



# CordisPulse

## August 2023

Welcome to August's edition of the CordisPulse – a monthly digest of key research and policy developments across the sectors in which Cordis Bright provides research and consultancy services, i.e. adult social care and health, children and young people's services, and criminal justice.

This month we were very interested in the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Respite Rooms Pilot Programme Evaluation: Final Report](#). The evaluation suggests the pilot has been successful in providing accommodation and support to victims of Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls experiencing, or at risk of, street homelessness. This report contributes to the evidence base of “what works” in terms of supporting victims of Domestic Abuse and VAWG.

Earlier this year we hosted a webinar, ‘Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes (DAPPs): what works?’, which also focused on improving outcomes for victims through assessing what works in changing Domestic Abuse perpetrator behaviours. The webinar covered: the need and focus of DAPPs, commissioning DAPPs, what works in the design and delivery of DAPPs and how the evidence base can be developed. We were joined by around 90 stakeholders from local authorities, the NHS, Police and Crime Commissioners, voluntary and community sector organisations, and academic institutions.

To view the webinar please [click here](#). We invite you to share them with anyone in your network who is involved in commissioning, designing and delivering responses to domestic abuse, including programmes for perpetrators. If you are interested in connecting with us to continue the conversation around domestic abuse or if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this month's Pulse, please do contact us on 020 7330 9170 or email: [stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk](mailto:stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk).  
Best wishes,

Dr Stephen Boxford  
Director & Head of Research



If you would prefer not to receive future editions of the CordisPulse, please click 'unsubscribe' at the very end of this email. If you would like to discuss anything that arises from the Pulse (or if there are others who you think would like to receive copies) then please contact Dr Stephen Boxford on [stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk](mailto:stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk) or 020 7330 9170.

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## **Cordis Bright News**

### **Published this month: Implementation and process evaluation of West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Sports, Creative Arts and Mentoring Provision**

We conducted a comprehensive implementation and process evaluation of West Yorkshire Combined Authority Violence Reduction Unit's Sports, Creative Arts, and Mentoring Provision. The provision was developed to provide additional support for young people at risk of school exclusion and serious youth violence in West Yorkshire. Its goal was to reduce serious youth violence and involvement in the criminal justice system by addressing persistent absenteeism and exclusions from school.

The report was published this month, you can read it [here](#).

## Adult Social Care and Health

### Reports

#### Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The caring penalty

Unpaid carers provide an invaluable service to society, but they shoulder a financial penalty in doing so. This report looks at the financial impact of unpaid care, and how policies can help mitigate it. Using data from [Understanding Society](#), this report looks at the magnitude, causes, and distribution of the carer pay penalty, as well as its evolution over time.

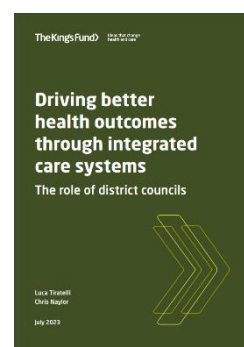


Recommendations from the report included:

- Tackling the caring penalty requires a radical redesign of work and how we perceive the role of care within it. This means support to give all carers genuine choice about how to juggle work and care, mitigate the financial impact of losing or reducing paid work, and prevent people from dropping out of work if their caring responsibilities increase.
- Any future settlement around care – unpaid or formal – should include a new Statutory Carer Pay entitlement, which mirrors statutory maternity pay and provides earnings-related financial support for carers with high-intensity caring demands up to nine months. This maintains the link between the carer and work, unlike Carers Allowance, and would prevent the financial shock of significantly reducing or exiting work, as well as reducing the demand for formal care services in the future.
- A wider reform of job design and employee leave to help carers juggle work and care and encourage more men to take on unpaid care, including an employee's right to have flexible working from day one and a more generous paternity leave entitlement.

#### The King's Fund. Driving better health outcomes through integrated care systems: The role of district councils

This report aims to improve understanding of the relationships between local government and integrated care boards. It found district councils can play a valuable role within integrated care systems (ICSs) because they can influence the wider determinants of health, can act and react in fast and agile ways, and have strong, close connections with local communities.



The report finds that district councils need to actively promote the contribution they can make to system working, identify areas of shared priority with other councils, accept accountability for delivering agreed goals on behalf of the system, and invest in building relationships across the ICS.

The authors identified five principles that underpin successful involvement of district councils in ICSs:

1. Creating effective local partnership structures that can drive collective action on the wider determinants of health.

2. Aligning agendas across levels within the ICS so there is a 'golden thread' connecting work at the system level and more local partnership work.
3. Embedding district council leadership throughout the system.
4. Investing in relationships between partners.
5. Building shared purpose.

### **NHS England. Case study: Pharmacy contraception service – growing people's confidence in local NHS care**

A recent pilot testing how NHS community pharmacies could deliver ongoing oral contraception to patients has shown how the new service is improving convenience for patients and overall access to repeat prescriptions. Pharmacies based in the heart of communities can offer a friendly and professional place for people to receive advice and support for their contraception management, without the need for a visit to a GP or sexual health clinic.

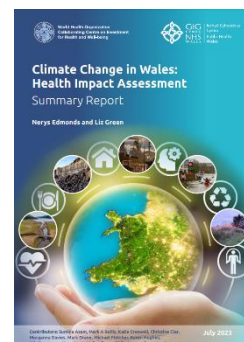
The idea of the pharmacy contraception service is to create additional capacity for ongoing oral contraception access that is more convenient for patients through longer opening hours or drop-in services, for example. The service moved from pilot to a national advanced pharmacy service in April 2023. This means all pharmacies in England can now choose to participate. The case study follows Ben Morris, Community Pharmacist at Fairway Pharmacy, Stoke-on-Trent.

### **Public Health Wales. Climate Change in Wales: Health Impact Assessment Summary Report**

Public Health Wales has published a Health Impact Assessment on the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change across Wales. The assessment recognises that climate change is the greatest threat to health and wellbeing that Wales will face this century.

Health and wellbeing depend on important ecosystems such as water, air and soil to provide the essential conditions for a healthy life. Changes to our climate such as wetter weather in the winter, flooding, coastal erosion, and drier, hotter summers will have significant impacts on physical, mental and social health and wellbeing such as increasing heat related illness, mental health problems because of experiencing flooding, and disruption to essential services.

This report provides a high-level, evidence-based strategic overview of the main health and wellbeing impacts of climate change in Wales. The Health Impact Assessment identified a number of population groups who are more vulnerable to the health and wellbeing impacts of climate. It also identified that climate change will have impacts across all of the social determinants of health, some of which have the potential to impact across the whole population.





## Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health and Social Care. Health-led Trials impact evaluation reports



These reports contain the detailed findings, analysis and explanation of the methodologies for the Health-led Trials, a large scale randomised-controlled trial testing time-limited provision of Individual Placement and Support for people with moderate to mild mental and physical health conditions in primary care.

### Evaluation of the Health-led Employment Trials

Trialling Individual Placement and Support for a new cohort: implementation and 6-month outcomes report

By Becci Newton, Rosie Gossler, Richard Dorsett, James Cusack, Bianca Gough, Amelia Benson, Joe Cusack and Karen Winsle

August 2022

These reports provide a comprehensive source of evidence on Individual Placement and Support for policymakers, academics, local authorities and practitioners. This research contributes valuable insights that inform the design of the ongoing expansion of the Individual Placement and Support service, as well as the future delivery of Universal Support.

## Briefings

### Social Care Institute for Excellence. Putting people at the heart of decision-making

A major new survey looks at how co-production is perceived in the UK today. Co-production is about working in equal partnership with people using services, carers, families and citizens. Co-production offers the chance to transform social care and health provision to a model that offers people real choice and control.

The survey, funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, explores how the term co-production is defined by staff in the adult social care workforce and service users; looks at individual experiences and the lessons learnt from working in a co-productive way; and examines a potential lack of cohesion between various levels of the workforce hierarchy and people who draw on services. It comes at the start of the eighth annual National Co-production Week, organised by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE).

The survey found that 59% of people with lived experience report having had opportunities to be involved in co-producing their own care and support, whilst only 37% have been involved in co-producing services or policies. Many respondents – both in the workforce and those who draw on services - spoke of a sense of distrust and disillusionment with co-production, saying it can become diluted and lose its meaning.

### Office for National Statistics. Rising ill-health and economic inactivity because of long-term sickness, UK: 2019 to 2023

This set of experimental statistics estimate the different health conditions of the working-age population and those economically inactive because of long-term sickness.

The main points are:

- More working-age people are self-reporting long-term health conditions, with 36% saying that they had at least one long-term health condition in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2023, up from 31% in the same period in 2019 and 29% in 2016.

- The number of people economically inactive because of long-term sickness has risen to over 2.5 million people, an increase of over 400,000 since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- For those economically inactive because of long-term sickness, nearly two-fifths (38%) reported having five or more health conditions (up from 34% in 2019), suggesting that many have interlinked and complex health issues.
- Over 1.35 million (53%) of those inactive because of long-term sickness reported that they had depression, bad nerves or anxiety in Quarter 1 2023, with the majority (over 1 million) reporting it as a secondary health condition rather than their main one.

### **Office for National Statistics. Care homes and estimating the self-funding population, England: 2022 to 2023**

This article provides an estimation of the size of the self-funding population in care homes in England.

The main points are:

- From 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023, there was a statistically significant 3.1% increase in the number of care home residents (372,035); of these, 37.0% (137,480) were self-funders, which is not a significant change since last year.
- The South East remained the region with the highest proportion of self-funders in care homes (47.5%), which is statistically significantly higher than the North East, which had the lowest proportion of self-funders (26.4%).
- Care homes providing care for older people remained the care homes with the highest proportion of self-funders (48.9%), which was statistically significantly higher than all other care home types; care homes for younger adults remained the lowest (2.0%).
- Smaller care homes, with 1 to 19 beds, remained the care homes with the lowest proportion of self-funders (12.0%), which is statistically significantly lower than all other care home sizes.
- Of care homes with ratings, care homes rated outstanding remained the care homes with the highest proportion of self-funders (50.9%), which was statistically significantly higher than care homes rated inadequate, which remained the lowest (24.0%).
- The coverage of the care home population improved in this release (75.4%) compared with the previous release (68.6%).

## Tools and Guidance

### NHS England. Acute inpatient mental health care for adults and older adults

In 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan was published, together with the NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan, which set out ambitious, funded plans, to transform mental health services. Shortly after this, the COVID-19 pandemic began, which had a major impact across the health system, including mental health services. As a result of pandemic pressures and the increases in cost of living currently facing households, inpatient mental health services have experienced sustained rises in demand and acuity, which have been particularly challenging due to the current workforce pressures across the NHS.

While adult and older adult acute inpatient mental health teams continue to work hard to deliver high quality care in line with the commitments set out in the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan, feedback from those who work in and access these services indicates that while some people have positive experiences, others can experience issues accessing care that truly meets their needs and supports their recovery.

It is vital that every person who needs acute inpatient mental health care receives timely access to high quality, therapeutic inpatient care, close to home and in the least restrictive setting possible. To support this, NHS England has produced this guidance to set out its vision for effective care in adult and older adult acute inpatient mental health services, together with resources and suggestions to support delivery. In this vision:

- Care is personalised.
- Admissions are timely and purposeful.
- Hospital stays are therapeutic.
- Discharge is timely and effective.
- Care is joined up across the health and care system.
- Services actively identify and address inequalities.
- Services grow and develop the acute inpatient mental health workforce.
- There is continuous improvement of the inpatient pathway.

## Children and Young People's Services

### Reports

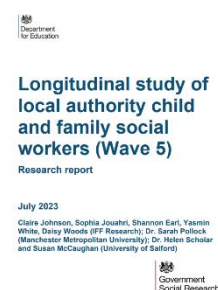
#### Department for Education. Longitudinal study of child and family social workers

This longitudinal study investigated recruitment, retention and career progression in local authority child and family social work over 5 years (2018 to 2022). It provides workforce information for employers and policy makers.

The study was updated in July 2023 with the Wave 5 report, which included the longitudinal analysis of key findings for social workers who took part in all 5 waves of the survey, the employment situation in 2022 and changes since previous waves in relation to:

- Employment journey
- Workplace wellbeing
- Job satisfaction and career progression
- Short-term career plans
- Reasons for leaving social work
- The experience of those in their assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE)
- The challenges of and opportunities for social work.

The Wave 5 report finds the majority of child and family social workers plan to continue working in the profession in 12 months' time, although an increased proportion at Wave 5 are considering moving into agency work, where the appeal has consistently been higher pay (and to a lesser extent, increased flexibility). This appeal seems to have increased and the qualitative interviews suggest this may be influenced by heightened cost of living pressures at Wave 5 compared with previous waves.



#### Department for Education. Foster carer recruitment and conversion rates

This small-scale study investigated foster carer recruitment and conversion rates from enquiry to application and approval. It provides information for fostering services and policy makers and covers:

- Marketing and advertising
- The recruitment process
- Data collection and use
- Ofsted conversion rates



The report makes a set of recommendations based on the research:

- Establish a centralised recruitment service for foster carers.
- Ensure that fostering services can influence the narratives around fostering on social media platforms. This requires creating content that is fun, engaging and captures the attention of the public.
- Services should better utilise existing foster carers in the recruitment process.

- Services should collect more qualitative data, particularly from prospective foster carers on why they did not progress with their application.
- Learning and good practice should be shared between services.
- Services should focus on retention of existing foster carers to reduce pressure on recruitment.

### Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Youth engagement impact study

The UK Youth Parliament is a 2-year programme, involving 300 elected young people aged 11 to 18 from across the United Kingdom to represent the views of young people at local and national levels. The Youth Policy Development Group involved 40 young people aged 16 to 25 in England who were consulted on policies by central government departments and ministers. From April 2023, both programmes were combined under the banner of the UK Youth Parliament.

The impact study explores programme reach and awareness, delivery, impact and outcomes for participating young people, and on policy processes more broadly. The report summarises what has worked well and opportunities for improvement in both programmes, identified by current and former participants, and other stakeholders. Recommendations from the report will be explored further by programme administrators and delivery partners under the new UK Youth Parliament programme. The Lundy model for child participation was utilised to engage youth voice throughout the evaluation process.

### Local Government Association. The implementation of family hubs: Emerging strategies for success

This report covers case studies of six councils to show the diversity of approaches to developing and leading family hubs. Some key themes were drawn from the case studies in the report. All councils are providing family hubs services for families with children aged between 0-19, and up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Most family hubs buildings are being converted from children's centres, though councils will generally continue to offer children's centres as part of their family hub network. Beyond the physical buildings, the family hubs agenda has provided councils with an opportunity to rethink how they design and deliver services to best meet families' needs.

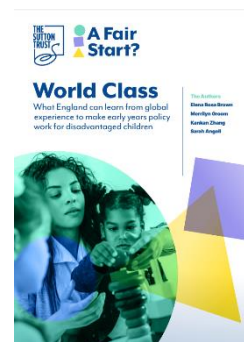


The importance of strong partnerships was highlighted by all councils, whether with organisations who are helping to deliver the services, or with public bodies such as schools and GPs who can help signpost children and families to family hubs. Councils are making good use of local commissioning arrangements to help deliver services, with the voluntary sector often being engaged for this purpose. No councils are running all family hubs services on their own, and some are almost entirely managing their services through commissioning arrangements, such as Essex County Council.

Overall, there is a high degree of energy and enthusiasm about family hubs from council officers. They see the value of the hubs, and all councils are making great strides towards developing and improving their services.

## The Sutton Trust. World Class: What England can learn from global experience to make early years policy work for disadvantaged children

England's early childhood education and care (ECEC) system has leapt up the political agenda in recent years, with significant interest from both major political parties. Given that there is increasing appetite to reform England's early years system, this report looks at what the country can learn from others to apply to that process.



Example countries, nations and jurisdictions include some of the 'usual suspects', whose early years systems are very well developed and frequently held up as exemplars of good practice (such as the Nordic countries), but also include countries where provision has been improved more recently, or where specific aspects of their early years systems could be beneficial for England. The report also includes cautionary tales, where changes made by countries have resulted in unintended consequences or poor outcomes. Throughout, learning and implications for England's early years system are highlighted.

Some of the lessons for England from international best practice found in the report are:

- Children benefit from being in settings with highly qualified staff.
- Having a higher number of staff to children supports better quality provision.
- England should remove barriers for disadvantaged families to increase participation.

## Barnardo's. Invisible Children: Understanding the risk of the cost-of-living crisis and school holidays on child sexual and criminal exploitation

Barnardo's is concerned that the cost-of-living crisis will mean that more children are at risk of exploitation, and that statutory and voluntary sector services will struggle to respond to this increased demand. We know that the cost-of-living crisis is having an unprecedented impact on children, young people, and families, with many struggling to access food, fuel, clothing and safe and warm housing. This report suggests that, as with past crises, organised criminal gangs are capitalising on rising costs and financial pressures, leaving children more exposed to criminal and sexual exploitation. On top of this, already-limited services to protect and safeguard child victims of exploitation are being stretched, meaning that many child victims are going without critically needed support.

The report makes several recommendations for action to tackle child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation. Some of these recommendations are:

- All governments across the UK should invest in and expand the provision of specific support services for victims of child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.
- The UK Government should introduce a statutory definition of child criminal exploitation in England to better help professionals identify victims, and make sure that victims are supported appropriately.
- The UK Government should strengthen protections from online child criminal exploitation within the Online Safety Bill.

- The Scottish Government should publish an updated National Action Plan to tackle child exploitation and abuse in Scotland.

### **Early Intervention Foundation. Evaluating systemic practice within the Supporting Families Programme**

This series of reports presents What Works for Early Intervention and Children's Social Care's findings around the potential implementation and evaluation of systemic practice in Early Help services, helping to prepare for future evaluation.

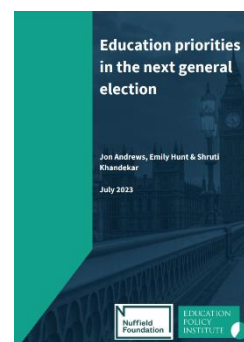
The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is seeking to commission a pilot evaluation of a promising practice approach – the psychologically-informed key worker approach based on systemic practice. This series of reports is intended to help build the evidence base and prepare for future evaluation.

These reports take an important first step in exploring how the systemic practice model could be implemented and evaluated, whether this is feasible and whether it has the potential to improve outcomes. Recommended next steps are:

1. Establish an agreed and clearly defined model of systemic practice, so that it can be implemented consistently across key workers and local areas.
2. Develop a refined logic model which can be tested in future evaluation.

### **Education Policy Institute. Education priorities in the next general election**

Following the pandemic's disruption and over a decade of austerity, the education system in England faces a number of challenges in the years ahead. But, with a general election anticipated next year, there is a genuine risk that education will not secure the profile it requires given wider economic issues and demands on public services.



For the first time, the Education Policy Institute, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, is providing a summary of the best evidence on current education challenges and effective policy interventions in order to assist political parties in drawing up their manifesto pledges on education. They make a number of calls on any incoming government.

In the early years this means:

- Simplifying the funding systems and weighting it more heavily toward children from low-income families and children with SEND.
- Publishing and implementing an early years strategy that will create a sustainable model for providers that is also affordable for families, including rolling out the Family Hub model in England.

In schools this means:

- Tackling widening gaps in pupil attainment between vulnerable learners and their peers.
- Reforming the current accountability framework, to ensure it is not adversely impacting education.

- Clarifying the role of local authorities within the now predominantly academised school system.
- Providing mental health support throughout schools.

## Tools and Guidance

### NSPCC. Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) framework and audit

This framework is designed to help local areas develop and improve multi-agency responses to children displaying harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). It provides a coordinated, systematic and evidence-based approach to recognising and responding to the risks and needs of this vulnerable group.

The framework seeks to:

- Support an integrated understanding of, and response to, HSB.
- Identify a continuum of responses to children and young people displaying HSB, ranging from early community-based identification and support with low-risk cases, to assessment, intervention and intensive work with the highest risk and needs.
- Promote effective assessment as key to preventing unnecessary use of specialist time and intensive resources with lower risk cases.
- Ensure children and families are offered the right level of support by suitably trained and skilled workers.

The framework promotes five domains that cover the essential elements of developing and delivering an integrated and effective HSB service. These five domains are: responses, prevention, assessment, interventions, and development.



## Criminal Justice

### Reports

#### Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Respite Rooms pilot programme evaluation: final report



The Respite Rooms pilot programme, funded by DLUHC (£5.7 million), provided short stay accommodation facilities with intensive support to help vulnerable rough sleepers affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence to get off the street and out of danger.

Respite Rooms Pilot Programme Evaluation:  
Final Report

From October 2021 to March 2023, the pilot programme operated across 12 local authorities.

Prepared by RPT Research on behalf of DLUHC  
July 2023

DLUHC commissioned this evaluation to assess what constituted good delivery of the Respite Rooms services, to understand the impact of the programme, and, in particular, to identify what is most effective in helping such vulnerable individuals to access the support they need to make choices and decisions around next steps for recovery.

The evaluation found that the programme was highly effective in supporting 792 vulnerable rough sleepers affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

#### Ministry of Justice. HMCTS Reform Evaluation: Rapid Evidence Assessments

The Right to Know (RTK) LTD conducted four Rapid Evidence Assessments as part of the Ministry of Justice's Overarching Evaluation of His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) Reform programme, on the following themes:

- Online services and access to justice
- Remote hearings and access to justice
- Centralising the workforce and access to justice
- Online services user support and access to justice.

The report outlines the approach taken and presents the finding from the four Rapid Evidence Assessments.

As many of the reforms are introducing new tools, services and systems to the courts and tribunals, evidence is limited across the four themes of reform activity. A key message throughout the reviews is the need to improve knowledge, and by implication, data, particularly regarding digital service provision. Further empirical and experimental research to evaluate court reform is encouraged.

#### His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. Police performance: Getting a grip



This report is based on findings from the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) 2021/22 inspection programme. The report finds that too often and in too many forces, the public is being failed by their police service.

Police performance  
Getting a grip

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The main points of the report are:

- Poor performance management is leading to poor service delivery. During inspection, many forces were failing to properly understand and manage their own performance.
- Poor use of data is leading to poorly informed decisions. Police weren't collecting data about all the things they should be, and where they did, they weren't accurately and consistently analysing it.
- Inadequate understanding of demand means some forces operate in crisis mode. In many forces, planning had become short-term and unsustainable.
- The workforce is increasingly under-resourced and under-skilled.
- Already scarce resources shouldn't be focused on non-police activity and 'failure demand'. Officers were spending a high proportion of time responding to demand that was unrelated to policing, for example mental health. 'Failure demand' refers to where a member of the public calls many times because their issue was not resolved on first contact.
- First-line supervisors are being let down. Supervisors frequently had high workloads, which made good supervision more difficult.
- The public is too often being failed at the first point of contact. Too often there were long delays in calls being answered.

### **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales: Annual Report 2022-23**

This Annual Report from Chief Inspector Charlie Taylor covers 83 inspection reports, independent reviews of progress and thematic reports published between April 2022 and the end of March 2023.

The report outlines how despite the lifting of the final pandemic restrictions in May 2022, many prisons are still failing to return to pre-pandemic regimes which support prisoners' rehabilitation.



Other key findings of the report are:

- There was too little time out of cell in most men's prisons, many of which were overcrowded and in poor condition.
- There were poor or not sufficiently good purposeful activity outcomes in all but one prison inspected; this was particularly concerning in men's category C prisons.
- Not enough key work was being done with prisoners, largely due to staff shortages.
- The treatment of women in prison suffering from extreme mental health difficulties was not good enough.
- Violence remained a significant issue in youth custody with the use of 'keep apart' to manage high levels of conflict between groups.
- There were largely positive conditions in immigration removal centres, but serious underlying weaknesses at the Kent short-term holding facilities holding migrants.
- Those held in court custody received reasonably good care.

Mr Taylor called for establishments to make sure that prisoners are given the help they need to move away from crime into more productive lives:

"Over the last year I have consistently raised concerns with governors, the prison service and ministers that prisoners who have not had sufficient opportunities to become involved with education, training or work, and have spent their sentences languishing in their cells, are more likely to reoffend when they come out. While I recognise the challenges in reopening regimes and am not encouraging practice that would increase the risk of violence for either prisoners or staff, I have become increasingly frustrated by prisons whose future plans are so vague that it is hard to see when progress is going to be made."

He concluded:

"In the next year I hope to see a significant improvement in the amount of time prisoners are spending in purposeful activity. The best governors have showed us what is possible; it is time for others to follow."

## Prison Reform Trust. Locked In? Achieving penal change in the context of crisis and scandal

Moments of crisis and scandal are an ever-present feature of the political cycle and the decisions taken in the heat of the moment can, and frequently do, have consequences and policy legacies that last for decades. The neat distinction sometimes drawn between 'normal' and 'exceptional' times is a convenient fiction that distracts us from how the criminal justice system operates.

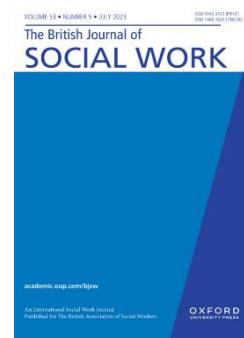
This discussion paper aims to shine a light on these important themes, and support those with a stake in the penal system to better understand the forces at work during these intense periods.



Produced in collaboration with the Prison Reform Trust's Building Futures Programme, it encourages a conversation about the tools and resources needed to navigate a more principled course during times of extraordinary turmoil.

## The British Journal of Social Work. Ideological Dilemmas in Social Work: Justice Social Workers in Scotland Talk about Gender in Practice

It has long been acknowledged that gender matters in social work, not least within justice social work, given the over-representation of men within the criminal justice system. Whilst there is significant theorising about the role of gender in criminal justice, there has been little empirical examination of how social workers understand and address gender in practice.

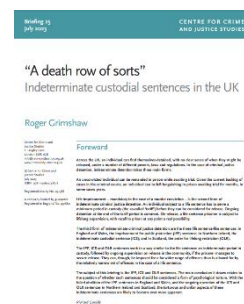


This article sets out to redress this omission by introducing a novel study of the expressed views of justice social workers (JSWs) in Scotland on gender in their work. The findings are challenging. They demonstrate that JSWs talk about gender in complex and, at times, seemingly inconsistent ways; the concept of ideological dilemmas is used as a vehicle through which to interrogate this further.

The conclusions of the article suggest that it is not necessary to resolve the conflicts and complexities that are an inevitable response to, and expression of, the multiple and often competing discourses within which JSW practitioners operate on a daily basis, but we do need to make space for these conflicts in practice. A person-centred approach to gender, and an intersectional approach to understanding personhood, offer a way forward, allowing insight into the complex and demanding environment within which JSWs function.

## Briefings

### Centre for Crime and Justice Studies. “A death row of sorts”: Indeterminate custodial sentences in the UK



Across the UK, an individual can find themselves detained, with no clear sense of when they might be released, under a number of different powers, laws and regulations. In the case of criminal justice detention, indeterminate detention takes three main forms.

An un-convicted individual can be remanded in prison while awaiting trial. Given the current backlog of cases in the criminal courts, an individual can be left languishing in prison awaiting trial for months, in some cases years.

Life imprisonment – mandatory in the case of a murder conviction – is the second form of indeterminate criminal justice detention. An individual subject to a life sentence has to serve a minimum period in custody (the so-called ‘tariff’) before they can be considered for release. Ongoing detention at the end of the tariff period is common. On release, a life sentence prisoner is subject to lifelong supervision, with recall to prison at any point a real possibility.

The third form of indeterminate criminal justice detention are the three life sentence-like sentences: in England and Wales, the imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentence; in Northern Ireland, the indeterminate custodial sentence (ICS); and in Scotland, the order for

lifelong restriction (OLR). The IPP, ICS and OLR sentences work in a way similar to the life sentence: an indeterminate period in custody, followed by ongoing supervision on release in the community, if the prisoner manages to secure release. They can, though, be imposed for a far wider range of offences than is allowed for by the relatively narrow set of offences in the case of a life sentence.

The subject of this briefing is the IPP, ICS and OLR sentences. The main conclusion it draws relates to the question of whether such sentences should be considered a form of psychological torture. With the failed abolition of the IPP sentences in England and Wales, and the ongoing operation of the ICS and OLR sentences in Northern Ireland and Scotland, the torturous and unfair aspects of these indeterminate sentences are likely to become ever more apparent.