



# CordisPulse

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## January 2019

Welcome to January'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. children and young people's services, criminal justice, and adult social care and health.

This month we were pleased to see the Children's Society's briefing on the potential of taking a public health approach to reducing serious youth violence. The Children's Society briefing outlines a concern that the emphasis on criminal justice responses in the *Serious Violence Strategy* may be narrowly punitive and does not take into consideration the safeguarding of children and young people, and some of the wider drivers of serious youth violence.

Our report on public health approaches to reducing serious violence for the Local Government Association shows the possible benefits of the public health approach. There is a growing recognition that addressing violence is not a single agency issue, as it is the culmination of many different causes. It is only by pursuing a strategic, coordinated approach involving a range of agencies, including partnerships between statutory and voluntary organisations, that violent crime can be effectively addressed.

Although there are different ways to reduce violent behaviour, a public health approach is being increasingly discussed, using an evidence-led methodology to reduce and prevent violence in communities. Our report for the LGA which can be accessed [here](#) provides an overview of: (1) what the public health approach is to reducing violence, (2) what public health approaches tell us about reducing violence, and (3) provides examples of interventions and models that may reduce violence.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this month's Pulse please do contact us on 020 7330 9170.

Best wishes,



Dr Stephen Boxford

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

### National MEAM approach evaluation

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) has commissioned Cordis Bright to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the MEAM Approach work, which aims to support local areas across the country to develop effective, coordinated services that directly improve the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage.

The evaluation will take place over five years between 2017 and 2022 and involves five core elements:

- Building research capacity in local areas developing work using the MEAM Approach.
- An outcomes evaluation of this work.
- An economic evaluation of this work.
- A process evaluation of this work.
- Comparison to the outcomes and process of the Big Lottery's Fulfilling Lives areas.

This report focuses primarily on reviewing return rates and the quality of data submitted by local areas in the MEAM Approach network under the Common Data Framework devised for the evaluation. It also summarises evaluation activity in the first six months of 2018-19 and considers quarterly reports about each local area which are produced by the national MEAM team.

### Scaling and spreading innovation

Our Head of Research, Dr Stephen Boxford, contributed to a Health Foundation webinar about an innovative approach we are taking to evaluating a novel social franchising approach to support the spread and scale up of health and care interventions. You can watch a recording of the webinar [here](#). You need to register with the Health Foundation to access it.

### What works in social prescribing?

This month we are pleased to add to a series of best practice evidence reviews on a range of issues related to the integration of health and social care, drawing on our work as the evaluation partner for seven NHS New Care Model Vanguard sites. This month we publish our eighth review: what works in social prescribing? This can be accessed by clicking [here](#).



## Adult Social Care and Health

### Reports

#### Department of Health and Social Care. The Women's Mental Health Taskforce final report

This is the final report of the Women's Mental Health Taskforce, which was formed in response to a rise in mental ill health among women and the poor outcomes some have experienced in mental health services.



The purpose of the taskforce was to listen to women about their experiences to inform a set of priorities to improve services. The taskforce finds that in some situations, services failed to take into account gender-related differences between women and men's experiences with mental illness. Among the key issues identified by women are: a failure to consider women's roles as mothers or carers when planning support, a lack of trauma-informed services which considered the relationship between gender-based violence and trauma, and a lack of flexibility in the service offering for women facing multiple disadvantage. Women also highlight a number of considerations for commissioners, providers, and practitioners, including giving them more control in terms of the care available, increased accessibility, providing care centred on safety, respect, and dignity, a better understanding of trauma, and an understanding of their caring responsibilities.

#### CQC. Opening the door to change: NHS safety culture and the need for transformation

The CQC visited 18 NHS trusts between April and June 2018, in order to understand the issues which contribute to 'Never Events' (avoidable incidents with the potential to cause serious patient harm or death) taking place. One challenge facing providers, which is also highlighted as an area for improvement, is a lack of clarity in terms of responsibility for educating and training amongst bodies such as universities, royal colleges, Health Education England, and the trusts themselves. Furthermore, staff are finding it difficult to cope with the volume of safety guidance, and have little time to implement this effectively in addition to their existing roles.



#### Independent Review of the Mental Health Act. Modernising the Mental Health Act: Increasing choice, reducing compulsion

This independent review of the Mental Health Act of 1983 sets out recommendations for improvements to the act in the face of rising detentions, disproportionately high numbers of detentions from black and minority ethnic groups, and the need to modernise policy.

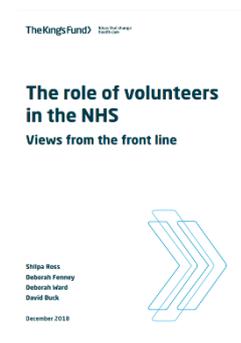
Using a blend of surveys, public meetings, and expert consultation, the review makes four thematic recommendations. Firstly, it suggests an increase in choice and autonomy for service users, giving them the right to ask for a second opinion after a diagnosis, and failing that a tribunal to determine the appropriate treatment. Secondly, it suggests that the refreshed act be limited in the restrictions it places on those detained, enabling tribunals to

decide whether a person is best placed in the community or in hospital. Thirdly, that all individuals should be given the help they need to recover, and eventually be discharged from the act. Finally, it recommends that the act ensures people are treated with respect, and that NHS trusts, local councils, and the police record the manner in which people from different ethnic communities are treated, allowing freedom of religious practice, and providing guidance around helping those with learning disabilities, and those with autism.

### **The King's Fund. The role of volunteers in the NHS: views from the front line**

The King's Fund were commissioned by the Royal Voluntary Service and Helpforce to understand the pressures facing frontline NHS staff, their views on the importance of volunteers, and any areas of need where voluntary workers could contribute.

It found that frontline staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the role of volunteers in hospitals, and that they enjoy working with them across a broad range of activities. However, they also recognise the need for improved understanding of the boundaries between voluntary and staff roles, and suggest further training in this area. The report recommends that the NHS adopt a formal volunteer strategy across acute care trusts, and that they work to empower frontline staff to achieve a supportive relationship with volunteers.



### **The King's Fund. New models of home care.**

This report explores existing innovative models and approaches to commissioning and delivering home care, and their alignment with what people want in the context of growing demand for services. A broad range of approaches are assessed in relation to their usage, the rigour with which they've been evaluated, their ability to enable a higher quality of delivery, their cost-effectiveness, and their scalability. Whilst each approach varied in its performance across these areas, common barriers were identified including funding innovative solutions in a market where the price of home care has been driven down, and the difficulty innovative providers have in working with traditional 'time-and-task' commissioning.



### **The Health Foundation. A place to grow: exploring the future health of young people in five sites across the UK.**

This report is the second step in the Health Foundation's inquiry investigating the key issues effecting young people as they transition into adulthood. Over the course of their engagement they spoke with over 600 young people in five sites across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It builds on the work of the first phase, which identified four 'assets' which were seen as essential for a healthy life: the right skills and qualifications, personal connections, financial support, and emotional support. Amongst other findings, the report posits that young people's access to these assets varies across each of the local areas, and was impacted by the availability of transport, youth services, education, employment, and a family support system.



## Tools and Guidance

### Local Government Association. **Fit for and during pregnancy: A key role for local government.**

This report identifies how local government can play an active role in the health of pregnant women in their area through health visitors, family workers, midwives, social care, and children's centres. The key areas of focus identified for councils were: ensuring a smoke-free pregnancy, increasing the number of breastfeeding babies at six months, reducing the burden of perinatal mental illness, and increasing the number of women entering pregnancy at a healthy weight.



### Public Health England. **Health matters: reducing health inequalities in mental illness**

This guidance outlines the measures local areas can take to reduce the level of health inequality for those experiencing mental illness. It describes the broad range of structural factors which can impact on levels of health inequality, including education, housing, and employment, as well as other issues which can accumulate over time, such as experience of trauma and poor working conditions. The list of recommended actions includes: understanding local need, improving standards of living, building stronger communities, early intervention, no wrong door policies, and robust workforce training.

### Local Government Association. **Supporting carers: guidance and case studies.**

This report provides guidance to local authorities on how they can improve outreach to people who find themselves providing care to friends or family, and provide them with adequate support and information. A number of suggestions are made, including making sure services are accessible and flexible, using a variety of channels for communicating information to carers, forming strong partnerships with local businesses and small charities, and utilising support mechanisms such as direct payments.



## Children and young people's services

### Reports

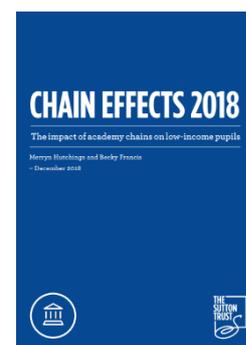
#### Early intervention foundation. Key competencies in early cognitive development: Things, people, numbers and words

This report describes the evidence-base for best practice in supporting children's foundational cognitive development during the first five years of their lives. Alongside early language development, the report describes three other competencies associated with successful cognitive development: children's understanding of objects, people, and numbers. It provides an overview of how each of these competencies relates to a child's development, outlining in each instance how these areas should be assessed, and the early interventions parents, teachers, and childcare professionals can make to encourage growth.



#### Sutton Trust. The impact of academy chains on low-income pupils

This report provides an overview of the impact that sponsor-led academy chains have on outcomes for low-income pupils. It finds that the majority of the 58 chains (38) reported that disadvantaged pupils had attainment below the mainstream average. Furthermore, change over the last five years in the overall ranking of academy chains is described as limited.



Nonetheless, whilst acknowledging the huge disparity in performance among chains, the report cites fringe examples of schools able to achieve impressive outcomes for disadvantaged students as evidence that improvements are possible. In order to encourage this further, the report makes a number of suggestions, including empowering Ofsted to undertake formal inspections of academy chains, ensuring the spread of good evidence-based practice between academies, and increasing teacher supply in subjects which are experiencing shortages.

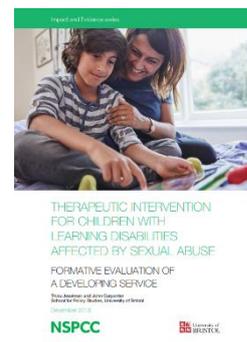
#### National Foundation for Educational Research. Assessment without levels

The purpose of this research is to describe and analyse the various approaches to non-statutory assessment used in schools since national curriculum levels were removed in 2014. Following consultation with teachers and senior leaders, some interviewees observe that the change is supporting teachers to provide more varied activities, and that pupils were gaining a deeper understanding of topics. There were mixed responses from teachers around their confidence in judging pupils attainment, whilst the majority did not feel their approach worked well for children with Special Education Needs.



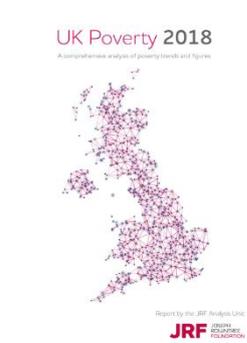
## NSPCC. Letting the future in for children with learning disabilities

This report is an evaluation by the University of Bristol of the NSPCC's therapeutic intervention to support for children and young people with learning disabilities who have been sexually abused. Its purpose was to determine whether: children and young people found the approach (LTFI-LD) helpful, practitioners felt it was effective, and carers felt they had improved their ability to respond to sexually abused children. Among the findings, the evaluation reports that LTFI-LD does help children make positive changes, and that the therapeutic relationship between carers and children was important in making this possible. Furthermore, practitioners value the flexibility that the NSPCC provided in order to meet the child's needs. However, there was an acknowledgment that carer's would need more support going forward, especially given the time-intensive nature of the intervention.



## The Joseph Rowntree Foundation. UK Poverty 2018

This annual report provides an overview of how poverty has changed in the UK over the last several years, with a particular emphasis on children and workers. Among the issues directly affecting children, the report finds that an estimated 4.1 million children are living in poverty – a rise of 500,000 over the last five years. Nearly half of children in lone-parent families were reported to live in poverty, whilst this dropped to a quarter of children in couple families.



The report also highlights the disproportionate impact of changes to housing market on low-income families. This is largely seen to have been driven by an increase in families with children living in private rented accommodation, as well as weaker protection provided by housing benefit payments.

## Department for Education. Sustainable improvement in multi-school groups

This report identifies the actions providers in Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), Teaching School Alliances (TSAs), and Federations and Local Authorities (LAs) currently take to facilitate sustainable improvement across the schools they work with. The research was initially informed by a literature review, which was followed by a series of detailed case studies, a national survey, and a focus group.



A number of 'contextual factors' are identified as influencing approaches to improvement, including the age of the MAT, the size of the network and growth model, composition (whether MAT is made up of sponsored or converter academies), the education phase, and the beliefs and values of the founding leaders. The report further argues that MATs and federations must focus on five fundamentals and five strategic areas if they are to see sustainable improvement.

## Briefings

### The Children's Society. Public Health Model to Reduce Youth Violence

This briefing was published for MPs in advance of the general debate on the public health model for reducing youth violence. It begins by referencing research conducted by The Children's Society, stating that 950,000 children across the UK have experienced either crime or anti-social behaviour.

The Children's Society lend their support to a public health approach to violent crime, citing the successes of Scotland's implementation of a Public Health approach as an encouraging evidence base. They argue that public health approaches are more holistic than existing criminal responses, which provide inadequate considerations for safeguarding young people, and fail to account for the wider drivers of violence.

## Tools and Guidance

### Local Government Association. **A Better Start: Supporting child development in the early years**

This guidance outlines the importance of early years settings to future outcomes and wellbeing, and examines the steps local authorities can take to ensure a holistic approach across health, social care, and early education services. Three key areas where councils can play a role in shaping early years settings are identified: the 0-5 healthy child programme, a focus on supporting parenting and relationships, and integrating support around the needs of the child and the family. In addition to this, the guidance also provides ten key questions to ask early years services, a set of case studies outlining best practice, and a list of useful resources.



## Criminal Justice

### Reports

#### Prison Reform Trust. Broken Trust: The rising numbers of women recalled to prison

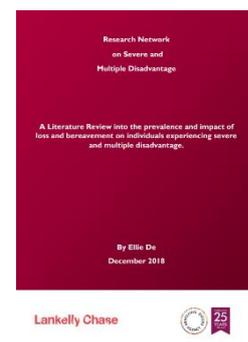
This report is based on a small-scale study of 24 women who have been recalled to prison and their experiences of the criminal justice system. It uses these accounts to understand and describe the problems with existing measures in place to support women upon release. Since the introduction of the Offender Rehabilitation Act in 2014, recall levels for women have risen by 131%, compared to 22% for men, with over 1,700 women recalled to prison in the last year.



Women reported a number of issues affecting them upon release, including finding appropriate housing, staying in touch with their probation officer, fears for their personal safety, substance abuse, and mental health needs. Drawing from these experiences, the report makes a number of recommendations to the government, including: the establishment of women-specific community services, repealing the 2014 extension of recall to those serving sentences under 12-months, and setting the reduction in women recalled to prison as an explicit policy objective.

#### Revolving Doors. The prevalence and impact of loss and bereavement on individuals experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage

This paper presents a review of contemporary literature on loss, dying and bereavement, in an attempt to understand the impact of loss on individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage. A number of key themes are identified across the literature, including the need to understand loss on a continuum (or scale of severity), the disproportionately high level of bereavement among homeless and imprisoned populations, and the significance of traumatic death as a unique form of loss.



The report outlines the implications of these findings for both support and research. Including: what people need to accomplish in order to grieve effectively, and how further research is needed to both dismantle the existing 'hierarchy of loss', and provide greater insight into different kinds of loss.

### Briefings

#### Howard League for Penal Reform. Children and young people describe how they were criminalised while living in residential care

This briefing describes the stories of four children and young people who were criminalised whilst living in residential care. They outline the failings in the care they received, the trauma their experiences caused them, and the factors they felt led to their criminalisation.

### Tools and Guidance



### **Ministry of Justice. Women's policy framework**

This framework provides gender-specific rules and guidance for the delivery of services working with women in custody and the community. It aims to raise awareness of the types of issues that affect women specifically. In addition to legal responsibilities, the document outlines the best available evidence for gender-informed interventions around a number of issues, including substance misuse, mental health, improved family contact, and accommodation.

### **National Crime Agency. Guidance for NGOs on how to identify and support victims of criminal exploitation**

This information provides a reference guide to the different types of criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, and domestic servitude. It describes the best ways to spot the signs of exploitation in individuals, including low self-esteem, a person being missing for large periods of time, signs of injury, and the unexplained acquisition of money. It also provides contact information for those who may be concerned, and links to further information around County Lines as an aspect of exploitation.