

CAMPAIGN EVIDENCE

We believe that wellbeing support for young men and young Black men in prison should be prioritised and should be tailored to meet their specific needs. We have compiled the list of evidence to support this, which you can see on our website, and we have presented a summary below.

WELLBEING IN PRISONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE NEEDS TO BE PRIORITISED, POST-COVID-19

There is a long-established gap between the mental wellbeing of people in prison and the mental wellbeing of the wider population. It is estimated, for example, that as many as 90% of people in prison have some form of mental health problem, personality disorder, or substance misuse problem. The best available data suggests that the rate of depression and anxiety in the prison population is more than three times that of the wider population, and rates of psychosis and personality disorder are more than ten times that of the wider population.

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation; as a result of infection control measures, people in prison spent 23 hours a day inside their cells, with greatly reduced contact with friends and family. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons found that there was too little mental health support at a time of heightened anxiety, and that the cumulative effect of Covid-19 restrictions on the well-being and rehabilitation of people in prison was likely to be significant and far-reaching. The Prison Reform Trust's CAPPTIVE project highlighted challenges facing people in prison including access to healthcare services, access to rehabilitative interventions, and access to purposeful activity of any kind.

- https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Centre_for_Mental_Health_MH_and_criminal_justice_PDF.pdf
- <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/what-happens-to-prisoners-in-a-pandemic/>
- http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/CAPPTIVE_families_webfinal.pdf
- http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/CAPPTIVE2_regimes_and_progression_web_final.pdf
- http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/CAPPTIVE3_Healthcare_FINAL.pdf

There is good evidence that the development of a positive, pro-social identity gives a young person in the criminal justice system the opportunity to become more future-oriented, exercise greater agency, and forms a replacement for any possible prior criminogenic identity. A more positive, pro-social identity will provide a framework in which the young person is empowered to both make good choices and enter positive relationships.

- <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Now-all-I-care-about-is-my-future-Supporting-the-shift-full-research-report.pdf>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf

NHS England is responsible for the commissioning of healthcare services for people in prisons, and commissioners within the NHS hold a legal duty to reduce inequalities in access and outcomes for patients, including those in secure settings. The National Partnership Agreement for Healthcare Services commits NHS England, HMPPS and the MoJ to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of people in prison, reduce health inequalities and to support rehabilitation through addressing the health related drivers of offending behaviour.

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/767832/6.4289_MoJ_National_health_partnership_A4-L_v10_web.pdf
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

NHS England, HMPPS and the MoJ are also committed to the principle of 'equivalence of care' between people in prisons and the wider population. Other national and international stakeholders including the World Health Organisation support the principle of 'equivalence of care'. The UK Government as a whole is committed to this principle through its formal adoption of The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), and this commitment is codified (without statutory enforcement) in a formal agreement between the members of the National Prison Healthcare Board.

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/837882/NPHB_Equivalence_of_Care_principle.pdf
- https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson_Mandela_Rules-E-book.pdf
- https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/99018/E90174.pdf

There is recent, high-quality evidence that there are significant disparities of access and quality of mental healthcare provision between individual prisons, as well as significant gaps in the provision of 'mild-to-moderate' mental health needs across the secure estate.

- https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_098698.pdf
- <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/health-and-social-care-committee/prison-health/written/83925.html>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/747470/review-of-deaths-in-custody-2016.pdf

Spending on prisons and prison officer numbers remain well below their levels prior to the reductions in funding that began in 2009/10. Despite recent changes those spending trends, prison performance continues to be poor as assessed by independent experts, and considerable operational pressure remains. Likely in part due to this operational pressure, limitations in commissioning capacity and capability present an ongoing barrier to better outcomes for young people from an ethnic minority background. In addition, the absence of specialist support and lived experience can make the commissioning of tailored, culturally competent services more challenging.

- <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmjust/1123/112307.htm#idTextAnchor026>
- <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publication/performance-tracker-2019/prisons>

WELLBEING SERVICES FOR YOUNG MEN NEED TO BE TAILORED TO MEET THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS

There is also good evidence drawn from neuroscience, psychology and criminology that young people in prison have needs distinct from older people in prison as a result of their cognitive, emotional and social development. In addition, young people's lives are often impacted by trauma, poverty, and inequalities, and this impact must be understood by those helping young people toward effective rehabilitation.

- <https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Key-Elements-of-Specialized-Correctional-Units-for-Emerging-Adults.-April-2021..pdf>
- https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/T2A-Young-Adults-in-Custody_V3.pdf
- <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmjust/419/41902.htm>

The precise mental health and wellbeing deficit within prisons continues to be poorly understood but the best evidence available suggests significant disparity between the prison population and the wider public. There is also widespread agreement among expert stakeholders that there are high levels of multiple and complex needs in the prison population, significant levels of unmet need, as well as significant levels of unidentified need. Levels of self-harm and suicide have worsened in recent years. Mental and emotional wellbeing has further deteriorated since the introduction of the restricted regimes designed to mitigate Covid-19 infection risks.

- <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/36746/pdf/>
- <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/36444/pdf/>
- <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2021/02/What-happens-to-prisoners-in-a-pandemic.pdf>
- <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20151014063548/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/psychiatric-morbidity/psychiatric-morbidity-among-prisoners/psychiatric-morbidity-among-prisoners--summary-report/index.html>

Desistance theory provides a strong theoretical explanation of the relevant mechanisms through which offending behaviours change. One of the central components of that mechanism are relationships between an individual and family or peers, and an individual and prison officers or other representatives of the justice system.

- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.4073/csr.2013.10>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf
- <https://academic.oup.com/bjc/article/57/2/463/2623932>
- <https://www.eif.org.uk/report/preventing-gang-and-youth-violence-a-review-of-risk-and-protective-factors>
- <https://thenayj.org.uk/cmsAdmin/uploads/explaining-desistance-briefing-feb-2021-final.pdf>

More broadly, there is good evidence from desistance theory and elsewhere that rehabilitative interventions that address the individuals; learning style, motivation, strengths, self-belief and hope, social capital, agency and are developed in a participatory way are most effective. These tailored interventions necessarily require more intensive and specialist expertise to deliver. Similarly, there is good evidence that to support desistance among individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds, there must be consideration of the structural and social components of offending behaviour, as well as a focus on enabling community-based support including input from those with relevant lived experience.

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/498493/what-works-in-managing-young-people-who-offend.pdf
- <https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Nacro-Using-an-identity-lens-2020.pdf>
- <https://thenayj.org.uk/cmsAdmin/uploads/explaining-desistance-briefing-feb-2021-final.pdf>
- http://www.sccjr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/A_Desistance_Paradigm_for_Offender_Management.pdf
- https://www.rhodesfst.com/uploads/7/6/4/8/76481963/472014wright_williams.docx

WELLBEING SERVICES FOR YOUNG BLACK MEN NEED TO BE TAILORED TO MEET THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS

Black men are overrepresented in the prison system, and suffer from disproportionate outcomes at all stages of the justice system. In 2017 the Lammy Review found that Black people make up 3% of the general population, but 12% of people in prison and 21% of children in custody were Black. In 2020, the proportion of people in prison who identified as Black increased to 13%. The Lammy Review also found that arrest rates were three times higher among Black men than in comparison to the white group, while Black men sentenced to custody received more than twice the average custodial sentence length for violence against the person offences.

Once in prison, Black men suffer from worse experiences and outcomes. In 2020 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons found that men in prisons from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Black people in prison, had more negative experiences than white people in prison in relationships with staff, victimisation by staff, behaviour management, disciplinary procedures, complaints, time out of cell and support to achieve resettlement objectives.

- <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8960/CBP-8960.pdf>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf
- <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/Minority-ethnic-prisoners-and-rehabilitation-2020-web-1.pdf>

Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in prison consistently report worse experiences and outcomes than their white peers across a range of indicators in the criminal justice system, including rehabilitative interventions. While poor quality data makes understanding the causes of this disparity challenging, some of the differences in experiences and outcomes faced by young people from ethnic minority backgrounds are caused by the criminal justice system itself; people from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be stopped and searched, more likely to be placed on remand, and receive longer average custodial sentence lengths. While it is also the case that some of the disparity is likely the result of systemic factors including social and economic disadvantage and exclusion, it does not follow that no action can be taken by the criminal justice system to eliminate this disparity.

- <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/Minority-ethnic-prisoners-and-rehabilitation-2020-web-1.pdf>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>
- https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/201809/Centre_for_Mental_Health_MH_and_criminal_justice_PDF.pdf

The quality of available evidence on the factors affecting rehabilitative outcomes for people from ethnic minority backgrounds is generally poor. However, there is good evidence that racism, discrimination, and a lack of cultural competence are significant barriers to effective rehabilitative outcomes for those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/639261/bame-disproportionality-in-the-cjs.pdf
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721977/the-effectiveness-of-rehabilitative-services-for-BAME.pdf
- https://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/clinks_young-review_report_final-web_0.pdf
- https://www.rhodesfst.com/uploads/7/6/4/8/76481963/472014wright_williams.docx

Originating from healthcare services working with people from ethnic minority backgrounds, cultural competence in organisations and individuals can be broadly summarised as; taking steps to ensure diversity, conducting self-assessment, managing the dynamics of difference, acquiring and institutionalising cultural knowledge and, adapting to diversity and the cultural contexts present. There are, however, numerous different approaches to operationalising the theoretical concept of cultural competence. There is some evidence for its efficacy of cultural competence in improving health and wellbeing outcomes in public sector settings for people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1497553/pdf/12815076.pdf>
- http://archive.mhsoac.ca.gov/Meetings/docs/Meetings/2010/June/CLCC_Tab_4_Towards_Culturally_Compentent_System.pdf
- https://permanent.fdlp.gov/lps94790/SR_2008-01.pdf
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16142538/>

There is robust and high-quality evidence that people from ethnic minority backgrounds in the criminal justice system are disproportionately likely to experience mental wellbeing challenges, and continue to experience racism and a lack of cultural competence as impediments to their mental wellbeing and wider health outcomes.

- https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_098698.pdf
- https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Bradley_Commission_briefing1_BME.pdf
- <https://3bx16p38bchl32s0e12di03h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/prevalence-patterns-and-possibilities.pdf>
- https://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/race_mental_health_and_criminal_justice_30.pdf

SPARK INSIDE EVIDENCE

Spark Inside has gathered evidence of the impact of the Hero's Journey life coaching programme for 15-25 year olds in prison, which demonstrates that as a programme that was specifically designed for young men, it has a positive impact on wellbeing and other outcomes, including future outlook, decision-making and problem-solving skills, empathy and emotional intelligence, and resilience and confidence.

- <https://www.sparkinside.org/sites/default/files/documents/2020-04/HJ%20Impact%20Summary%202020%2023-04.pdf>

Spark Inside's tailored version of the life coaching programme, Hero's Journey from a Black Perspective, which addresses the specific experiences of young Black men in prison, who are over-represented, was piloted at HMPYOI Isis in early 2020, before the Covid-19 crisis. Anecdotally, we know that it was a huge success – after the first workshop one young man shared his experience with five people on his wing. Before it began, young men were asking to enrol on the programme and we now have a waiting list of young Black men wanting to take part. The programme will be run and evaluated in the near future.

