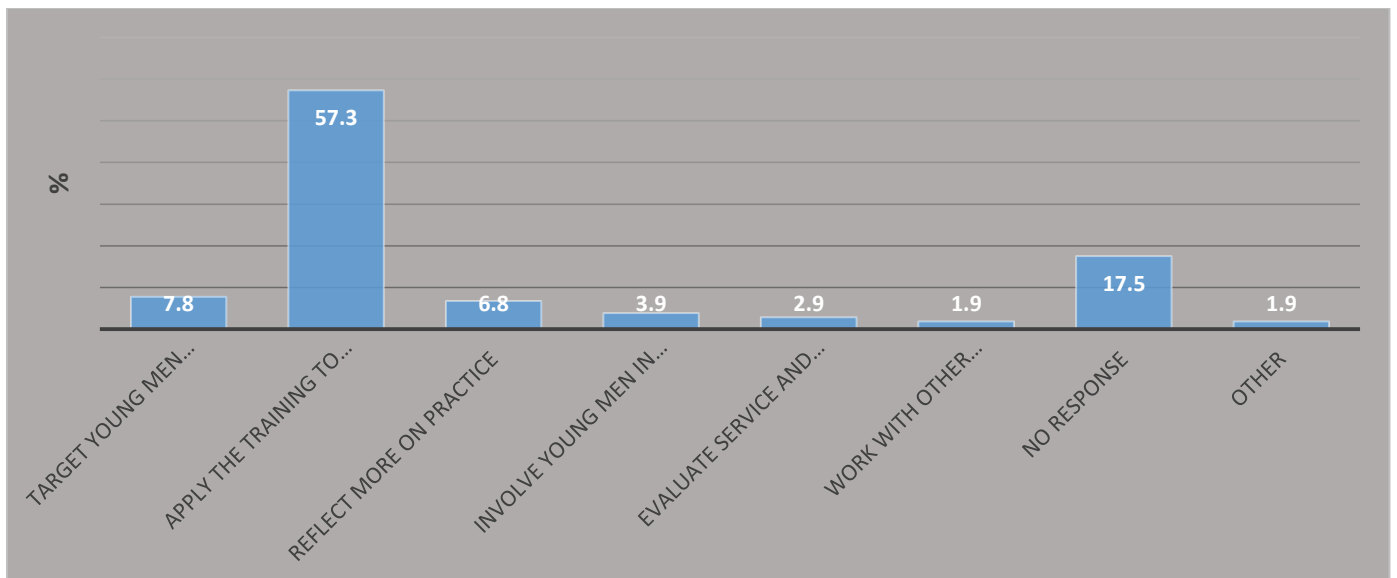


Figure 6: An overview of what service providers [n=170] said they will do differently as a result of having completed the 1-day workshop

Some 70% of service providers answered the question about what they would have liked to have covered in the 1-day workshop. The greatest need was for more practical tips/tools to engage

young men (21.4%) while others wanted, for example, more information and statistics on mental health and examples of successful programmes in the area.

Table 5: An overview of what service providers [n=144] said they would like to have covered in the 1-day workshop

Area to be covered	N	%
More practical tips/tools to engage young men	44	21.4
More information and statistics on mental health	22	10.7
Examples of successful programmes in the area	18	8.7
More exploration around the role of services	13	6.3
Role playing and case studies	10	4.9
More time/two-day workshop	5	2.4
More audio/video clips	3	1.5
Exploring technology and motivational interviewing	2	1
Other	27	13.1
No response	62	30.1
Total	206	100

Frank revealed that many service providers enquired about the possibility of doing the two-day TOT training residential and that many wanted to deliver the workshop themselves:

“What’s interesting is that a lot of the people who we are delivering this course to are people who would like to be delivering it themselves. Last week we were with the [named group] one of the men asked about the Train the Trainers and asked if there was one coming up soon and it was interesting because that’s not the first time that’s come up. A lot of people liked the course so much they would like to be trained in terms of delivering it.” (Frank, Facilitator)

4.2.4 Medium-term Impact of the Training

In keeping with the immediately post-workshop data from all service providers, the majority interviewed 1-month post-workshop felt that it was highly valuable and commented that the sessions could be replicated with young men. Many reported that they had already used various aspects of the 1-day workshop in their practice, while others revealed that they intended to do so.

This section will detail the mechanisms by which service providers reported integrating the 1-day workshop in practice as well as the barriers experienced in attempting to do so. Notably, some service providers interviewed (n=3) did not find the 1-day workshop helpful for them and, in fact, were quite critical of the workshop. Their experiences and the factors underpinning their frustrations will be presented in Section 4.3 with a view to exploring their specific training needs.

4.2.4.1 Integrating the Training into Practice

At 1-month post-workshop, many service providers named that they were already integrating elements of the 1-day workshop into their work, while others hoped that they will get opportunities to use it in the future. Jennifer (Youth Worker) revealed that she used some elements of the 1-day workshop with young men with some success. Sophia (SPHE teacher) alleged that she used many aspects of the 1-day workshop such as the set-up of a classroom and making sure it was a safe space for young men. She also revealed that she used some of the workshop sessions with young men to great success. She felt that these changes moved the focus squarely onto young men and gave them more ownership of their SPHE class:

“...the bags and the baggage. I borrowed that to do with one of my groups the following week. I used that and I threw it out there to them and they were very happy to fill it out you know.” (Jennifer, Youth Worker)

“There was loads there that I brought back. I even found myself sitting down a few days afterwards at break time telling people around me. I learned an awful lot from it and I put some stuff into practice already, like even setting up the structure of a classroom for SPHE - just shove away all the tables and sit around in a big circle... just to have them all on an equal footing really and me in the middle. There’s more of a focus on them and not so much of me preaching, just to give them more time at the end of a lesson to say what they liked about that class... The Carousel which I’ve never done before which was really good where we’re all interviewing each other and walking around and that was brilliant. They loved that.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Using elements of the 1-day workshop has increased the confidence of the service providers to work with young males:

“...it definitely increased my confidence to do those kind of activities or even working with young males.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

Ronan (Youth Worker) felt that, as a result of the 1-day workshop, he had become more sensitive and non-judgemental in his work with young men. He believed that the workshop had reiterated the importance of having these traits when trying to engage young men, because he felt that young men could recognise when a person is being insincere:

“I think I have been a little bit more sensitive and a little less judgemental and that is a good thing to bring because young people can see a fraud. That’s the one thing that I take and that’s good. I have been more sensitive. I’m looking forward now over the Christmas to take a bit of a rest period and actually have a look at how I can bring what I have learned from the workshops into my programmes.” (Ronan, Youth Worker)

The majority of service providers expressed their intentions to use various elements of the 1-day workshop in their future practice. Mary (Youth Worker) felt that she could transfer the sessions she did at the workshop to her work with young men. She felt that her current work in relation to mental health could facilitate this even more:

"I'm lucky I have a bit of leeway in that I am doing personal development so we can open the discussion on any of those things or we can do the practical things even about 'what do you think mental health is?' So all of the topics we would have covered that day I can transfer them into the work I do." (Mary, Youth Worker)

Many service providers said they would use and intended to use some specific sessions in their future practice. Jane (Youth Worker) and Mark (SPHE teacher) picked out a number sessions they intend to use and felt that these would be an ideal way to understand the psyche of young men:

"...along with the walking debate, what we did at the training was we had some paper and we would associate words with young men, so I am actually going to do that with the males here. It would be a very interesting exercise to just get them to think about certain things you'd associate with males and things you wouldn't associate with males; you know that whole gender imbalance there." (Jane, Youth Worker)

"Definitely the pictures one and I would use the walking debate. I would definitely use those two. I think as well creating an awareness and it can work in guidance, the awareness of multiple intelligences." (Mark, SPHE teacher)

Some service providers said that they would like to use the 'Journey into Manhood' session with young men and also with their co-workers. They felt that this session would give service providers a real insight into the key transitions in young men's lives:

"...one of the exercises we need to do is the idea of all the challenges facing young men, the whole growth journey. I think that's a brilliant one to introduce to staff, for them to begin to realise what it's like for young men you know." (Emily, Youth Worker)

"We did a kind of mind-mapping session with what's a young man you know. I was amazed at the amount of stuff that came up and the amount of stuff that didn't come up. I actually came away and said 'do you know what now that will give me a great insight into a young person's mind from the start'. I could do the exercises with them as in I'd do my one and he would do his you know and it would be a good opener I was thinking afterwards." (Grant, Youth Worker)

Others also expressed their desire to do aspects of the 1-day workshop with their colleagues. Mark (SPHE teacher) said that he would try and get the workshop into his own school and that he would be presenting his experience of the 1-day workshop to his colleagues:

"I think that would be a great springboard and we could make a school-wide project out of that. We've a nice small school so we could definitely do that kind of thing on a bigger scale." (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

"I will be presenting this to the pastoral care team with the idea of getting it introduced and getting the guys down because I thought they [Facilitators] were very good to be honest with you. Even if we had a 2-hour workshop or something you know." (Mark, SPHE teacher)

Declan (Youth Worker) and Daniel (Sports person) were already using elements of the 1-day workshop instinctively in their approach with young men:

“We all kind of picked the best things that we learned and instinctively you are kind of doing it without thinking about it. It’s the way I’ve always done it you know what I mean.” (Declan, Youth Worker)

“I am using it every day of the week really when I’m dealing with youngsters and you’re just trying to listen and make them as comfortable as possible.” (Daniel, Sports person)

4.2.4.2 Barriers to Integrating the Training into Practice

A number of barriers were mentioned by service providers with regards to using elements of the 1-day workshop. Jane (Youth Worker) felt that her biggest barrier would be the stigma for young men in relation to mental health and that utilising the workshop with young men would be more appropriate on an individual basis:

“...from my own experience it can be very hard with young males to think about certain things and talking about things they don’t feel comfortable with. Those kind of topics [mental health] they would find a bit too heavy and embarrassing especially with other males. If they were on their own then maybe, a group activity can be quite tough but it’s something that I’m definitely going to try and hopefully they will engage with it.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

Another participant highlighted her lack of contact time with young men as a barrier to putting her learnings from the 1-day workshop into practice:

“I haven’t had an opportunity to work with young men at the moment. I only volunteer with the youth club one evening a week so I am not involved in any group work at the moment.” (Heather, Youth Work)

Many service providers identified systemic barriers within their organisations:

“I suppose we are mid-way through our terms and our plans are fairly set out and we haven’t got the opportunity to, but it doesn’t mean that I wouldn’t use them [training workshops] going forward where there was an opportunity to slot them in.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

Mark (SPHE teacher) felt that the lack of resources in the school were significant barriers in terms of using the aspects of the 1-day workshop. He highlighted a lack of space in his school as a primary barrier. He revealed that he intends to try and get the workshop into his own school to try and change the culture:

“...to get the resources to actually do stuff in a meaningful way is very difficult and very challenging, so you can’t do this kind of sensitive group work with thirty kids in rooms that are not suitable, you can’t walk around the room. You need the resources there and the state are not providing them. I would be pushing to have the workshop done in the school so that it becomes part of the culture. If the culture doesn’t change in the organisation, then it doesn’t create the habits that will create real change you know.” (Mark, SPHE teacher)

Recommendation 3: Make provision for the wider roll-out of the 1-day workshop in the future

It is evident that service providers were motivated to attend the 1-day workshop to improve their capacity to engage young men around mental and emotional health issues. The Unit 6: ‘Connecting with Young Men’ training was effective, in the short term, at significantly improving levels of knowledge, skill and capacity among service providers to engage young men and to influence the practice of their peers both within and beyond their own organisations. Furthermore, post-workshop, service providers reported their intention to integrate their learning in practice and it was evident that some service providers had begun to do so at 1-month post-workshop. Therefore, Unit 6: ‘Connecting with Young Men’ training achieved its objectives as outlined in Section 1.3 and, in particular, was effective in building confidence among service providers to integrate their learnings in practice to the benefit of the young men with whom they worked. These findings provide a strong rationale for upscaling the delivery of the 1-day workshop and making sufficient resources available to facilitate a broader roll-out of the programme in the future. It is recommended that appropriate funding and resources are made available to ensure that ‘Connecting with Young Men’ training continues to be delivered in the future.

4.3 The 1-Day Workshop Experience and Needs

For the majority of service providers interviewed (n=14), the 1-day workshop experience was predominantly positive and, for the most part, they had their training needs met. The experience of service providers is supported by the experiences of both Trainers and Facilitators. A number of factors were identified that contributed to their positive workshop experience and some factors were identified that would enhance future training. Three youth workers from one particular workshop day (three were delivered to youth workers) were not satisfied with it and did not have their expectations of the workshop met. Evidence suggests that these particular service providers were highly experienced and competent in connecting with young men generally, and would have preferred more of a focus on mental health and the development of a clinical skill set:

“Nothing more [learning] than what I had before. I deal with mental health every day. I’m the suicide prevention officer for the building and I do a lot of one-to-one with young men, so maybe if there was a bit more about you know identifying young men with mental health issues and to get them to admit that they have a mental health issue is the biggest thing.” (Declan, Youth Worker)

There was, however, some evidence of resistance to reflective practice for at least one of these service providers - which may also have influenced their opinion of the workshop given its emphasis on reflective practice. While the Trainers adapted their training to suit specific groups of experienced youth workers, one Trainer believed that there was value in challenging some of the thought processes amongst the youth workers about how they work with and their expectations of young men:

“Also, there might be a perception that ‘we know what we’re doing, we are fine’ but maybe just trying to pull that back and go ‘well have you’. It’s challenging, like we were challenged in the training [TOT] about our own expectations [of young men] and just making ourselves aware of them and I think it’s really valuable just to bring that back to people [youth workers] as well.” (Amy, Trainer)

A number of themes arose from the triangulation of data from Trainers, Facilitators and service providers with respect to the 1-day workshop experience and specific training needs of service providers (Section 4.3.1). Structural aspects of the workshop were also identified as significant by Trainers and Facilitators and these are presented in Section 4.3.2.

4.3.1 Training Experience

In this section, findings with respect to the strengths of the training (Section 4.3.1.1), gaps in the training (Section 4.3.1.2), adaptations to the training (Section 4.3.1.3) and training expectations (4.3.1.4) will be presented.

4.3.1.1 Strengths of the Training

Several aspects of the training were identified as key strengths and these will be presented here. Service providers were highly complimentary about the Facilitators and the variety of training methodologies adopted. A number of sessions were singled out for their effectiveness by service providers, Trainers and Facilitators. Many commented on the applicability and replicability of the sessions to working with young men. The focus on reflective practice was valued by the majority of contributors to this research, in that it enabled service providers to reflect on their own values and potential prejudices towards young men and to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses in their capacity to work with young men. However, for some, it was overdone at the expense of more practical tips on engaging young men (see section 4.3.1.2.a). The majority of service providers also highlighted networking and peer learning as an extremely valuable aspect of the 1-

day workshop. Specifically, the themes discussed in this section include: (a) facilitation of the training, (b) content of the training, (c) interactive and experiential methodologies, (d) reflective practice and (e) networking and peer learning.

a) Facilitation of the Training

The majority of service providers were highly complimentary of the Trainers' experience and how they delivered the 1-day workshop. The Facilitators were warm, open and allowed for flexibility, all of which fostered greater participation as well as productive and informative discussions:

"I thought the delivery was excellent. I thought the presentations from the two Trainers was brilliant. I thought it flowed and it wasn't PowerPoint." (Neil, Sports person)

"I suppose the best part of the training was that it was kind of open. There was a structure but it was flexible. The Trainers weren't 'ok we have enough with this now and it's time to move on' you know. They kind of facilitated it very well that way, because I know they were watching the clock and trying to get everyone to have a say. The Facilitators were excellent in that sense. They catered for everyone's needs." (Grant, Youth Worker)

"...the lads [Trainers] are fantastic really. It was a warm and welcoming atmosphere the second we came into the room, and there was tea and coffee and everything there too, so it had a nice atmosphere to it and it was nice and relaxed. It's fantastic to be able to learn and to chat and to have the opportunity to be in a workshop like that, learning from [named Facilitator]." (Marie, Sports person)

Shirley (SPHE teacher) revealed that the inclusive nature of the 1-day workshop allowed her to voice her opinion freely, which, she disclosed, was not something she would ordinarily do. She believed that the workshop should be rolled out nationwide, beginning with the primary education system:

"They (Facilitators) brought a lot, and people were very open, and I wouldn't be very outspoken in a group now but I found myself offering stuff up you know, and I wasn't shy or anything... This is something that should really be pushed out and I think you need to go back to the source, even into primary schools or something." (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Some service providers, however, were critical of the facilitation of the 1-day workshop, pointing towards a lack of time management. It was felt that this lack of time management resulted in the workshop not beginning on time or finishing on time resulting in some service providers missing the end of the workshop in order to utilise various modes of transport:

"It [the training] was supposed to finish at 4pm but it went over and I had to actually go as I was catching a train. There were a few people who had to go at 4pm and I felt we didn't get the opportunity then to close it up and to finish the discussion. I could have missed the first hour for the half an hour at the end you know." (Heather, Youth Worker)

“The time management - the last half an hour was half an hour over the time of the course, you know. It didn’t finish on time.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

b) Content of the Training

The majority of service providers highlighted various elements of the 1-day workshop for specific praise and felt that they were highly replicable and applicable to their own work. This was reiterated by Trainers and Facilitators; they felt that the majority of the sessions were well-received by and enlightening for service providers. In particular, the sessions relating to the use of photographs, the walking debate and the ‘Journey into Manhood’ were named by service providers, Trainers and Facilitators for their effectiveness. In addition, service providers also identified the exploration of masculinities, the top tips for engaging young men and the salutogenic approach that underpinned the entire workshop as specifically useful, while Trainers and Facilitators highlighted the effectiveness of the carousel technique (Bags and Baggage workshop) and the multiple intelligences for engaging services providers:

“There are workshops that are standalone and you could do anyway with any group. There are lovely pieces right through the day that you can use.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Many service providers found the use of photographs particularly enlightening and thought-provoking, and reported that they would consider using them with groups:

“...there was photos and that was very effective and the group really engaged with that particular workshop.” (Marie, Sports person)

“There was an exercise with photos spread out all over the floor of young men, and it was about what kind of feelings might be there for young men, and I think that was quite useful because, again, it was quite visual and it was kind of something a little bit different. It wasn’t just sitting there discussing. It gave people there the opportunity to form their own opinion and stuff like that which, I think, would be important for groups.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

“I loved the handouts and we also did a great exercise where we put a load of photographs on the floor. That’s something that I want to do now... That, I thought, was a great one. I’d love to do that.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

The walking debate was praised as being democratic, inclusive and giving people a sense of ownership over the workshop - all of which supported them to critically reflect on their own views and beliefs:

“Walking Debates are useful to engage the whole group and to get people to critically reflect.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

“...there was one part of it there asking questions ‘what bracket do you belong to’ and you know you can think away to yourself ‘Jesus, yea, I reacted a small bit different there than I thought I would’ you know.” (Declan, Youth Worker)

“...when we did the debates and stuff like that and awareness about my own practice. Sometimes you might be a bit biased or have prejudices, but then when you’re kind of aware of these things it can help with your practice.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

Jeffrey felt that the walking debate challenged some of the beliefs and preconceived notions that service providers might have held and highlighted a particular incident in his own workshop that proved challenging and enlightening for service providers:

“One man stood and he said ‘I don’t want my son playing with Barbies, I’m sorry’ and to see that debate it was just great, we even congratulated them. He was nearly apologising to the group but he stood his ground and he didn’t want his son playing with Barbies and he was entitled to that opinion. The walking debate was great, you could nearly spend the whole afternoon doing that.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

The ‘Journey into Manhood’ session was also praised for its relevancy and applicability:

“I’d say the timeline was one of the main learnings from it because it really opened my eyes to exactly what’s going on in young men’s lives that you would often forget about, that we wouldn’t take into consideration when planning different programmes and different things like that whereas now it definitely comes into consideration.” (Marie, Sports person)

“One of the workshops that we did was the timeline for young men and we found that very effective because there could be a lot going on that you could forget about or you wouldn’t even think of. So I think that was very, very effective. That hit home for a lot of us.” (Grant, Youth Worker)

Agatha and Frank both felt that the multiple intelligences session was thought provoking for service providers and, consequently, it is one that Agatha now uses in other areas of her work:

“The multiple intelligence was really interesting. It was a small group of ten, and six were logical thinkers. It really did flavour the atmosphere in the room. I love the multiple intelligences; I’m delivering that on a one-to-one with people when I’m coaching because that’s a brilliant insight. It was interesting as well in the academic group who we first delivered it to because some of them had very poor inter-personal skills and self-awareness.” (Agatha, Trainer)

“Anytime I did it the feedback was always very, very positive. They were learning stuff about themselves in terms of their own intelligence which they might not have been aware of. I always use that now ‘How are you smart?’ (Frank, Facilitator)

When Jeffrey and Amy tweaked the introduction to the photographs session, it yielded positive results. Initially they got service providers to think about their own views of masculinity and maleness which brought up some negative connotations. They then did the photographs session which revealed the positive aspects of young men and masculinity. Showing these two contrasting views of young men and masculinity was a real eye-opener for service providers and a great learning experience:

“What we tried to do was bring into their consciousness how straight away they gravitated towards the negative, yet what they would want in a young man or what they would see are all these positives. How then do we bring that out and that was actually really powerful, it was a direct comparison. They were sitting there like ‘I never even thought about this’ and that worked really well.” (Amy, Trainer)

“That was very powerful, it changed it to strengths, the way some of them were like ‘we were so negative at the start’.” (Amy, Trainer)

The majority of service providers felt that putting the focus on the strengths and positive aspects of young men was an enlightening aspect of the 1-day workshop. Some acknowledged that they often focused on the negatives of young men and that they tended to adopt a deficit-based approach. Heather and Emily (Youth Workers) highlighted taking a strengths-based approach to young men as a key learning and something that could immediately be put into practice:

“The one where we looked at issues and solutions and potential solutions I think it was good. I like that solution-based idea you know that could be applied in different settings. I wouldn’t mind trying that now at all.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

“My main professional learning from the training was that you have to focus on positive models of men and how to mentor each other, find their passions and things like that, rather than wallow in the depression of it all.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

Mark (SPHE teacher) also expressed that having a strengths-based approach to work with young men was an important learning for him and that it was important to counteract the prevailing negative rhetoric that shrouded young men:

“...the idea of understanding positive models for boys that counteracts all of that rubbish about you know that they are all obsessed with video games and all this stuff. The stuff that the [named Trainer] introduced you know he talked about the negative stuff and the difficult things and it was interesting to know it and then to go from the negative to the positive... To be able to work towards implementing positive ways of thinking and to get young people to look at themselves positively is brilliant.” (Mark, SPHE teacher)

Ronan felt that he learned a lot about the concept of masculinities, how masculinity can influence the behaviour of young men for good or for bad, and how young men can be pigeon-holed into a particular role. Others felt it was also important to challenge negative forms of masculinity with young men. They felt that adhering to health diminishing masculinities contributed to offending behaviour in many young men:

“The main professional learning I would take from it is the idea of masculinity. I have never really thought about that and how varied it can be and not to just put males into one box if you know what I mean... A lot of them would have a very very macho sort of gender view of masculinity. That is the one that I would try and challenge some of the young people that I am working with.” (Ronan, Youth Worker)

“The idea of challenging young men in relation to how they view masculinity I think is very important.” (Mark, SPHE teacher)

Marie (Sports person) revealed that she learned about how to market health initiatives, programmes and training specifically to groups of men, and that she has begun to integrate these learnings into her work:

“One of the things from the workshop or that we took was having male specific leaflets and male specific posters and stuff like that that men can connect with themselves rather than these generic things that have females all over. We started giving those out to men’s groups and that has been very positive from the men we work with on [named project]. I would imagine that that would transfer down to the younger men too and they can connect with the leaflets and the brochures and things like that.” (Marie, Sports person)

Sophia (SPHE teacher) was pleased with all aspects of the 1-day workshop. She highlighted the applicability of the workshop to her own practice:

“I noticed they [Trainers] showed us how to set up a classroom and what games to play, different ways of getting boys to talk. The carousel definitely, the horseshoe shape, you know not having all the desks facing the teacher. I think just some of the hands-on exercises were great for me because I’m working with other people. I’m working with the kids all the time, with big groups, so I took a lot from that.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Heather (Youth Worker) was content with many of the activities and sessions at the 1-day workshop and felt that there was a natural flow to the workshop, where each aspect was connected to the other. She felt that each discussion led naturally onto the next:

“I liked that everything seemed to be interconnected. One exercise that we were doing would link in with the next one you know. In that sense there was a good flow. The content of what was discussed and how each exercise linked in together I thought that was excellent and the content of what we were discussing. All of those were very interesting and the actual content was excellent... The discussion was fantastic.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

Overall the majority of service providers reported that their knowledge and awareness of young men’s mental health, and the issues encountered by young men, greatly increased as a result of the 1-day workshop and that this would directly benefit their work:

“My awareness of males and mental health wouldn’t have been great but I was given that time to have a bit more of a think about it. So I thought it was brilliant. My awareness has definitely grown.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

Some service providers [n=3], however, were not satisfied with the workshop content or training methodologies and were not hesitant to express their feelings regarding this. Jack (Youth Worker) was expecting the workshop and methodologies to be more in sync with the report [Engaging

Young Men Project] that informed the training and he highlighted a number of discrepancies between the two:

“When I got back [from the training] I found the study and there are a number of recommendations with regards to training and I just pulled some of the text from that just as a reminder to myself. It said specifically in recommendation five that you should be looking at an educational component with young men and mental health in terms of signs and symptoms and coping strategies you know. Whatever methodologies they were using I expected those kind of methodologies given that it was a youth organisation targeting people who work with young men so that just didn’t happen.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

“The development of emotional intelligence amongst the service providers via experiential learning methodologies you know to develop emotional intelligence amongst boys. We find then in the training a component on language and communication and the importance of building relationships there was a little bit of that, creating a safe space. When I look at this I tend to feel even more let down by the day. That’s what I was thinking we were going to get, we were going to get training.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

Jack (Youth Worker) felt that the only new material he received from the 1-day workshop came from other service providers and through hand-outs delivered to each participant at the end of the workshop. He revealed that his overriding feeling from the 1-day workshop was one of frustration and irritation:

“The majority of the information on the day was from the other participants [service providers]. I’d say maybe five percent of the day they gave us some new material and that came within the last half an hour.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

“There were handouts that came at the very end, but the handouts that come at the end is not the training. There were three exercises, there was a debate, a written exercise, and there was a pairs exercise [carousel] which was just frustrating and that really summed up the day.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

c) Interactive and Experiential Methodologies

The majority of service providers were impressed with the variety of methodologies utilised in the 1-day workshop. Michelle (Youth Worker) expressed her enjoyment with the non-static nature of the workshop and felt that this helped to keep her engaged in the workshop, while Rachel and Marie (Youth Worker and Sports person) also expressed their contentment with the variety of the workshop and the approach by the Trainers:

“They [the Facilitators] covered different types of media, they had us moving around, they engaged us really well. It is really good training you know it really is.” (Michelle, Youth Worker)

“I think the Trainers were quite engaging. The exercises were very interesting and it was broken up between exercises and slides or whatever which was good.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

“The workshops and the different activities that we did were very apt and very appropriate to the tasks we were doing. You could see they really engaged everyone in it and we were up moving for some of them and sitting down for others, we were talking in small groups and we were talking in a large group. Overall, that was very very positive, and I think that was very relevant to the group that was there.” (Marie, Sports person)

Getting service providers on their feet and working interactively brought a vibrancy and energy into the room and both the use of the carousel technique (‘Bags and Baggage’) and the ‘Journey into Manhood’ sessions were highlighted for their capacity to do this:

“The carousel, you could hear the volume rising. It started off fairly quiet and then just the noise and the energy in the room.” (Beth, Trainer)

“It’s the participation and the physical, you know, moving and everybody interacting.” (Agatha, Trainer)

“The ‘Journey into Manhood’ really gets the room buzzing and everybody can be included in it. It’s inclusive, everyone has a say and they are down on the ground drawing the timeline, and we have five or six pages in the middle of the floor showing the transitions in young men’s lives, and you can look at the implications around that then.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Conversely, Faye (Youth Worker) felt that there wasn’t enough movement in the workshop and that there was too much discussion and feedback around each session which she particularly felt draining in the afternoon:

“...it was a little bit heavy in the afternoon. There was an awful lot of discussion in groups. You had to give feedback and listen to a lot of feedback. From my point of view, I like training to have a bit more movement. We did a moving debate which was great, but a bit less around the feedback and stuff, particularly in the afternoon. I thought I was going to die, especially with all the feedback. I thought it would never end.” (Faye, Youth Worker)

Jennifer (Youth Worker) was particularly impressed by the ‘learn by doing’ aspect of the workshop, which supported her to integrate the learning into her practice with young men:

“There was a circle and you had to focus on the topic itself and work things out which I found very useful as well. It’s more they are doing experiential stuff themselves. I think people, on reflection, will have realised that they were in a group work situation and that they can replicate the situation with the lads themselves. That was excellent, as it was totally about doing it and then you can go back and do it again.” (Jennifer, Youth Worker)

d) Reflective Practice

The content of the 1-day workshop was facilitated using experiential and interactive methodologies that required reflection on professional practice as well as personal attitudes towards, and values and beliefs about, young men and the transitions and challenges they encounter in their lives.

Some service providers revealed that experiential methodologies were novel for them and that they greatly enhanced their experience of the 1-day workshop:

“There were exercises around self-reflection and a lot of the exercises looked at the issues that young men face, and they were kind of interesting because they were different to a lot of the same exercises you do in other training sometimes and they were kind of different exercises.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

The opportunity to reflect on their own work practice was greatly valued by the majority of, but not all, service providers. For some, the reflection just gave them a chance to pause within the busyness of continually moving through pieces of work and increased their awareness of their skills and what they were already doing well, while also giving them a chance to look at what they could improve upon:

“It brings you back because you jump from doing this piece of work and that piece of work. It brings you back to ‘how have I been doing that?’ you know.” (Clare, SPHE teacher)

“I suppose the awareness side of it. Personally, I find it hard to kind of stop and think about it. I kind of jump in straight away with an opinion or something. I think what I got from the training is to be aware of something, take your time you know. I think that awareness is key and I really took away that [from training].” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

“I thought the different exercises that the Facilitators had us do gave you space to think about your practice and maybe areas in which you could learn new skills, and learn what you’re doing and what you could improve on, and what’s working well for you.” (Faye, Youth Worker)

Mary (Youth Worker) revealed that reflecting on her own work made her long for a previous role she had, that she had to temporarily forego due to other commitments:

“It actually made me miss my work with [named organisation] so much that I really want to go back early, and I’m going to go in and do some training for the new outreach team. I was invited to go and train them and I’m actually really looking forward to it you know. The whole thing kind of reminded me why I do that work, so that was nice.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

The fact that many service providers valued the opportunity to reflect not only on their own strengths and their practice with young men, but also to put themselves in ‘a young man’s shoes’ was also observed by Trainers and Facilitators. They believed that such reflection allowed service providers to become aware of the skill-set they already had at their disposal; in some instances, service providers received affirmative comments from their peers in terms of how they work with young men which was significant for them. The training process also modelled good practice on how service providers might support young men to become aware of their own strengths:

“Self-reflection, they realised what they already bring, what they have, and that sometimes they do this automatically, so they don’t even acknowledge in themselves what skills they have. What they realised was that they were such a positive force in the young person’s lives and they actually weren’t acknowledging that. So, for them, I think going through the exercises really brought them to that realisation.” (Beth, Trainer)

“...it was about that self-reflective piece. Also because we had services there it allowed them to think more about their services and how they were working as workers.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“I’m using the Bags and Baggage [carousel workshop] and things like that to help the ...people who turn up as participants [service providers] to reflect on their own practice in a way that they could use the same approach in supporting a young man to find his own strengths, and making the link all the time between supporting the process to be brought into another setting, to empower a young man around his own passions and challenges and strengths.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

For Agatha, the reflective nature of the 1-day workshop gave service providers a chance to put themselves in a man’s position which highlighted the importance of listening to young men. She believed that the reflection would be ongoing post-workshop for many service providers:

“For my group, like the doctors, it was probably their first ever perceptual positioning of being in a man’s shoes and I suppose to be less prescriptive and communicate less and listen more. I’d say there was a lot more post reflection when they left you know.” (Agatha, Trainer)

However, some service providers felt that the reflection aspect of the workshop was overdone and that it was not so much training but a facilitated group discussion. For these service providers, there was relatively little new learning:

“I would not describe what we had on the day as training. I would describe it as facilitated shared experiences, you know discussion, reflection.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

“I suppose there were opportunities to reflect in the first part of the day but it was kind of overdone. The idea of having the notion and an awareness of what baggage young guys are bringing in and what society is putting on them. Whether you call it learning or, I just call it reflection, it wasn’t something that I would name as new.” (Frances, Youth Worker)

Jennifer (Youth Worker) felt that a lot of her fellow service providers would, in hindsight, acknowledge the importance of self-reflection and the tools at their disposal once they returned to their work with young men, despite a perceived lack of raw materials and practical resources from the 1-day workshop:

“I was very happy with it to be fair. I think that people were probably looking for a bit more on what they can do, but maybe when they went away and reflected on it, it

was sort of group work and we were looking at the tools we have already when we are working with young people.” (Jennifer, Youth Worker)

e) Networking and Peer Learning

The majority of service providers valued the opportunity to meet other service providers and, by doing so, their learning was enhanced and networks were created that could be a resource for the future. For many, the 1-day workshop provided an opportunity to get out of ‘your own little bubble’ and to meet with other service providers:

“For me that was the best thing out of it [training] just to learn so much more about the services. You can be guilty of getting caught in your own little bubble a bit you know.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

“I feel I got the opportunity to speak with other practitioners within my own field and also in other settings who come in contact with young men regarding mental health.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

Networking with others gave service providers the opportunity to acquire more resources that would facilitate them in their attempts to engage young men:

“The networking to be fair because you come across really valuable resources or other people that are different that you can then chat to. And I suppose sometimes you can put a face to a name.” (Jennifer, Youth Worker)

“Through this avenue we were able to share ideas and interlink through agency visits and develop a professional relationship in the aim to engage young males in the future who present with mental health issues.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

Jack (Youth Worker), who was disappointed with the 1-day workshop overall, revealed that his learning from other professionals was so great that it prevented him from leaving the workshop. Grant felt that the 1-day workshop was service provider led which was a pleasing aspect of the workshop:

“If it hadn’t been for the input of the group that was there on the day, I’d have left.” (Jack, Youth Worker)

“...that’s what I got from the course the last day, that it’s led by us which was great and we got our questions asked.” (Grant, Youth Worker)

Sophia (SPHE teacher) revealed that her own confidence levels had increased as a result of the 1-day workshop and meeting fellow professionals:

“My confidence levels have increased. It has given me a lot of new learning from other professionals that I could use in my practice here.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Recommendation 4: Maintain an explicit focus on the ethos and innovative methodologies that are inherent in the ‘Connecting with Young Men’ programme

Service providers paid tribute to a number of key aspects of the programme that they attributed to its success and that consistently underpinned its ethos, content and mode of delivery. Specifically, the strengths-based approach to working with young men, the focus on understanding gender as a dynamic construct, the use of experiential and interactive sessions, the integration of ongoing reflective practice, the opportunities for peer networking and support, and the creation of a positive group dynamic, were highlighted as critical components that should be upheld in the future. Future delivery of ‘Connecting with Young Men’ training should stay true to the ethos and innovative methodologies that are inherent in the programme.

4.3.1.2 Gaps in the Training

A number of gaps in the 1-day workshop were identified by service providers and included: (a) lack of practical instruction, (b) not enough focus on mental health and (c) the representation of young men. These are presented below.

a) Lack of Practical Instruction

The majority of service providers felt that the 1-day workshop didn’t provide enough practical instruction on ‘how to’ engage young men and specifically, how to engage them in relation to mental health. Many service providers were also looking for examples of programmes that had worked in the area of young men and mental health which they could integrate into their service:

*“I was a little disappointed that I didn’t come away with more of the ‘how to’ bit.”
(Faye, Youth Worker)*

“I would like the training to give some ideas in relation to mental health programmes and maybe ideas in relation to what we can use with young people coming into us. Just to give us an idea of what sort of programmes have been tested or what has been proven, what’s good practice, what’s bad practice you know. What supports are available for people who are facilitating these programmes.” (Ronan, Youth Worker)

“I thought maybe they would have referenced ‘well this is being piloted and this works well’ or you know maybe practicalities that have been overcome in those kind of scenarios.” (Dawn, Youth Worker)

Heather (Youth Worker) felt that, while reflecting on the environmental suitability that her service provides for young men was useful, she received no practical direction about how to make it more suitable which was a loss for her:

“We had to consider our space to see if it was open for young men. There’s nothing that we could do differently, nothing about how to make our space open for young men.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

Jane (Youth Worker) expressed a desire for greater guidance and theory in the domain of young men, while Marie (Sports person) felt that having a more targeted approach to engaging specific groups of young men and various ideas and methodologies would greatly augment the workshop:

“Personally, for me, I know there is no certain skill-set for working with young males but I think maybe a bit of guidance, I don’t know really. I know there is no specific way of working with them but maybe have a theoretical approach or something.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

“Ideas or different methods of doing things, because as you know no two groups are the same. So the more we have, the more we can play around with to try and figure out what suits the young men you are working with best.” (Marie, Sports person)

Trainers also recognised service providers’ need for a manualised programme to bring back to their work with young men and felt that an extra piece could be added onto the 1-day workshop to show service providers how to tailor a programme for young men:

“...the youth workers generally know how to engage young men because they are coming into their service. It’s their bread and butter. There is something missing at that last piece and then the translation across... Youth workers, in particular, would like to know how can we bring this back and actually know how to do a programme with young people.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

Agatha delivered the 1-day workshop to health professionals and felt that they thought the training was not traditional enough - in that it wasn’t academic or theory-based, despite her belief that the training was evidence-based. She felt that the experiential nature of the workshop was alien to many of the service providers:

“I delivered to a group that were occupational health physicians and they felt it was very abstract, very woolly, I just got that sense from them. It wasn’t academic enough, it wasn’t theory-based. For them, I’d say it was a very unusual experience; a workshop where there was role-playing and where it was loose. So it was coming at it from a whole different angle. The role play, they hated all that. It was conflicting with what they were comfortable with. They wanted me to just deliver stats and theory. Every group is unique and you can’t forecast how it will go.” (Agatha, Trainer)

b) Not Enough Focus on Mental Health

Some service providers expressed their disappointment with a lack of focus on mental health and commented on their wish to learn about doing work on mental health without specifically mentioning mental health:

“There’s a huge debate around that [mental health language] and how to make it mental health without even having to call it mental health you know. A little piece about that would have been really interesting.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

“More practical stuff on engaging young men on mental health. Maybe something to explore with them that would maybe get them talking that little bit more.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

Dawn (Youth Worker) expressed her frustration at being constantly involved in debates and discussions at the expense of a focus on mental health. She also revealed that she left the workshop early due to her frustrations:

“All of the people attending the training were already working with young men quite successfully. Then they were looking at what kind of approaches work when you’re trying to engage young men but, again, the emphasis was generic across the board and not specifically in mental health. I would have felt you know, based on the description of the training, that we were very much going to be looking at what works in terms of engaging young men in mental health support. If I was new into the job you know, and I didn’t have any experience working with young men, the training might have had some use... I did actually leave the training. I don’t think I’ve left a training as frustrated in quite a while. It just didn’t hit the mark at all you know. It was just far too broad and generic and at quite a basic level.” (Dawn, Youth Worker)

Rachel (Youth Worker) also felt that there wasn’t enough emphasis placed on the mental health aspect. She felt that mental health and young men were discussed separately and not together. Hence, she felt there was no link made between the two:

“I think engaging young men was looked at, and mental health and wellbeing for young men was looked at, but connecting the two might not have really happened. I don’t think it was looked at in terms of engaging young men in mental health and wellbeing you know that kind of way. I think both pieces were looked at, but maybe they weren’t connected as well as they could have been.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

Recommendation 5: Provide increased and tailored resources to service providers that offer practical and tangible examples of best practice on engaging young men

Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training specifically focused on the engagement process i.e. the **why** and **how** of building relationships with young men, rather than offering a new or revised mental health programme i.e. **what** to offer them (Fowler et al, 2015). However, it is evident that many service providers wanted more practical tips on 'how' to initiate and build these relationships. For these service providers, more specific clinical skills such as symptom recognition and/or a defined programme might have been more appropriate. In particular, they believed that citing evidence of what has worked elsewhere would have been beneficial to give a greater insight into the 'how' of working with young men which, they felt, would have given them more tangible ideas of what to try in their own practice (as distinct from bringing back a 'glossy programme'). The EYMP Advisory Group and the Drafting Group should consider ways of integrating such evidence into the sessions. In particular, consideration should be given to doing so in the 'Top Tips for Engaging Young Men' session whereby the 'The Top 10 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' of Engaging with Young Men' could be illustrated via the discussion of evidence of good practice in terms of what others have done and/or haven't done elsewhere. Practical resources (hard copy and/or online) could also be made available to service providers for reviewing after the 1-day workshop - which would further support them to integrate the learnings from the workshop into practice. Findings from this evaluation also point to the need for the development of new resources and toolkits to support service providers with practical and concrete examples of **what** has worked elsewhere. It is recommended that increased resources and toolkits are made available to support service providers with practical examples of effective practice on engaging young men and that these are tailored to the needs of different service providers.

c) The Representation of Young Men

Issues with respect to how young men were represented via the presentation of statistics and the audio-visual resource were identified by Trainers and service providers. In particular, the absence of more diverse young men's voices and their experiences of mental health issues was named. Half of the Trainers in the focus group had felt that there was a disproportionate focus in the statistics section on 'young men as a problem' - which was at odds with the overall strengths-based approach of the training. It was felt there should have been a more balanced approach that included a focus on positive aspects of young men's lives, such as for example, their involvement in sport:

“The stats, there were too many. There was so many and I think everybody knew why they were in the room, that young men have a tough time. The stats definitely I think reinforced the negativity around young men.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“...we say we are working from a salutogenic basis and then we focus on the illnesses. So what is the balance? What is the other side of that coin? So young men participate in sport so there’s some recognition of the strengths as well as the challenges.” (Sean, Trainer)

While it was acknowledged that the statistics demonstrated a rationale for the 1-day workshop, they were adapted by Trainers (paired back) for delivery in order to make them effective.

Another aspect of the workshop that warrants further consideration is the use of the audio-visual resource. During the TOT residential, it was identified as an issue due to the predominance of college-going young males featuring in it. Consequently, it was felt that it was not suitable for use with some service providers - e.g. those working in marginalised communities - given the cohort of young men with whom they worked. This was realised in practice:

“The only thing that didn’t work sometimes was the video that was in the pack and that was in [named location] as well and that didn’t go down very well. The comment was that the young lads seemed very well off.” (Frank, Facilitator)

Mary (Youth Worker) believed that a video showing young men talking about their mental health issues would have been enlightening for service providers and suggested that future training should consider this:

“I would have liked to see a video maybe of young men talking about what it’s like for them. I think that would be really nice. I think that would just help us to picture and remind us who we were talking about.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

Recommendation 6: Provide a greater diversity of young male voices and statistics that will be engaging and relevant for service providers and in keeping with the strengths-based approach underpinning the training

Service providers identified the importance of bringing young male voices into the room and that the audio-visual resource used lacked sufficient diversity. It was also felt that the representation of young men in the 'Heroes and Villains' PowerPoint presentation was unbalanced, and at odds with the overall ethos and strengths-based approach of the programme. It is recommended that new audio-visual resources are developed that reflect the diverse experiences and needs of different population groups of young men, and that can play a pivotal role in bringing the future delivery of Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training alive for training participants. Consideration should also be given to reviewing this resource and, while not shying away from the reality of the 'negative' statistics, an objective critique of how young male 'Heroes' are portrayed should be conducted.

4.3.1.3 Adaptations to the Training

It is evident that Trainers were conscious of the training evaluation and were keen to stick to the script. In some cases, however, deviations from the script were necessary to meet the needs of the service providers:

'We still tried to keep to the actual programme because obviously there's a whole research base behind that, but it's just tweaking it.' (Amy, Trainer)

In some instances, the workshop was adapted to suit the practical needs or the level of experience of the service providers. For example, Beth delivered the 1-day workshop over two half-days to accommodate the service providers, and she adapted the delivery to ensure there was enough content for both days:

"We delivered it over two half days because that's what suited the service, and the next one we are delivering we are doing it the same way because, again, that's what suits them, and that worked well. I suppose we were thinking you had to be actually sure you had enough material for the second day, so we did both the Multiple Intelligences and the Journey into Manhood because we had the time to do that." (Beth, Trainer)

Amy and Jeffrey believed that service providers were already implementing aspects of the workshop and, subsequently, didn't focus on particular aspects of the workshop that they believed would have little benefit to them:

“I noticed with the top tips for engaging young men, we kind of felt the sector does this any way you know. We actually introduced a piece at the start which was around just asking the question ‘well what does it really mean to be a man’ - really exploring that and just getting people into the headspace - and we found that was quite beneficial actually, and we tweaked the transition piece as well into that and said: ‘does that change then as you transition?’.” (Amy, Trainer)

In one workshop, in recognition of the service providers’ experience and need, Trainers didn’t use one session. Instead, they put service providers into small groups to discuss issues they have faced when attempting to connect with young men and also possible solutions:

“I think it’s something certainly across the youth sector, it’s very much that ‘well give me the programme to bring back’, it is very much that mentality which is fine. We didn’t use the carousel, we broke them into smaller groups and allowed them to check that way, because we felt that would allow them the space to. There was four, I think, max in a group and they came up with an issue or someone nominated it and they unpicked and explored and unpicked and explored. That was one of the ways we adapted that now.” (Amy, Trainer)

Sean delivered the 1-day workshop to a group of predominantly young women and, as a result, he felt that the ‘Journey into Manhood’ session proved to be problematic - as this was based largely on female perspectives. However, he experienced the group as being open to exploring gender at a deeper level, but felt restricted from doing so given the structure of the day:

“...my instinct would have been to push hard at gender and see what came, but the opportunity wasn’t there to do that because we had exercises to go through. It was really exciting to be working and speaking about men with this group of women and the welcome that was there for it. There was no pushback at all, no resistance to it.” (Sean, Trainer)

Leonard (Facilitator) named the importance of working with the energy that different service providers may bring and using individual sessions appropriately. In particular, he felt that the interactive aspects of the workshop were well received by service providers who worked on the frontline in the community:

“The interactive stuff goes really well where there are frontline community workers. They are inclined to love the really interactive stuff, and all you do is throw in the questions and get out of the way and then you reflect on it. Where you have that there is fantastic energy and the day takes care of itself. For other groups, it could be different because they might, by their nature and temperament and personality, be more reflective, and they are often drawn to the disciplines that suit their temperament and personalities. They mightn’t be as energetic as the community health worker that’s working in the middle of a family resource centre somewhere, so that could be a different day. The groups I have had, all of them worked very well, but some of them worked differently depending on the extroversion or introversion of the group you had in front of you.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Naturally, Trainers and Facilitators had preferences for particular sessions and, in Frank's (Facilitator) case, he revealed his preference for the 'Multiple Intelligences' session instead of the 'Journey into Manhood'. However, when delivering over two days, he revealed that he would do both:

"The journey into adulthood works very well along with the multiple intelligences but I don't think it's a very good substitute for it. On its own, it doesn't have the same bite as the multiple intelligence piece, but it definitely works well when you do both over two mornings, which we have done." (Frank, Facilitator)

The Trainers' experiences of delivering the 1-day workshop were mixed. Some workshops went well but others not so well. Amy and Jeffrey completed three 1-day workshops and felt that two went well, one did not go well, and that learning came with each workshop experience:

"For me the process was a bit of a rollercoaster. The last one in [named County] was probably the best because all of the learning had come across." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

As expected, some Trainers reported improved delivery of the workshop as their confidence and experience increased in delivering it:

"After that, during the second and third trainings, you knew exactly what to say and we were much more confident delivering it." (Frank, Facilitator)

One of Frank's main learnings from delivering the 1-day workshop was that every workshop was different and that he enjoyed delivering it because he never knew what to expect. He believed that he also learned a lot from the service providers:

"The main lesson I've learned is that no two courses are the same. I love delivering this training because I don't know what's going to come up. I learned an awful lot of new things from each of the trainings I've delivered from the participants themselves. From that point of view, it's a lovely training to deliver because it's different you know and you have no idea what's going to come up. It just makes it a lot more exciting to deliver." (Frank, Facilitator)

While consistency is important from a quality assurance perspective, it emerged that some flexibility may need to be afforded to Trainers to adapt the 1-day workshop to: (i) use sessions more effectively to both sustain engagement and offer opportunities to deepen the interaction between, and learning for, services providers and (ii) give Trainers enough time to respond to what might emerge for a group of service providers in the course of a workshop rather than rush through a packed agenda. Trainers and Facilitators critically reflected on the structure of the day and proposed changes to the structure that may provide this leverage.

Sean felt that both the carousel and walking debate allowed people to learn about themselves and others, and suggested that these sessions could be done earlier in the workshop - as he felt it facilitated greater understanding of others and more active listening:

“I think both the impact of the carousel and the walking debate allowed people to see each other differently and my instinct is that it could happen early on rather than later on. I think it would be significant that people get a chance because it’s one thing going around and introducing yourself and all of that. When you’re speaking I’m not listening. I’m worrying about what I’m going to say, and all that stuff is going on, whereas suddenly I have to look you in the eye. I have to see well, actually, I disagree with you and you get to see everybody in a different way.” (Sean, Trainer)

“...In terms of the afternoon session, the walking debate always goes down very well.” (Frank, Facilitator)

Frank felt that the first half of the 1-day workshop was more effective in terms of its structure and engaging service providers. The ‘*material on the latter part of the day is a bit flatter*’ (Agatha, Trainer) and while this may be, in part, due to the time of the day, it may warrant review:

“The morning bit is the best in terms of the layout of the programme. In terms of the meat of the programme, the best meat is in the morning up to the Multiple Intelligences, maybe even the walking debate, but then after that it kind of fizzles out a bit you know. But that’s fair enough. You still have to do the ‘Dos and Don’ts’ and the final round.” (Frank, Facilitator)

Both Facilitators reported having modified the workshop to accommodate for overlap as content for later sessions emerged naturally via earlier discussions:

“...in the nature of the conversations that come out there’s an overlap, so even the bags and baggage and the barriers and bridges, you can get away by nearly not doing the barriers and bridges because between the bags and baggage and the top tips that you are going to do, you have covered some of the other stuff and also with the PowerPoints that you’ve used you’ve covered nearly the barriers and stuff like that. I was able to get through that by slimming down some things and putting other bits in you know what I mean.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

The impact of the tight schedule was also experienced by some service providers, with one concluding that the reduction of programme content before the break would leave more time for meaningful discussion afterwards:

“Remove some of the exercises before the break and it would allow more time after the break for discussion and the exercises that we were doing.” (Heather, Youth Worker)

The majority of Trainers felt that service providers would benefit more if the workshop was delivered over two days. Some Trainers felt that they had to rush elements of the workshop that were really productive, and that they were always conscious of the time and sticking to the programme:

“...you could easily make it over the two days and people would commit to the two days.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“I suppose the observations from the training itself was that really we could have done this over two days to really give it what it needs. We kind of had to shove things on when the conversation was really rich, but that’s where you get all the learning where people start to think about things. We let it flow, but we were conscious of catching ourselves, like there is definitely such a gap for the training. I think it’s tweaking it to the audience.” (Amy, Trainer)

“I would say from our perspective you could easily do a good two-day training... I think just the time pressure, there’s a lot of material to fit in to one day, and I think you’re conscious that you can’t spend too long on any one thing and you daren’t let it go off track because how are you going to pull it back and then what do you cut out? So, you do feel a little bit under pressure that there are things, there’s a sequence. So, yea, I think the time was probably difficult.” (Beth, Trainer)

Leonard also felt frustrated at not being able to use all of the training material given the tight timeframe. As stated earlier, he had to tailor it to suit the service providers and energy levels in the room:

“The challenge for me was it’s like having a fantastic sweet shop and not being able to use all of it. I have learned to err on the side of delivering quality pieces that you facilitate and try and make sure they go away with that rather than blow them away with overkill.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Grant (Youth Worker) also felt that he could have benefited more from the 1-day workshop if it had been done over two days:

“Over two days you could have benefited even more.” (Grant, Youth Worker)

Service providers also suggested a number of ways to improve the 1-day workshop in the future. Some service providers felt that offering opportunities for role playing would enhance the workshop. Mary (Youth Worker) felt that, although role playing could be difficult for many service providers, the benefits would far outweigh the negatives:

“I suppose the only thing I would have liked would have been role plays. I think they put you out of your comfort zone a bit, and maybe that’s why they didn’t do it, but overall I found it really helpful.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

Emily (Youth Worker) also believed that role playing would have greatly enhanced the workshop experience for service providers, and particularly role playing from the perspective of young men:

“More interactive pieces and maybe role plays from a young person’s perspective could build confidence for some workers looking to work with young men.” (Emily, Youth Worker)

Faye (Youth Worker) also suggested role playing as a means to enhance the 1-day workshop despite, in her opinion, much general dislike for them. She felt that role playing would help people to gain experience by trying to mirror real-life situations with young men. She also suggested creative facilitation methodologies where service providers gave feedback in many disguises:

"I have just recently taken part in training around creative facilitation where there were lots of different ways of giving feedback that I learned. That would have been really good. I think it would have been good, like everybody hates role plays, but I think they are good for exploring situations like if there was kind of a young fella in difficulty to role play how you would manage that. Everybody hates them, but I love them." (Faye, Youth Worker)

Mark (SPHE teacher) suggested the creation of scenarios that would mirror role playing, where a person talks about these scenarios in the third person. Neil (Sports person) felt that real-life stories and case studies would also greatly augment the 1-day workshop, while Emily (Youth Worker) cited the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) as a possible format to replicate in terms of role playing:

"I was suggesting that you create scenarios [similar to role plays] and you deal with them in the third person, where they analyse somebody else rather than the person themselves, because in that case it can create a safety." (Mark, SPHE teacher)

"I suppose I would have liked to see more stories, more case studies and how to deal with different scenarios. I'm not running it down now because I thought it was good." (Neil, Sports person)

"ASIST Training uses role plays of the intervention and the person whom is affected by negative thoughts." (Emily, Youth Worker)

Shirley (SPHE teacher) expressed her desire for follow-up training to hear how her fellow service providers integrated the workshop into their practice and to learn about what worked or didn't work with young men:

"I suppose even if there was a follow-up session or something after a couple of months - where you could say 'well that worked, this didn't work or I'm not sure about that' - just to give concrete feedback back in a couple of months' time towards the end of the academic school year to see if it helped." (Shirley, SPHE teacher)

However, Mark (SPHE teacher) felt that the 1-day workshop needed to strategically target a critical mass within organisations or be brought to whole schools and organisations in order to affect a cultural shift with respect to mental health. He argued that one person cannot affect organisational change alone:

"I think that we did enough for the day, there's no way we could do much more to be honest. And it was good. The only thing is if you are bringing one individual from a school it's not going to change the culture, so you have to look at having larger

numbers from certain places or else you have to go into the schools themselves.”
(Mark, SPHE teacher)

Recommendation 7: Adopt a flexible and targeted approach to programme delivery to ensure it continues to meet the needs of service providers

While consistency in training delivery is important from a quality assurance perspective, it emerged that some leverage may need to be afforded to Trainers to adapt the 1-day workshop. Specifically, attention ought to be given to: (i) the use of more dynamic techniques (e.g. case study scenarios and role plays) to overcome the energy lag that typically occurs in the afternoon of the workshop and to sustain engagement; (ii) a more flexible approach to the delivery of content - tailored to the needs of a particular target audience or to afford more time to respond to what might emerge for a group rather than rush through a packed agenda; and (iii) offering the workshop over two days - thereby affording more time to do justice to the volume and depth of content (notwithstanding the practicalities of getting service providers released for two days). Consideration also ought to be given to delivering the 1-day workshop to a critical mass of individuals within particular organisations with a view to bringing about more meaningful cultural and organisational change with regard to engaging young men. It is recommended that Trainers be afforded a more flexible approach to programme delivery and that key organisations are targeted with more intensive delivery of ‘Connecting with Young Men’ training.

4.3.1.4 Training Expectations

Service providers came with a variety of expectations for the 1-day workshop which were based upon: (a) their understanding of what the workshop had to offer and (b) their level of experience of working with young men and mental health. Many training expectations were met and some were not. On reflection, Trainers and Facilitators felt it was important that future training be reframed to accurately reflect its aims and objectives so that service providers can self-select appropriately.

Many service providers hoped to learn from the Facilitators and their peers:

“I was expecting to learn from the people that are facilitating the training course and from other professionals. Just a bit of experience; you know trying to pick up more knowledge from professionals working in the area of young men. Yea, absolutely yea [expectations were met]. I definitely learned a lot from the Facilitators and other professionals.” (Jane, Youth Worker)

“I wasn’t sure what I was getting into to be honest. I thought it would be about suicide awareness. I thought it was a very good course now, one of the better ones I have done.” (Daniel, Sports person)

“I didn’t know what to expect really. I suppose when I was in and saw the volume of people there I was kind of glad that everyone is in the same boat here. It was actually nice to get into a room and see we are not the only people banging our heads against the wall. And even from the Trainers’ point of view they have experience of doing the course in other places as well, you know, and it was nice to be able to link all that together.”(Grant, Youth Worker)

Some service providers had particular expectations about the gender balance, training styles and workshop activities:

“I wasn’t sure if it was going to be workshop-based or if we were going to get some hands-on opportunity to talk, so we weren’t really sure. We were hoping that it would be workshop-based which it was, because there is more practical learning in that. They [training expectations] were met yea, absolutely.” (Mary, Youth Worker)

“I was expecting it to be very open, a lot of talking, a lot of communication and different kinds of activities and stuff, and that was exactly what it was. I was hoping that there would be a mix of male and female in the group and there was, and my expectation to come away at the end of the training was with some practical ideas and practical ways that other people used and have been successful in engaging men. They [expectations] were met.” (Marie, Sports person)

“I just thought it would be very much filling in forms and working in small groups of two, but I loved the idea of working together. There were very few times where we broke into small groups and there wasn’t too many of us. I think they limited it to twenty-five and we were in a horseshoe shape. It was just very inclusive I thought. It was very different to what I thought it would be.” (Sophia, SPHE teacher)

Given the title of the 1-day workshop used for marketing purposes, the majority of service providers were expecting practical tips and exercises on how to engage young men. Some were also looking for specific information in terms of the signs and symptoms of mental distress in young men and lots of talk about mental health. While many were keen to name that they were very satisfied with the workshop and got a lot from it, this expectation was not met for everyone. This has previously been identified as a gap in the training in Section 4.3.1.2:

“I was hoping to learn a few strategies on how to make young fellas feel more at home; how to deal with certain situations. I suppose the more the course went on it was about creating an environment and calling on your own experience as it comes to you.” (Neil, Sports person)

“Well my expectations of the training were based on the title of it and I suppose some information on what’s out there and, so, the short answer to that is no [was training aim achieved].” (Jack, Youth Worker)

“Initially I thought it was going to be about engaging young men in mental health and wellbeing, so I was expecting a bit around that, how to focus them on their mental health but that wasn’t really covered. In terms of mental health, it wasn’t specific enough I think.” (Rachel, Youth Worker)

Some service providers were looking for ways to engage young men, generally, as they felt they were not adept at initially recruiting groups of young men. They were hoping that the 1-day workshop would provide ways to do this but were left disappointed. This has also been identified as a gap in the training in Section 4.3.1.2:

“I think what I was looking for was how, literally, do you get a group to come in for a weekly session, how do you actually persuade them, how do you get them you know. We didn’t really do anything like that. There was nothing along those lines and it was just assumed that you had a group of young men that you wanted to get to engage and connect with, but what the reality is that it’s identifying them and coaxing them and encouraging them to attend some kind of a chat.” (Clare, SPHE teacher)

Many service providers were left a little disappointed due to what they felt was a lack of emphasis on the practicalities of engaging young men. Nevertheless, they felt they took much away from the 1-day workshop and saw the workshop as a useful exercise:

“I was very happy with it to be fair. I think that people were probably looking for a bit more on what they can do, but maybe when they went away and reflected on it, it was sort of group work and we were looking at the tools we have already when we are working with young people.” (Jennifer, Youth Worker)

“In that respect (practical tips for engaging young men) they weren’t met, but that doesn’t say I didn’t get a lot from it because I did. I do have a problem engaging young men who are sort of outside that category [young male offenders]. They are not really getting into trouble but need the supports. You know they have been forgotten about by the community to a certain extent. It [training] opened my eyes in relation to that.” (Ronan, Youth Worker)

The majority of Trainers reported ambiguity about the focus of the 1-day workshop and were acutely aware that the workshop expectations of some service providers were at odds with the objectives of the workshop. While ‘mental health’ was in the title of the workshop, the concept of gender, engaging young men, and creating male friendly services dominated the sessions and discussions. Trainers believed that the workshop suited a certain cohort of service providers but others desired a more specific, and probably more clinical, skill set:

“...it’s about what the training is meant to be. We’ve had that question several times. Is this training for people that they can create a young man-friendly service? Is it training that they could then become better workers with young men?... We didn’t talk a huge amount about mental health at all. Like we covered it, and went through it, but we talked more about gender and gender identity, so where does it fit?... It was nearly like people wanted different things. Those [named organisation] workers, for them it was about their service. They were saying ‘we could use those images’. For other people it was more about the work. I think some people thought that they were getting that clinical skill-set.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

There was no consensus among Trainers about whether there should be an explicit focus on mental health in the 1-day workshop. One Trainer was surprised that the service providers didn't highlight the lack of focus on mental health at the workshop:

"...you would have to put a specific focus on mental health. I was surprised we didn't have more people talking about the mental health part. I kind of felt we escaped lightly on that." (Beth, Trainer)

Amy believed that mental health did not need to be named in the title of the workshop, and felt that the title should have a generic focus. She felt that it was more prudent to avoid focusing specifically on mental health. Instead, she felt it was better to link all the issues in relation to young men with mental health and how they can affect the mental health of young men:

"...you don't need to name mental health in the title but, maybe as you go through it, emphasising that this is influencing mental health and wellbeing. So, maybe making it more a case of the day-to-day and that's kind of bringing the mental health bit out, and recognising that it is a spectrum and all of this piece and all of these exercises are actually having an influence on the mental health and wellbeing. So maybe there is something there about how we frame that." (Amy, Trainer)

Trainers felt that the focus of the 1-day workshop should be about supporting service providers to connect with young men in general and in all aspects of health:

"I think it's [the training] about connecting with young men. The words 'mental health' in it just drags it away into a corner that isn't useful. I think even putting gender on it drags it into a corner and, for me, it has baggage." (Sean, Trainer)

"For me, 'Connecting with Young Men' is around how do we connect with young men. So, if they have sexual health difficulties, that they know where to access services or if they have mental health or physical difficulties. It's a broad range and it shouldn't just be for mental health services. I think narrowing it down to mental health misrepresents it." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

Like others, Amy felt that ultimately connecting with young men was about the service provider's capacity to build a relationship with young men and that it did not matter if the service provider was male or female. She believed that the workshop was about creating awareness amongst service providers by challenging their thought processes and supporting them to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes towards young men:

"It's that relationship piece you know. It's trying to pull it back to that, if you're a male or female in front of whoever it is, but what is the relationship and what's the role and bringing it to their awareness and their preconceptions or what they might have." (Amy, Trainer)

It is evident that the expectations of some of the service providers didn't align with the aims and objectives of the workshop itself. As highlighted earlier, Trainers believed that some service

providers were looking for more practical instruction and a programme that they could deliver to the young men with whom they worked. They believed that service providers didn't recognise that the workshop was about the knowledge and skills that they bring to their work:

"There was something in the title that wasn't there, young men, mental health and wellbeing, so in that mental health piece they wanted to jump straight into it. They thought we were going to talk about men and their mental health straight away so even we changed our expectations and outcomes, and we tried to pull that back from them so it was really clear 'this is about you and how you can build your experience and that self-reflection piece'. They were like what about the mental health piece. Are we going to talk about mental health?" (Amy, Trainer)

Frank also reiterated that some service providers were, perhaps, under a misapprehension as to the nature of the workshop and that they were looking for more practical tools in working with young men. He disclosed that, at the start of each workshop, he made it explicit to service providers exactly what the workshop was about:

"I always flag up at the start of the training that it's about the 'how' and 'why' we work with young men, not about the what. [Named Trainer] made the point that we should flag that up a bit more before people go to the training, because some people come in with that expectation and we should have that somewhere, even though it is in the flyer." (Frank, Facilitator)

Recommendation 8: Ensure that the title of the 1-day workshop is aligned with the objectives and content of the workshop

The full title of the programme and that which is used on all marketing materials for recruitment is: “Connecting with Young Men - Engaging Young Men in Mental Health and Wellbeing”.

Therefore, it is not surprising that service providers had an expectation that the workshop would have a strong focus on mental health and wellbeing. Many cited the lack of focus on engaging young men around mental health issues as a gap in the workshop that caused, for some, disappointment while for some others, considerable frustration. Both Trainers and Facilitators identified an ambiguity about the focus of the workshop, and an incongruence between the workshop content and the focus on mental health and wellbeing. Consensus about whether the focus should be on how to engage and build relationships with young men generally or around mental health and wellbeing specifically was not achieved. However, all felt it important in the future that the workshop be reframed to accurately reflect its aims and objectives so that service providers are in a position to self-select appropriately. With due consideration to Recommendations 2, 4, 5 and 7 - and the future roll-out and possible refinement or development of the programme - the title of the 1-day workshop may warrant review in the future. It is recommended that the focus of the workshop be reviewed and that the title of the workshop be aligned with the objectives and content of the workshop.

4.3.2 Training Framework

Trainers and service providers identified a number of significant factors related to the training framework that will be presented here. These include the support required for Trainers to deliver the 1-day workshop (Section 4.3.2.1), the management and recruitment of service providers (Section 4.3.2.2), and issues related to the evaluation (Section 4.3.2.3).

4.3.2.1 Support for Trainers

Support for Trainers on a number of levels was identified by Trainers as key to the delivery achieved to date, and it was felt that on-going support was needed to ensure that future delivery of the 1-day workshop remained contemporary and relevant.

Training to date was greatly influenced by the post-training supports that were integrated into the 2-day training and delivered as part of the workshop on operationalising the training. Specifically, these supports were provided in the form of mentoring, recruitment and co-facilitation. The Trainers felt that they were fully supported post-training in their efforts to recruit service providers

and organise workshop events. For example, Jeffrey felt that they were well supported in their efforts to deliver the 1-day workshop, and felt that there was a safety net and support network for them at all times which, he believed, added to their great training experience:

“I think all the background stuff has been phenomenal all the way through. I personally felt so supported by [Evaluator], sending us reminders of what [Evaluator] needed, same with [named Facilitator], same with [named Facilitator]. I felt like there was a team of people ready to do whatever it was we needed and I think that kind of added to the great experience. You just knew there was people behind you.”
(Jeffrey, Trainer)

Amy expressed gratitude at the fact that the Facilitators said that they would accompany the Trainers during their first 1-day workshop and that, overall, the training model is one that should be emulated by others:

“I think the whole process, if you were to look at it as a model, in terms of the research that’s been done behind it. You had all the work with [named Author] and also [named Evaluator] work, it’s a really good model and like in terms of those two days in [named venue], you knew that so much work went into that, the way it was facilitated over the two days and giving you the space. Even when you were going out to do your first training, they said ‘well one of us will come with you and do that’. To have that openness, like that really adds validity and strength to it. So I would say if you’re looking at the whole process as a model, it’s a really good model to emulate you know, it’s excellent.”(Amy, Trainer)

Co-facilitation was integral to the delivery of the 1-day workshop which was identified as an essential component of the workshop by both Trainers and Facilitators. Given the experiential nature of the training and the subject matter, co-facilitation is required to manage the group dynamic and discussions, and is supportive to Trainers during the workshop planning and delivery and post-workshop debriefing:

“I think definitely the approach of two Facilitators is so important because there was just so much to pick up on and comment on, the conversations were so rich. I would say going forward just to keep that as a solid rule you know, it’s a two-person job.”
(Jeffrey, Trainer)

“It is a two-man job and even for the debrief, you’d be able to say... at the end ‘was there anything I missed there’. You can have a cup of coffee at the break and say ‘is there anyone who’s very quiet’ you know. The wisdom of having pairs was fantastic... There’s just a great wisdom in doing it in pairs.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

On one occasion, the co-facilitator was able to be with a service provider who became upset outside of the workshop room while the other Facilitator could continue on with the workshop:

“...anything around mental health we really insist on a co-facilitator and that’s the reason why because emotional things come up for people and one person has to be available to go out and deal with that while the other person continues delivering the course.” (Frank, Facilitator)

Some Trainers felt that co-facilitation, while interesting, brought its own challenges. They felt that a lot of preparation was required to make it work well *‘because it doesn’t just happen on its own’*. Specifically, the practical tasks [paperwork, prompts and handovers] and marrying different facilitation styles, particularly when working with someone for the first time, required thorough preparation:

“...it was the first time I ever trained with him [named Facilitator] and we worked really well at making that happen, but there was a piece of work preparing for it, not just in my head, but connecting with him. Myself and [named Facilitator] operate so differently and that was exciting like what’s going to happen next (laughs).” (Sean, Trainer)

“...it doesn’t matter how many times you are going to deliver it [the training], it’s still a preparation piece. And those handover pieces as well - because you know this is where I finish, but how do you hand that over and that’s always a piece of work.” (Beth, Trainer)

Nick felt that it was important that there ought to be on-going support for the Trainers after they delivered the workshop and suggested that there needed to be more get-togethers for the Trainers where they could offer mutual support to one another:

“I think this end of things is very important as well, having support afterwards as a lot of stuff can come up for Facilitators. There does need to be a space like this afterwards, a focus group or something. It’s been done with Units 1-5 from time to time, possibly not enough, but it’s a good opportunity just to informally feedback stuff, just to say ‘well this is a difficulty I am having, is somebody else having a similar difficulty, ‘this is what went well’. I think it’s just all-round self-care.” (Nick, Trainer)

This was echoed by Beth from the point of view of keeping the workshop contemporary and relevant:

“I do think there is something about the on-going piece in terms of keeping up with new information, and keeping it live, and keeping it real. Because when you leave here, and go back out, then you’re a little bit isolated again. So it’s about keeping it live.” (Beth, Trainer)

Recommendation 9: Provide ongoing support to Trainers to ensure continued diffusion of training

On-going support for Trainers post-TOT is essential to ensure the diffusion of workshops and that Trainers are afforded ongoing opportunities for support and professional development. It is well established that post-TOT 'refresher' training - where Trainers are afforded opportunities to share workshop experiences and learn from one another - plays a pivotal role in sustaining 'active' Trainers. It is also important that Trainers who become 'inactive' are afforded opportunities for co-facilitation and mentoring to enable them to return to the status of 'active' Trainers. It is recommended that appropriate and on-going supports are put in place for Trainers.

4.3.2.2 Service Providers: Recruitment and Management

Demand for this workshop was high among a wide variety of service providers and, while this aided recruitment, managing the demand was often problematic. Tardiness [arriving late and leaving early] of some who did manage to get a place on workshops also posed difficulties given the tight schedule of the day.

The Trainers' fears about recruiting a sufficient number of service providers to take part in the 1-day workshop were misplaced, as there was a high demand for the workshop. The level of demand, across a wide range of disciplines, surprised a number of Trainers and the two Facilitators who also played a key role in both mentoring and leading the delivery of the workshops. While interest from social workers and youth workers was expected, the interest from such a diverse range of service providers was not:

"What's interesting is that the people who are signed up for the course in [named location] are community development workers, social workers, people from [named organisation], mental health social workers and senior clinical psychologists, so there's a huge variety of people who are looking for this training. I would have assumed it would have been youth workers, community workers and maybe childcare workers, but people like clinical psychologists and occupational therapists you wouldn't have expected to be interested." (Frank, Facilitator)

Consequently, the recruitment of service providers posed little difficulty for the Trainers and Facilitators. Throughout the recruitment process, it became evident to Trainers that there was a need for this type of workshop targeting young men:

“There is no other training like it at the moment. That’s the thing, and people recognise that young men are struggling in whatever way and they are looking for support around it.” (Amy, Trainer)

“They are screaming out for stuff with mental health and they are screaming out for stuff to do with young men. Anything with mental health people just want to grab on to it no matter what it is.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

In fact, Amy and Jeffrey didn’t have sufficient spaces on their workshop and the overspill attended a workshop delivered by another Trainer. Frank revealed that he initially recruited by returning to service providers who attended Engage Units 1-5 training and he believed that there was a greater demand for Unit 6 [‘Connecting with Young Men’] than there had been for Units 1-5. Leonard also felt that there was a lot of public interest for the workshop from a wide range of disciplines. He believed that once a workshop had been completed, word-of-mouth spread and this created further interest in the workshop:

“...there is a real interest out there around younger men and I think that’s where it is at. I didn’t feel any gap in people not being interested in it and that was not even doing a whole lot of communication around it. I’ve been on the road, and the mixture of disciplines was fantastic and the mixture of frontline workers that are turning up to the training are actually frontline workers. It’s not somebody sent on because we better tick that box you know. I literally have had drug workers, health workers, primary care workers, psychologists and psychiatrists sitting in circles which has been great. That’s without doing hardly any promotion around it. We were working off [named Author] first promotion of it and now word-of-mouth is out there, so I’ve been back in [named location] and [named location] a second time.” (Leonard, Facilitator)

Some Trainers identified that the logistics of organising and managing the demand for the workshop posed a bigger problem than the initial recruitment. Jeffrey highlighted the difficulty he had in informing people that there were no more spaces available and that he had to notify people that they were prioritising the youth sector which, he said, meant disappointing some people. He felt that this was made more difficult when some service providers didn’t turn up to the workshop. He revealed that there were a lot of service providers that were outside of the youth sector who attended the workshop, and he felt that they might have benefited most from the workshop:

“We had to tell quite a chunk of people that we didn’t have space for them, so it was hard when some people didn’t turn up and there was a lot of [named group] in particular in [named location] who wanted to sign up. In each region we had to tell people no because we prioritised the youth sector, but my observation was a lot of it was [named group], there was quite a few in the [named location] that wanted it and there was some in the [named location] who did get on it and for me they probably benefited from it the most because they wanted to create a young male friendly service. Even their reaction, they followed up with us with an email to get more information. So [named group] was definitely something that jumped out at me.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

Beth also revealed that there was a high demand for the 1-day workshop and that she was frustrated when people didn't turn up - considering that she had told others that there was no more space available. She emphasised that the group she delivered the workshop to recruited other service providers through shared networks for a second day's workshop:

"It was over-subscribed, a little bit like Amy's. You know some people didn't turn up on the day which I was really cross about, because I told people there wasn't any more places available, so I'm not sure how you resolve that. I think the group we recruited they recruited themselves so there was no issue, and that second group we are going to deliver to is because that first group was over-subscribed. So there was actually enough for a second group there." (Beth, Trainer)

Agatha revealed that recruiting service providers for her workshop was made easier due to the motivation of her company - where professional points were put towards in-house training. She also disclosed that there were more training events in her company and that there was a greater awareness of health and wellbeing issues:

"The motivation in [named organisation] for going [to the training] was that there was professional points that went to in-house training. It's brilliant as well because they have increased the training in [named organisation], they have doubled it for new recruits coming in now because they see there is more emphasis on wellness, and this is a big area because of shift work and being sick on the job and how that is impacting safety and the human factor element. I'm delivering it on any platform I can and just telling them what it's about. It's good material where you can kind of take bits out you know." (Agatha, Trainer)

The majority of Trainers felt that, in some instances, the tardiness of service providers inhibited the delivery of the workshop. It was reported that some service providers arrived late and left early, which was disruptive - especially given the experiential and reflective nature of the workshop and the importance of the group dynamic:

"...the participants [service providers] themselves were just being so late and then on one occasion some people left the training early without letting us know and stuff like that, so for any of the difficulties I encountered like that, it was just me going to that space saying 'alright you just can't control somethings', but yea very frustrating." (Jeffrey, Trainer)

It was felt that accommodating late comers wasn't fair to those who were punctual:

"If you're putting that much emphasis on the people that are late in terms of the contract and all of that, you're actually letting down the people who are there." (Nick, Trainer)

While adopting a hard line as per the ASIST programme (turn away late comers) appealed to some Trainers, there was general agreement that more emphasis was needed during the planning phase to ensure that service providers were aware of what they were committing to:

“It’s that preparation piece that resolves more problems before you land on the day but it does take time. It’s not just a question of rolling it out and send out a quick email to say ‘everybody come tomorrow’. It’s their commitment. This I what they are committing to, what we are offering, but for them to avail of that they have to make a commitment to come and stay for the day and respect that the other people here are doing the same... I’ve come more to a mind-set of more than five minutes late then we actually can’t accommodate you in the training because, if you have got to the group agreement and they’re not part of that, then they have missed out on the whole piece there... It’s about respect for the other group members. So I’ve kind of come more to the mind-set of ‘if you’re not here it’s not important enough for you to prioritise’.” (Beth, Trainer)

Trainers also generally agreed that putting a cost on the workshop would increase the value of the workshop and, in turn, the commitment of service providers. They felt that making the workshop available for free left it open to abuse:

“...it was around that value piece, when people have free training do they value it as much?” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“When training is offered for free, people disregard it, they don’t think it’s worth it. Whereas, if they are paying money for it they think this is brilliant.” (Nick, Trainer)

Furthermore, putting a charge on the workshop would make people answerable to their managers who needed to approve the expense. One Trainer suggested if service providers didn’t turn up to the workshop, or arrived late, that they would be accountable to their managers which may improve their commitment to the workshop:

“Once you attach a price their line manager will have to sign off on it and, therefore, if they don’t turn up they will have to explain it to the line manager ‘why didn’t I turn up, why did I turn up late’.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

Recommendation 10: Consider charging a fee to future participants in the programme

In the context of programme credibility and sustainability, there may be merit in charging a fee to future participants on the programme. Trainers reported indifference and ambivalence amongst some service providers in relation to attending the workshop on time and remaining for the full duration of the workshop. It is, therefore, recommended that the organisers should, in the future, consider charging a fee for participation in the programme. Other mechanisms for sustaining the future roll of the training worthy of exploration include accessing core statutory and/or philanthropic funding.

4.3.2.3 The Evaluation

The majority of Trainers felt that administering the consent forms and questionnaires to service providers was burdensome for both themselves and for the service providers. Initially, there was the work load of organising the paperwork pre-workshop. The Trainers found that it was difficult to get service providers to fill out the forms together and to do so quickly, while some service providers had queries and/or an issue with the level of personal details required and addressing these took time:

“The problem is we handed it out and you had to explain it to people, every individual you had to explain and other people were coming in and ‘did you give a form, who got a form’ and we didn’t know who had the forms. In some ways it was more work. It was nearly easier to put them on the chair and say ‘fill it out now’ and just take it off them in five minutes.” (Beth, Trainer)

“...some people were leaving that bit early. They would come to you at the start and say they need to leave a half hour early so you’re trying to get them, and then some people are so early for the training and some people are late but you’re trying to get people to do it at exactly the same time, but it’s difficult and you’re still going to have to wait for them. You had to wait for the last person.” (Jeffrey, Trainer)

“I think giving out the consent forms, people weren’t happy with them, with the amount of detail. I noticed quite a few people didn’t actually fill it out, and I didn’t feel I could say to people you need to fill it out. People actually did comment, and I did email [named Evaluator] about the person who wanted to know how long the data was being kept for.” (Beth, Trainer)

Frank (Facilitator) used music at the beginning [arrival and registration] and at the end of the day [completion of evaluation form] and he believed that it helped to put the service providers at ease; particularly as they arrived into a room full of silent people:

“...if you’re working with young men, rather than them coming into a silent space, it would actually be much easier for them to go in if there was music in the background and they all enjoyed the bit of music at the start, it just put them at ease. Especially when you are giving out the pre-evaluations, it would have been very silent otherwise. The music in the background took a bit of pressure off.” (Frank, Facilitator)

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Engage Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training aimed to assist a broad range of service providers to effectively engage with young men on mental health and wellbeing issues and was diffused via a TOT cascade training model. Trainers [n=17], who represented a variety of organisations from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors (Appendix 1), underwent comprehensive 2-day residential training on the 23rd and 24th June 2015. A formative evaluation was integrated into the TOT and this was allowed to shape the final 1-day workshop for service providers. Subsequently, from October 2015 to March 2016, this cohort of Trainers, with the support of two TOT Facilitators, delivered a total of 24 workshops over 26 days to 367 service providers. This evaluation investigated a subset of these workshop days (n=18) and a subset of these service providers immediately post-workshop (n=206; via questionnaire). Three pairs of Trainers were asked to target specific groups of service providers for Unit 6 training, namely, sports coaches, youth sector workers and social, personal and health education (SPHE) teachers. The workshop experience and needs of these specific service providers (n=17) was also investigated up to 1-month post-workshop via interview. The main conclusions of this investigation are presented here along with the recommendations for future practice.

Overall, the training was received very positively by both Trainers and service providers alike. Trainers left the TOT with a high level of confidence and competence in their ability to deliver the 1-day training to service providers and this is reflected in the experience of service providers who participated in the training. There is strong evidence that 'Connecting with Young Men' training met the needs of service providers. Service providers were highly satisfied with the training and, immediately post-training, improvements were found in all variables measured. 'Connecting with Young Men' training was particularly effective at building confidence among service providers to integrate their learnings in practice; to the benefit of the young men with whom they worked. Specific gaps in the training that were identified by service providers and warrant consideration include practical tips on 'how' to initiate and build relationships with young men and the need for greater clarity in terms of the focus on mental health. However, overall the findings provide a strong rationale for upscaling the delivery of training and making sufficient resources available to facilitate a broader roll-out of the programme in the future.

The Trainers were highly satisfied with the 2-day TOT residential. Overall, at the end of the two days, Trainers rated their level of confidence in relation to delivering the training as 7.94 [range 4-10; where 1 was not at all confident and 10 was very confident]. Similarly, Trainers rated their level of competence in relation to delivering the 1-day workshop as 7.65 [range 5-10; where 1 was not

at all confident and 10 was very confident]. These scores give a good indication of the degree to which Trainers felt the TOT training had equipped them to deliver the 1-day workshop to service providers. It is evident from the scores achieved that the training was successful in achieving its aim of training Trainers appropriately.

Recommendation 1: Include a formative evaluation in the development of future TOT programmes as a general principle for all programme development

Trainers' both valued and felt valued by the integration of the formative evaluation in the TOT model. Not only did the constructive feedback from the formative evaluation strengthen the content and delivery of the 1-day workshop for service providers, it also secured the 'buy-in' of Trainers by honouring their commitment to delivering the workshop to service providers. It is recommended that future TOT models should integrate a comprehensive and meaningful formative evaluation into the development of training.

Recommendation 2: Continue to use TOT methodologies that build Trainers' competence and confidence

The TOT experience was effective for Trainers and, upon completion, Trainers felt both competent and confident to deliver the 1-day workshop to service providers. Specifically, the factors that contributed to the success of the TOT experience were the safe climate created by the Facilitators, the venue and the residential component, the power of the group dynamic, the opportunity to network with peers, the training methodologies used, and the opportunities created for reflection. It is recommended that these components should remain at the core of future TOT models of training as building competence and confidence in Trainers is key to ensuring the diffusion of training.

Recommendation 3: Make provision for the wider roll-out of the 1-day workshop in the future

It is evident that service providers were motivated to attend the 1-day workshop to improve their capacity to engage young men around mental and emotional health issues. Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training was effective, in the short term, at significantly improving levels of knowledge, skill and capacity among service providers to engage young men and to influence the practice of their peers - both within and beyond their own organisations. Furthermore, post-workshop, service providers reported their intention to integrate their learning into practice and it

was evident that some service providers had begun to do so at 1-month post-workshop. Therefore, Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training achieved its objectives as outlined in Section 1.3 and, in particular, was effective in building confidence among service providers to integrate their learning into practice to the benefit of the young men with whom they worked. These findings provide a strong rationale for upscaling the delivery of the 1-day workshop and making sufficient resources available to facilitate a broader roll-out of the programme in the future. It is recommended that appropriate funding and resources are made available to ensure that 'Connecting with Young Men' training continues to be delivered in the future.

Recommendation 4: Maintain an explicit focus on the ethos and innovative methodologies that are inherent in the 'Connecting with Young Men' programme

Service providers paid tribute to a number of key aspects of the programme that they attributed to its success and that consistently underpinned its ethos, content and mode of delivery. Specifically, the strengths-based approach to working with young men, the focus on understanding gender as a dynamic construct, the use of experiential and interactive sessions, the integration of ongoing reflective practice, the opportunities for peer networking and support, and the creation of a positive group dynamic, were highlighted as critical components that should be upheld in the future. Future delivery of 'Connecting with Young Men' training should stay true to the ethos and innovative methodologies that are inherent in the programme.

Recommendation 5: Provide increased and tailored resources to service providers that offer practical and tangible examples of best practice on engaging young men

Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training specifically focused on the engagement process i.e. the **why** and **how** of building relationships with young men, rather than offering a new or revised mental health programme i.e. **what** to offer them (Fowler et al, 2015). However, it is evident that many service providers wanted more practical tips on 'how' to initiate and build these relationships. For these service providers, more specific clinical skills such as symptom recognition and/or a defined programme might have been more appropriate. In particular, they believed that citing evidence of what has worked elsewhere would have been beneficial to give a greater insight into the 'how' of working with young men which, they felt, would have given them more tangible ideas of what to try in their own practice (as distinct from bringing back a 'glossy programme'). The EYMP Advisory Group and the Drafting Group should consider ways of integrating such evidence into sessions. In particular, consideration should be given to doing so in the 'Top Tips for Engaging Young Men' session whereby the 'The Top 10 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' of

Engaging with Young Men could be illustrated via the discussion of evidence of good practice in terms of what others have done and/or haven't done elsewhere. Practical resources (hard copy and/or online) could also be made available to service providers for reviewing after the workshop, which would further support them to integrate the learnings from the workshop into practice. Findings from this evaluation also point to the need for the development of new resources and toolkits to support service providers with practical and concrete examples of **what** has worked elsewhere. It is recommended that increased resources and toolkits are made available to support service providers with practical examples of effective practice on engaging young men and that these are tailored to the needs of different service providers.

Recommendation 6: Provide a greater diversity of young male voices and statistics that will be engaging and relevant for service providers, and in keeping with the strengths-based approach underpinning the training

Service providers identified the importance of bringing young male voices into the room and that the audio-visual resource used lacked sufficient diversity. It was also felt that the representation of young men in the 'Heroes and Villains' PowerPoint presentation was unbalanced and at odds with the overall ethos and strengths-based approach of the programme. It is recommended that new audio-visual resources are developed that reflect the diverse experiences and needs of different population groups of young men, and that can play a pivotal role in bringing the future delivery of Unit 6: 'Connecting with Young Men' training alive for training participants. Consideration should also be given to reviewing this resource and, while not shying away from the reality of the 'negative' statistics, an objective critique of how young male 'Heroes' are portrayed should be conducted.

Recommendation 7: Adopt a flexible and targeted approach to programme delivery to ensure it continues to meet the needs of service providers

While consistency in workshop delivery is important from a quality assurance perspective, it emerged that some leverage may need to be afforded to Trainers to adapt the workshop. Specifically, attention ought to be given to: (i) the use of more dynamic techniques (e.g. case study scenarios and role plays) to overcome the energy lag that typically occurs in the afternoon of the workshop and to sustain engagement; (ii) a more flexible approach to the delivery of content - tailored to the needs of a particular target audience or to afford more time to respond to what might emerge for a group rather than rush through a packed agenda; and (iii) offering the workshop over two days, thereby affording more time to do justice to the volume and depth of

content (notwithstanding the practicalities of getting service providers released for two days). Consideration also ought to be given to delivering the 1-day workshop to a critical mass of individuals within particular organisations - with a view to bringing about more meaningful cultural and organisational change with regard to engaging young men. It is recommended that Trainers be afforded a more flexible approach to programme delivery and that key organisations are targeted with more intensive delivery of 'Connecting with Young Men' training.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that the title of the 1-day workshop is aligned with the objectives and content of the workshop

The full title of the programme and that which is used on all marketing materials for recruitment is: "Connecting with Young Men - Engaging Young Men in Mental Health and Wellbeing".

Therefore, it is not surprising that service providers had an expectation that the workshop would have a strong focus on mental health and wellbeing. Many cited the lack of focus on engaging young men around mental health issues as a gap in the workshop that caused, for some, disappointment while for some others, considerable frustration. Both Trainers and Facilitators identified an ambiguity about the focus of the workshop and an incongruence between the workshop content and the focus on mental health and wellbeing. Consensus about whether the focus should be on how to engage and build relationships with young men generally, or around mental health and wellbeing specifically, was not achieved. However, all felt it important in the future that the workshop be reframed to accurately reflect its aims and objectives, so that service providers are in a position to self-select appropriately. With due consideration to Recommendations 2, 4, 5 and 7 - and the future roll-out and possible refinement or development of the programme - the title of the 1-day workshop may warrant review in the future. It is recommended that the focus of the workshop be reviewed and that the title of the workshop be aligned with the objectives and content of the workshop.

Recommendation 9: Provide ongoing support to Trainers to ensure continued diffusion of the 1-day workshop

On-going support for Trainers post-TOT is essential to ensure the ongoing diffusion of the 1-day workshop, and that Trainers are afforded ongoing opportunities for support and professional development. It is well established that post-TOT 'refresher' training - where Trainers are afforded opportunities to share workshop experiences and learn from one another - plays a pivotal role in sustaining 'active' Trainers. It is also important that Trainers who become 'inactive' are afforded

opportunities for co-facilitation and mentoring to enable them to return to the status of 'active' Trainers. It is recommended that appropriate and on-going supports are put in place for Trainers.

Recommendation 10: Consider charging a fee to future participants in the programme

In the context of programme credibility and sustainability, there may be merit in charging a fee to future participants on the programme. Trainers reported indifference and ambivalence amongst some service providers in relation to attending the workshop on time and remaining for the full duration of the workshop. It is, therefore, recommended that the organisers should, in the future, consider charging a fee for participation in the programme. Other mechanisms for sustaining the future roll of the training worthy of exploration include accessing core statutory and/or philanthropic funding.

In conclusion, building capacity among service providers to engage young men around mental and emotional wellbeing is an essential component of mental health promotion and suicide prevention strategies. 'Connecting with Young Men' has been shown to be an effective mechanism for building such capacity, and a plan to sustain its delivery and integration into the professional development of frontline service providers should be developed. The sustained delivery of 'Connecting with Young Men' training requires a dedicated Co-ordinator, ongoing opportunities for support and professional development for Trainers', and quality assurance procedures that underpin the development and adaptation of the 1-day workshop to meet the needs of specific service providers. However, a source of funding is necessary to support future delivery.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Trainers and Organisations

Name	Organisation
Anne Farrell	CIE, Dublin
Ann Scanlon	Irish Heart Foundation, Dublin
Barry Wilson	Ballyhoura Development Ltd, Limerick
Bernadette Rooney	HSE, Dublin
Ailish O'Neill	National Youth Council of Ireland, Dublin
James Barry	National Youth Council of Ireland, Dublin
Honza Konvalinka	Croi na Gallimhe, Galway
Jacqueline Daly	East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support Centre
John Madden	Drogheda Men's Shed
Joseph Nyirenda	Roscommon LEADER Partnership
Kevin Brady	Irish Men's Shed Association, Westmeath
Michael McTigue	Irish Men's Shed Association, Mayo
Naoise Kavanagh	ReachOut, Dublin
Nigel Tate	Gorey Family Resource Centre, Wexford
Paul Gillen	HSE, Galway
Sé Franklin	Men's Development Network, Waterford
Tony Owens	Traveller Men's Worker, Longford

Appendix 2: Reflective Log

- Profound learnings from the training in terms of key take home messages
- Profound learnings from the training in terms of modes of delivery, trainer experience and group dynamics
- Divergent opinions among trainers and what these are
- Issues identified with translating learnings from the training into action in the 1-day training to service providers

Appendix 3: Post-Training Questionnaire for Trainers

Evaluation of EYMP Unit 6

To answer the following questions I would be grateful if you could:

- a) reflect on your experiences of the EYMP Unit 6 'trainers' module and
- b) review the session plans (as per pack) and other resources used (not included in pack yet).

We welcome your honest and detailed feedback, as we are eager to learn from your experiences and reflections.

Q1. Please identify your most significant professional learning(s) to date and discuss how these may influence your approach to working with young men.

Q2. Please identify your most significant personal learning(s) to date and discuss possible implications these may have in your personal life.

Q3. What training design and implementation factors facilitated or inhibited your learning and your capacity to deliver the training you have committed to? (Please use the four bullet points as a guide, but you are not limited to these points)

- Recruitment
- Resources
- Delivery Methods
- Group Dynamic

Q4. How could the training be enhanced or improved? Please identify gaps in the content, resources and elsewhere.

Q5. How confident are you that you will be able to deliver the 3 training programmes you have committed to? (where 1 is not at all confident and 10 is very confident)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Q6. How competent do you feel to deliver the training? (where 1 is not at all competent and 10 is very competent)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Q7. What will support you to deliver the training?

Q8. What will inhibit you from delivering the training?

Appendix 4: Pre and Post-Training Questionnaires for Service Providers

Evaluation: PRE-TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

Researcher Use Only

Name: _____

Participant Code: _____

Organisation Representing: _____

Job Title: _____

Email: _____

Mobile: _____

Demographic Information

1. Date of birth (date/month/year) _____
2. Sex (please circle) M F
3. How long have you been working with your current organisation? _____
4. How long have you been working in this area? _____
5. Which of the following categories best describes the organisation that you represent? (please circle)

CommunityVoluntaryStatutory

Other (please describe) _____
6. What geographical area does your organisation work within? (please circle)

LocalRegionalNational
7. Please describe the type of service(s) that **you** provide within your organisation under the following headings and in as much detail as possible please:
 - a. Area of interest e.g. counselling services _____

 - b. Target population group(s) _____
8. How would you rate your level of knowledge with respect to engaging young men?
(1 = very poor and 10 = excellent) Please circle one.

12345678910

9. How would you rate your level of skill with respect to engaging young men in your services? (1 = very poor and 10 = excellent) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. During the past year, how successful have you been at engaging young men in your services? (1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know

11. How successful do you think you can be in identifying priorities for young men's mental health that could meet the needs of your organisation? (1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know

12. How successful do you think you can be in improving your capacity to engage young men in your service during the next year? (1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know

13. How successful do you think you can be in convincing other service providers within your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year? (1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know Not Applicable

14. How successful do you think you can be in convincing other service providers beyond your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year? (1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know Not Applicable

15. What has motivated you to attend the 'Engaging Young Men' training?

Evaluation: IMMEDIATELY POST-TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

Researcher Use Only

Name: _____

Participant Code _____

Organisation Representing: _____

Date of Training

Job Title: _____

Email: _____

Mobile: _____

-
1. How satisfied are you with the training (1 = very unsatisfied and 10 = completely satisfied)
Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. (a) What was the **most valuable** aspect of the 'Engaging Young Men' training?

- (b) What was the **least valuable** aspect of the 'Engaging Young Men' training?

3. What else would you have liked to have been covered in the training?

4. How would you rate your level of knowledge now with respect to engaging young men?
(1= very poor and 10 = excellent) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What personal or professional learning have you gained as a result of today's training?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

6. What will you do differently as a result of the 'Engaging Young Men' training?

7. How would you rate your level of skill now with respect to engaging young men in your services? (1 = very poor and 10 = excellent) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. How successful do you think you can be in identifying priorities for engaging young men that could meet the needs of your organisation?
(1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know

9. How successful do you think you can be in improving your capacity to engage young men in your service during the next year?
(1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know

10. How successful do you think you can be in convincing other service providers **within** your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year?
(1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know Not Applicable

11. How successful do you think you can be in convincing other service providers **beyond** your organisation to prioritise engaging young men in their work plans for the coming year?
(1 = not at all successful and 5 = extremely successful) Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 Don't Know Not Applicable

Appendix 5: Telephone Interview Topic Guide

Prior to attending the training

- How did you hear about the training?
- What motivated you to do this training?
- What skills / experience did you bring to the training?
- What were your expectations of the training? Were these met?

The training experience

- What was your overall experience of the training?
- Did the training achieve what it set out to achieve? [Show them the aims and objectives]
- Please name your professional learnings from the training? [Integrate learning into practice?]
- Have you experimented regarding the use of some of the workshops? [Probe their experience of using the material in practice]
 - What have you used?
 - How did you use it?
 - What was the context of using the workshops?
 - How was it received?
 - What is your confidence levels like after that experience?
- How has the training influenced your practice in the past month? [Direct engagement with young men and/or discussion regarding business plans and strategy with colleagues]
- As a concept, do those who work with young men require training in the area of engagement in mental health?
- What were the most beneficial aspects of the training?
- How could the training be enhanced or improved?

Going Forward

- What plans have you to incorporate the training into your work in future?
- Have you considered integrating the training into the broader business plan / strategic direction of your organisation?
- How do you think you might best use this training in your work?
- Do you have any concerns about using the training in practice?
- What supports do you need in order to use the training?

Appendix 6: Topic Guide for Trainers' Focus Group

1. Since the EYM training, looking back what are your thoughts and reflections on the training?
2. How has the training influenced your work with young men?
3. What has been your experience regarding the recruitment of service providers for the 1-day training?
4. What was it like for you when delivering the training?
5. What aspects went well / did not go well?
6. What has been the general feedback from service providers?
7. What facilitated / hindered your ability to deliver the training?

Appendix 7: Service Providers' Most Significant Personal and Professional Learning

Most Significant Personal Learning	Frequency
Transitions to adulthood raised memories and reflections on personal experiences	1
Training beneficial to life-long learning which helps personal life	1
Learning about multiple intelligences and passing this knowledge on	1
Reflections on current engagement with young men and how to adjust it accordingly	1
Do not assume anything when working with young men	1
Reflecting on my own and others journey into adulthood	1
Success does not mean happiness	1
The training has made me aware of my approach to style of parenting	2
More aware of the issues young men may have	1
Exploring my own masculinity	1
Be flexible when working with young men	1
Learned ways on how the health of young men in the community can be improved	1
Reflecting on questioning and exploring my own value base	1
Recognition of how our values shape our thoughts and interpretations	1
No Response	2
Total:	17

Most Significant Professional Learning	Frequency
Reflecting on personal experience has helped learning	1
Greater awareness of what to expect from EYM training programme	1
Society and young men may view personal success differently	1
Existence of EYMP mapping report	1
Men will open up in a safe space	1
Multiple intelligences and how we are all smart in some way	2
The various learning styles	2

Rules of engagement with young men	1
The training has enlightened me on how to approach my work	1
Training has reinforced the work I do with young men	1
The open interaction of the group work	1
Shared experiences with others and how this can be used to improve engagement	1
The value of the experiential model of training	1
Salutogenic assets-based approach	1
None	1
Total:	17