Title: Transforming care: problems and possible solutions
Authors: Sinclair N.
Abstract: Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to raise issues about Transforming Care (TC) and discuss possible solutions. Design/methodology/approach: Reflections and commentary on Transforming Care following Painter et al.’s article on correlates for the risk of admission to specialist hospitals. Findings: Concerns are raised about the initial assumptions of TC, in particular the composition of the inpatient group and impact of the existing legal framework on reducing this population. The lack of cohesion between Care and Treatment Reviews and Care Programme Approach reviews is noted, and combining meetings is suggested. Originality/value: The relevance of Wolfensberger’s social devaluation analysis is explored and O’Brien’s Personal Futures Planning is recommended as a potential way of drawing these currently disparate approaches together around the individual client.
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Download from: If you are an NAS employee you can read this journal online from your NAS computer.
Keywords: Care; Autism; Mental Health Act 1983; Intellectual disability; Community; Forensic services; Secure services; Hospitals
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Classification Journal Collection

Title: Mental health in prisons: eighth report of session 2017-19: report, together with formal minutes relating to the report
Authors: Committee of Public Accounts
Abstract: There were 84,674 adults in prison in England and Wales in 2016–17, between 10% and 90% of whom are thought to have mental health issues. Rates of self-inflicted deaths and self-harm in prisons have risen significantly in the last five years, suggesting that mental health and overall well-being in prison has declined. There were 120 self-inflicted deaths in prison in 2016 and 40,161 incidents of self-harm, the highest on record. Prisoners with mental health issues face huge challenges in our prison system which witnesses told us that the current prison environment is often ill equipped to deal with. Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is responsible for the management and operation of prisons in England and Wales and ensuring that the prison environment is safe, secure and decent. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for prison policy and commissioning services in prisons. NHS England is responsible for healthcare in prisons, both for physical and mental health. In 2016–17, NHS England spent an estimated £400 million providing healthcare in adult prisons in England, of which it estimates £150 million was spent on mental health services and substance misuse services, although it could not provide an exact figure.
Publication date: 2017
Publisher: House of Commons
Keywords: Mental health; Prison
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CID: 47106
Classification Booklets and reports

Title: A critical review of current police training and policy for autism spectrum disorder
Authors: Hepworth D.
Abstract: Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to critically review the current police training and criminal justice policy regarding the treatment of suspects with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) during the initial stages of the criminal justice system (CJS), and provide potential policy reform and areas for further research. Design/methodology/approach: By reviewing extant literature, research and policy documents, this paper provides a critical review of the current policy and training for dealing with suspects with ASD in the current CJS in England and Wales for suspects with ASD. Findings: This paper proposes that current policy and police staff training is insufficient during all initial stages of the criminal justice process. Although there are emerging policies and schemes which are promising, they require further research and national participation. Policy reform and improved training is required to ensure minimal opportunities for miscarriages of justice to those individuals with ASD. Originality/value: This paper provides a chronological journey through the initial stages of the CJS in England and Wales for a suspect with ASD, and the challenges that they may face. Suggestions are made based on criminological and psychological research to remedy the potential opportunities for miscarriages of justice.
Publication date: 2017
Address: Diana Hepworth, PhD Researcher, University of Salford, Manchester; email:
Title: Incompatibilities and seclusion of patients with an autism spectrum disorder detained in high-secure psychiatric care
Authors: Murphy D.; Bush E-L.; Puzzo I.
Abstract: Purpose: Whilst individuals with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) represent a relatively small proportion of patients detained in high-secure psychiatric care (HSPC), previous research suggests that such individuals present with difficulties and needs significantly different from non-ASD patient groups. However, to date, there has not been any formal examination of how individuals with an ASD are represented in records of key risk management actions (i.e. seclusions and incompatibilities with other patients). The paper aims to discuss these issues. Design/methodology/approach: An observation of hospital data examining two key risk management actions for a group of individuals with an ASD is detained in one HSPC hospital. These include the number of formal incompatibilities with other patients and the number of, and hours in, seclusion. Both actions require extra staff and security provisions and can decelerate the rehabilitation and recovery process. Findings: In addition to suggesting an overall increase in the general prevalence of ASD within the hospital compared to previous estimates, individuals with an ASD appear to have a disproportionately higher number of incompatibilities with other patients compared to those patients without an ASD and experience more and longer periods of seclusions. Originality/value: Although the methodological limitations of the study are acknowledged, explanations for the findings are discussed along with future research and recommendations as to how ASD patients might be best managed in the hospital. It is argued that the findings add further support for a specialist ASD service within HSPC.
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Keywords: Patients; Autism spectrum disorders; Secure services; Care; Forensic services; Psychiatry
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Classification Journal Collection

Title: Revealing the training on intellectual and developmental disabilities among forensic mental health professionals: a survey report
Authors: Sarrett J. C.
Abstract: Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to assess the training forensic mental health professionals in the USA receive on intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Given the difficulties obtaining accurate prevalence rates of these disabilities in criminal justice settings, it is important to understand how these disabilities are being evaluated and the level of understanding about these disabilities evaluators hold. Design/methodology/approach: An online survey was distributed to forensic mental health professionals in the USA that included questions on training opportunities in graduate education, post-graduate forensic training, and professional training opportunities. Participants were also asked about their current work, how they assess I/DD, and their estimates on the percentage of cases they see with I/DD. Findings: Respondents reported some training that focused heavily on assessment methods. Most respondents estimated between 5 and 25 percent of their cases involving I/DD and reported using a wide range of assessment methods. Finally, many respondents reporting more training needed in this area. Practical implications: More training is needed for forensic mental health professionals on identifying I/DD. Additionally, professional guidelines on what tools and methods to rely on to identify these disabilities is paramount to ensure homogeneity of methods and, thus, better estimates of overall prevalence in criminal justice settings. Originality/value: This is the first assessment focused on how forensic mental health professionals are trained to identify I/DD and can be used to improve identification of I/DD in forensic settings.
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This paper is written by a multi-disciplinary team who work within a low and medium secure hospital setting for adults with learning disabilities (LD), some of whom have autism. They were keen to explore the views of service users with LD and autism to ascertain how they felt about the service and to consider changes to the service might be helpful. Eight adults with an average age of 37 years were interviewed and their responses analysed for common themes. Their average length of stay in the hospital was 9 years, with some having been there for 13 years or more. While most of the eight people appeared to be reasonably satisfied with the services they received, most referred to some aspects they found problematic. Given the fact that most service users in the study lived there for several years, creating a service which they value and feel comfortable within is a priority for staff and managers in this and similar forensic services. As the authors suggest, there are few studies which consult people with LD and autism for their views, and more needs to be done to develop ways to do this effectively and on a regular basis. Although the authors do not discuss how well the service performs in terms of its ability to move service users out into less secure settings, this paper clearly raises the question as to whether all those currently in such services need to continue living there and the type of service which needs to be created as a next step.