

Mental Health News

Mental health problems or learning disabilities in the criminal justice system

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

View previous news stories by selecting [this link](#)

You can also follow Mental Health News on [Twitter](#)

One of the ongoing regional (and national) issues is the impact of imprisonment on people who are mentally unwell and/or have a learning disability. We know that Mental and Physical Health is one of the 9 key factors that influence offending and re-offending.

In 2007, the Prison Reform Trust published a report called *No One Knows*. This estimates that of the 82,000 prisoners in the UK, between 20% and 30% have learning disabilities or learning difficulties

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/subsection.asp?id=525>

"No One Knows is concerned with people with learning disabilities and learning difficulties who enter the criminal justice system, their experiences as they travel through it and in particular the effect their impairments have on their ability to cope with the exigencies of the criminal justice process".

The *Bradley Report* asks us to examine the extent to which offenders with mental health problems could, in appropriate cases, be diverted from prison (and the barriers to such diversion) and makes 84 recommendations.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_098694

"Evidence suggests that there are now more people with mental health problems in prison than ever before. While public protection remains the priority, there is a growing consensus that prison may not always be the right environment for those with severe mental illness. Custody can exacerbate mental ill health, heighten vulnerability and increase the risk of self-harm and suicide."

Staff across the Mental Health, Learning Disability and Criminal Justice Systems need to familiarize themselves with the challenges and find new and better ways to meet the needs of this particular group.

For more information about *No One Knows* please contact Jenny Talbot on: 020 7251 5070 or email:

jenny.talbot@prisonreformtrust.org.uk

To join the UK forensic and learning disability network, log on and complete electronic joining form at:

www.jan-net.co.uk

Heard about Mental Health News from someone else? You can receive your very own email by clicking on [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Had enough of hearing about Mental Health News? You can stop receiving emails by clicking on [UNSUBSCRIBE](#) (note this can take up to one week to take effect).

If you would like more information or have any feedback about this news story, or have suggestions for a future news story please email [INFO](#)