CordisPulse

October 2015

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Welcome to October'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.

During September, we were pleased to see a range of interesting reports and developments including:

Children and young people's services. This month Women's Aid published a toolkit for MPs on tackling domestic violence. It provides information to help improve understanding and identification of domestic violence, and increase the effectiveness of referrals in terms of appropriateness and timeliness. It coincides well with work that we have recently undertaken on behalf of local authorities to help improve on-the-ground support to prevent domestic violence and improve the outcomes for victims/survivors. We have provided some further information below on one aspect of this, i.e. commissioning effective services to respond to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. Over the coming issues of the Pulse, we plan to focus on these issues further and share some of the findings from our work with a range of clients.

Characteristics of effective commissioning in the domestic abuse and violence against women and girls fields

We recently completed a literature review on effective commissioning strategies. This highlighted the following 10 key tips:

1. Ensure a comprehensive needs assessment is in place that considers victims, witnesses (especially children) and perpetrators
2. Include victims/survivors in decision-making and governance structure
3. Ensure the commissioning plan is linked to a wider strategy setting out aims and objectives
4. Ensure that commissioning focuses on improving outcomes
5. Strengthen procurement by having common standards and models of practice across different services

6. Engage all relevant partners and invest time in strengthening partnership working
7. Put in place clear and transparent care pathways that everyone understands
8. Be realistic about funding that is available: ensure services are sustainable into the long-term
9. Find ways of involving the local community: in understanding needs, deciding priorities and commissioning services
10. Put in place from the outset a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation that focuses on outcomes

Want to find out more? Contact Steve Boxford on stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk. Or consider signing-up to receive information about our 'seminar for commissioners' on domestic abuse and violence against women and girls which we're planning for April 2016. Contact Steve for further information.

Criminal Justice. The Prisons & Probation Ombudsman's Annual Report contains a number of interesting insights into a range of key issues affecting the prison system, suggesting that many of the challenges of the past few years are persisting. The Centre for Crime and Justice Studies published a report into the effectiveness of community sentences, and the National Police Chief's Council produced a strategy document on how officers should deal with the policing of children and young people.

Adult Social Care and Health. The King's Fund presented the findings of its research into mergers of foundation trusts and NHS trusts, suggesting that many mergers in the past five years have been flawed and offering a number of future alternatives. NICE published guidance on delivering home care to older people, and Think Personal Act Local has produced a useful personalised care and support planning tool.

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

Children and young people's services

Policy

Department for Education: Preventing extremism in the education and children's services sectors

This official policy document outlines the government's policy on preventing extremism in schools and children's services.

To view this policy document, please click here

Reports

Cardiff University: Personalisation in Children's social work – An ethnographic study of practice in England

This study, published by Cardiff University's Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre (CASCADE), finds that the introduction of personal budgets in children's social work may increase bureaucracy for social workers, making them feel deskilled as professionals and reducing the time they have available to do face-to-face work with families.

To view this report, please click here

Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion: Understanding the improved performance of disadvantaged pupils in London

This report, published by the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics (LSE) examines why disadvantaged pupils in London have experienced a much higher increase in GCSE level achievement than similar pupils outside of the capital. It concludes that the improved performance largely reflects gradual improvements in school quality over time, in particular amongst primary schools.

To view this report, please click here

Comic Relief: Unprotected, overprotected – meeting the needs of young people with learning disabilities who experience, or are at risk of, sexual exploitation

This report, commissioned by Comic Relief, highlights that some young people with learning disabilities have become invisible to services, and that professionals working with child sexual exploitation often lack the right information to protect these young people. It calls for national investment to develop child sexual exploitation resources and materials specifically tailored to support professionals in direct practice with young people with learning disabilities.

To view this report, please click here

Department for Education: Impact of the Family Justice Reforms on Front-line Practice Phase Two – Special Guardianship Orders

This research report commissioned by the Department for Education finds that vulnerable children are being placed in inappropriate arrangements due to a preference among family judges for special guardianship orders over adoption. The research suggests that there is a desire amongst family courts to push for a placement within the wider family as a result of legal rulings from 2013 which called on local authorities to provide evidence that all alternative to adoptions have been considered.

To view this report, please click here

Department for Education: Study of Early Education and Development (SEED) – Study of the quality of childminder provision in England

This report presents a research study evaluating the quality of childminder provision in England. It finds that there are three key factors associated with quality in childminder settings, ranging from the adult-to-child ration, to the frequency and quality of training, and the years of experience of childminders.

To view this report, please click here

Every Disabled Child Matters: Short Breaks in 2015 – An uncertain future

This report by campaign group Every Disabled Child Matters analyses short break spending data from 126 councils received through a Freedom of Information Act request. It finds that 73 councils had made cuts between 2011 and 2015, and calls for the government to invest £800 million in short breaks for families with disable children over the next four years, as well as for tougher checks on councils to ensure that they are providing adequate support and publishing data to show this.

To view this report, please click here

National Association of Head Teachers: An early years place for all – NAHT survey on extending childcare provision in schools

This study, published by the National Association of Head Teachers, finds that more than two thirds of early years providers believe that extending free childcare entitlement for three and four year olds from the current 15 hours a week to 30 hours will lead to a reduction in the number of children they can accommodate. The report suggests that the majority of providers of nursery education in schools are not currently receiving enough funding to cover the cost of existing provision, and calls on the government to ensure that proper planning and funding is put into place ahead of the extension of the childcare offer.

To view this report, please click here

National Autistic Society: School report 2015

This report from the National Autistic Society finds that half of parents are dissatisfied with changes to the way that children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) receive support under the new system of education, health and care (EHC) plans. It calls on the government to review local authorities' implementation of the SEN reforms which have seen EHC plans replace the previous system of statements of SEN.

To view this report, please click here

National Children's Bureau: Poor Beginnings – Health inequalities among young children across England

This study presents analysis by the National Children's Bureau which finds significant variations in indicators of health and development in early childhood across different parts of the country. It finds that, for example, a child in a reception class in Barking and Dagenham is more than two and a half times more likely to be obese than a children the same age away just 18 miles away in Richmond-upon-Thames. Overall, it shows that children under five in poor areas are significantly more prone to obesity, tooth decay, accidental injuries and lower educational development.

To view this report, please click here

National Foundation for Educational Research: A Guide to Regional Schools Commissioners

This research report explains the background and role of the eight Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) who were appointed in September 2014. It also provides an analysis of the characteristics and challenges faced for each region, providing a comparison between areas ahead of expected expansion of RSCs roles to include decision-making in tackling underperformance in schools.

To view this report, please click here

NSPCC: Always there when I need you – ChildLine annual review 2014-15

The annual review of the NSPCC's ChildLine presents a number of interesting finds. Whilst the overall number of counselling sessions provided by ChildLine is in decline, the number of young people suffered from mental health problems who have contacted the services has risen from 24,000 sessions in 2013/14, to 85,000 in 2014/15. In addition, the numbers of those troubled by anxiety has almost trebled and the number reporting unhappiness and low self-esteem issues also rose. The report suggests that a lack of mental health services for children could be behind these increases, which it argues is laying the foundations for long-term mental health problems.

To view this report, please click here

Public Health England: Oral health survey of five-year-old and 12-year-old children attending special support schools 2014

This report from Public Health England presents the results of a survey of more than 5,000 children aged between five and 12. It finds that children attending special schools have higher rates of severe tooth decay than those attending mainstream schools. It also finds significant regional differences in oral health, with the North West of England having the highest rates of tooth decay for all age groups surveyed.

To view this report, please click here

Rees Centre: What is the relationship between being in care and the educational outcomes of children?

This literature review, carried out by the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford, finds that on average being in foster or kinship care does not appear to be damaging to children's education. Although children in care do lag behind in educational attainment compared with those in the general population, being in care may not itself be the reason for this. As a result, it calls on authorities to focus efforts on providing services that enable these children to thrive.

To view this report, please click here

Sutton Trust: Extra-curricular Inequalities

This research briefing analyses ONS data and presents findings which show that children from the most advantaged households benefit from significantly more spending on extra-curricular activities and private tutoring than their poorer peers. It makes a series of recommendations relating to how the government can reduce these inequalities, such as through the introduction of a means tested voucher system as part of the pupil premium to allow lower income families to purchase additional educational support.

To view this report, please click here

The Children's Society: On your own now – the risks of unsuitable accommodation for older teenagers

This report published by The Children's Society argues that children's services departments are not doing enough to secure good quality housing support for care leavers and other vulnerable teenagers. Based on research into the 118 providers used by local authorities to house vulnerable 16 to 17 year olds, the report finds that half of these providers have evicted or asked a child to move at short notice. It calls on government, councils and Ofsted to strengthen the regulations around accommodation and support for young homeless people.

To view this report, please click here

University of Northampton: Understanding Agency and Resistance Strategies – Children's Experiences of Domestic Violence

This report presents the results of a two-year study led by the University of Northampton, which featured interviews with 110 children and young people who had experienced domestic abuse from the UK, Greece, Italy and Spain. It finds that the perception that children who experience domestic violence are passive and helpless is often inaccurate. It suggests that children are often more resilient than they seem in dealing with the impact of domestic abuse in their home, and using these insights develops a group-based therapeutic intervention to support children which builds on their existing strengths and coping strategies.

To view this report, please click here

Statistics

Department for Education: Planned expenditure by local authorities in England – 2015 to 2016

This statistical release from the Department for Education details planned spending by local authorities on schools, education, and children and young people's services for the 2015-16 financial year. Notably, it shows a fall of over £125 million in spending on Sure Start children's centres, as well as wider cuts across children and young people's services.

To view this statistical release, please click here

Tools and Guidance

Women's Aid: Tackling domestic violence toolkit for MPs

Women's Aid have published a domestic violence toolkit for MPs to help them support their constituents who may be experiencing domestic abuse. The toolkit includes key data about domestic abuse and information on how MPs can support their constituents.

Please click here to access the toolkit

Barnardo's: Care leavers accommodation and support framework

This framework, developed with the input of five local authorities and launched by charities Barnardo's and St Basil's, sets out what local authorities should do to help young people comfortably transition into after-care accommodation. In drawing up the framework, the Youth Justice Board and various leaving care and housing charities were involved, and the resulting tool lists five steps that local authorities should take to put young people in control of their housing.

To view this guidance, please click here

Criminal Justice

Reports

Centre for Crime and Justice Studies: Community sentences since 2000 – how they work and why they have not cut prisoner numbers

This report, published by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, examines the alternatives to community sentences across eight EU member states. It outlines the key policy development since 2000 in the UK prison population, and the use of alternatives. Covering the increasing role of the private sector, the growth of electronic monitoring, the growing punitiveness of community sentences and the confused and conflicting policy messages around punishment and rehabilitation, the report presents a set of suggested core principles for the better use of alternatives to custody.

To view this report, please click here

Prisons & Probation Ombudsman: Annual Report 2014-15

The Prisons & Probation Ombudsman's annual report draws attention to a number of key issues. It reports that while there was a decrease in self-inflicted deaths on the previous year, rates are still higher than 2012-13. It also reports an overall rise in the number of deaths in custody of 5%, and suggests that the challenges facing the prison system have not gone away.

To view this report, please click here

Tools and Guidance

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction: Penalties for drug law offences in Europe at a glance

This tool allows users to instantly compare the penalties for drug possession and supply across Europe. Searches can also be refined according to drug type, quantity and the addiction or recidivism of the offender.

To access this tool, please click here

Local Government Association: Tackling serious and organised crime

This guidance is aimed at leaders of local government and members of community safety partnerships, health and wellbeing boards and local safeguarding boards. It provides guidance of how councils and other agencies can best identify and safeguard against serious and organised crime particular that involving vulnerable individuals.

To view this guidance, please click here

National Police Chief's Council: National Strategy for the Policing of Children & Young People

This strategy document published by the National Police Chief's Council sets out a number of key principles for how officers should deal with young people. It states that police officers dealing with under-18s should treat them as children first, rather than as potential criminals. It also calls on police to identify and respond effectively to the vulnerabilities of children and young people, and emphasises the need for police to seek a full understanding of the circumstances behind any young people who come to their attention.

To view this guidance, please click here

Adult Social Care and Health

Reports

ADASS: A report on the findings of the ADASS survey of social care activity in prisons and approved premises

This report, published by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), finds that there has been a slow start to the implementation of Care Act provisions for councils to asses and respond to the social care needs of prisoners. The report, based on data for 79 of the 115 prisons operating in England, found that the vast majority of prisons had sent 10 or fewer referrals to councils in the first three months of the implementation of the Care Act.

To view this report, please click here

HSCIC: Mental Capacity Act (2005) Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (England) – Annual Report, 2014-15

This annual report published by HSCIC shows that more than 40% of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (Dols) applications made to local authorities in 2014-15 were not signed off by the end of the financial year. It presents regional variations in this data, as well as drawing out the most-cited reasons for the refusal of a Dols application.

To view this report, please click here

IPPR: Breaking boundaries – Towards a 'Troubled Lives' programme for people facing multiple and complex needs

This report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) finds that locally-led and locally coordinated action is key to supporting people with multiple and complex needs. It shows that public spending on individuals experiencing problems like addiction, homelessness and offending is still largely reactive, and argues that preventative support would deliver better results and save money by avoiding duplication and preventing the need for costly crisis care and support.

To view this report, please click here

Joseph Rowntree Foundation: How can we make our cities dementia friendly? Sharing the Learning from Bradford and York

This report draws out the key messages from independent evaluations of Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) programmes in York and Bradford. It finds that in order to create an environment which is more accessible, including and supportive for those with dementia, people with dementia and their families must be engaged with the core of any initiatives. It suggests that this should be coupled with strong strategic

planning, commissioning and leadership, and that joint working between primary and secondary health providers is key.

To view this report, please click here

Local Government Association: Learning Disabilities Services Efficiency Project – Interim position report

This interim report of the Local Government Association's Learning Disabilities Services Efficiency Project provides a snapshot of the work currently being undertaken by five councils to find ways to curb costs in learning disability services while continuing to meet needs. It finds that moving adults with learning disabilities from care homes into supported living and promoting greater independent for the group could help councils to deliver savings while meeting needs.

To view this report, please click here

National Audit Office: Managing conflicts of interest in NHS clinical commissioning groups

This report presents the National Audit Office's findings from an investigation into managing conflicts of interest in NHS clinical commissioning groups. It finds that under current arrangements, there is a potential for some GPs and their colleagues to make commissioning decisions about services they provide, or in which they have an interest. The report makes a series of recommendations to increase the transparency at all levels of the commissioning process in order to manage conflicts promptly and effectively.

To view this report, please click here

The King's Fund: Foundation trusts and NHS trust mergers 2010 to 2015

This report published by The King's Fund reviews 20 mergers involving NHS trusts and foundation trusts between 2010 and 2015. It finds that mergers are often based on faulty reasoning and a lack of evidence of lasting solutions. Instead, the report suggests that the Department of Health should support service improvement and transformation wherever possible, rather than instigate mergers. In cases where a merger is contemplated, there needs to be a more realistic assessment of the costs and benefits involved.

To view this report, please click here

Statistics

HSCIC: Personal Social Services – Expenditure and Unit Costs England 2014-15

This statistical release provides information about the money spent on adult social care by councils in England. It shows that spending on adult social care dropped 8% in real-terms under the coalition government, despite funding transfers from the NHS to boost social care budgets.

To view this statistical release, please click here

Tools and guidance

Local Government Association: Health and Care Quality Systems in practice

This guidance from the Local Government Association is intended to support health and care leaders in navigating the local agencies and organisation responsible for regulating and improving the quality of health and care services.

To view this guidance, please click here

NICE: Home care – delivering personal care and practical support to older people living in their own homes

This guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) relates to delivering personal care to people in their own homes. It suggests that visits should last at least 30 minutes and only be shorter if the care worker is known to the person receiving care. It also sets out guidance for the appointing of named care coordinators to plan support for service users.

To view this guidance, please click here

Public Health England: Service user involvement – A guide for drug and alcohol commissioners, providers and service users

This guidance details the benefits of involving recovering drug and alcohol users in treatment design. It sets out the different levels of user involvement, with various examples of good practice.

To view this guidance, please click here

Think Local Act Personal: Personalised care and support planning tool

This tool is aimed at leaders, commissioners, planners, clinicians and practitioners involved in designing and delivering personalised care and support planning for people with a variety of health and social care needs. It uses a series of case study scenarios to demonstrate what different journeys through personalised care and

support planning could look like, and is intended to stimulate and inform discussions about service design and delivery at a local level.

[To access this tool, please click here](#)