

Joint **BAFS** and **The Forensic Network** event

Mental health in the criminal justice system: towards reform

The relationship between mental health and criminality is complex and multifaceted, with various factors contributing to how mental health issues intersect with criminal behaviour.

**25th October
2024**

KEY SPEAKERS

- **Professor Peter Watson** | Solicitor Advocate PBW Law, Visiting Professor of Law, Strathclyde University, President BAFS
- **Professor Andrew Forrester** | Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, Cardiff University; Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Director of Research, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
- **Sir Harry Burns** | Professor of Global Public Health, Strathclyde University and former Chief Medical Officer
- **Mr David Kennedy** | General Secretary, Scottish Police Federation, Hon Member BAFS

VENUE | **STIRLING COURT HOTEL, UNIVERSITY
OF STIRLING, SCOTLAND, FK9 4LA**

FEES | **BAFS MEMBER RATE: £70 (USE CODE BAFSM)**
| **NON-MEMBER DELEGATE: £95**
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SPECIAL FORCES/SERVICES: £50**

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SPEAKERS

Professor Peter Watson	President BAFS
Professor Andrew Forrester	Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, Cardiff University; Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Director of Research, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Dr Harneet Hundal	Clinical Director and Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Mr David Kennedy	General Secretary, Scottish Police Federation
Professor Lindsay Thomson	Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh; Medical Director, State Hospital at Carstairs
Dr Jo Brown	Clinical Director and Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, Orchard Clinic, Royal Edinburgh Hospital
Clare Crole-Rees	Consultant Psychologist, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Dr Manuela Jarrett	Assistant Professor in Mental Health Nursing, University of Birmingham
Shelagh McCall KC	Convener of the Faculty of Advocates' Human Rights and Rule of Law Committee
Sir Harry Burns	Professor of Global Public Health, University of Strathclyde

PROGRAMME

09:00 Registration / Coffee

09:30 Opening remarks: **Professor Peter Watson**

MORNING CHAIR: **PROFESSOR PETER WATSON**

09:45 - 10:15 **Professor Andrew Forrester**
Mental health in the criminal justice system - what works, and what needs to change?

10:15 - 10:45 **Dr Harneet Hundal**
Providing mental health services in prison and court settings: challenges and solutions

10:45 - 11:15 **Mr David Kennedy**
The Police Service and mental health

11:15 - 11:45 Break

11:45 - 12:30 **Professor Lindsay Thomson**
People with mental disorder in prisons in Scotland

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

AFTERNOON CHAIR: **DR JO BROWN**

13:30 - 13:45 Opening remarks
Dr Jo Brown

13:45 - 14:15 **Clare Crole-Rees**
Managing and preventing trauma in prisons

14:15 - 14:45 **Dr Manuela Jarrett**
The Offender Personality Disorder Programme

14:45 - 15:15 **Shelagh McCall KC**
Mental health and the criminal courts: a lawyer's perspective

15:15 - 15:45 Break

15:45 - 16:15 **Sir Harry Burns**
The Science of Rehabilitation

16:15 - 16:45 Panel discussion & questions

16:45 Closing remarks
Professor Peter Watson

17:00 Post-conference drinks

19:00 Conference dinner

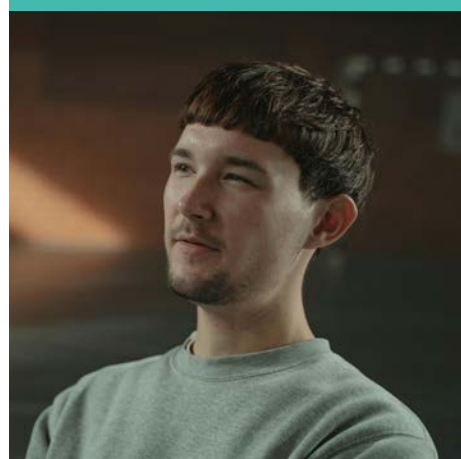
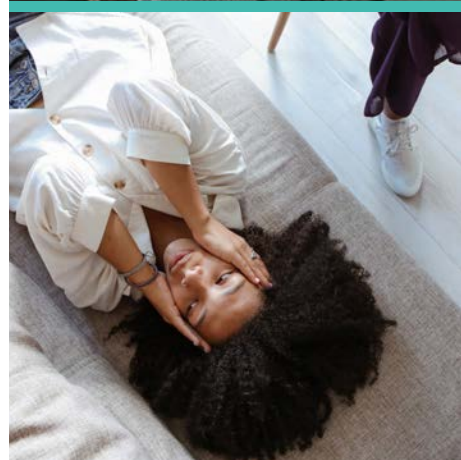
Mental health in the criminal justice system: it's time for reform

ABSTRACT

The relationship between mental health and criminality is complex and multifaceted, with various factors contributing to how mental health issues intersect with criminal behaviour. Here are some key points to consider:

- 1. Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders.** Research suggests that individuals with certain mental health disorders may have a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal behaviour compared to the general population. Disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and severe depression have been associated with an increased risk of involvement in criminal activities.
- 2. Co-Occurrence of Substance Abuse.** Substance abuse often co-occurs with mental health disorders and can exacerbate criminal behaviour. Substance abuse can impair judgment, increase impulsivity, and lead individuals to engage in illegal activities to support their addiction.
- 3. Social Determinants of Health.** Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment, lack of access to mental health care, and unstable housing can contribute to both mental health issues and involvement in criminal behaviour. Individuals living in disadvantaged communities may face increased stressors and limited resources, which can impact their mental well-being and increase their vulnerability to criminality.
- 4. Impact of Trauma.** Exposure to trauma, including childhood abuse, neglect, or witnessing violence, can significantly impact mental health and increase the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour later in life. Untreated trauma can lead to symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and maladaptive coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse or aggression.
- 5. Criminalization of Mental Illness.** In many societies, individuals with mental health disorders may be disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system due to factors such as stigma, lack of access to mental health treatment, and inadequate community support services. Instead of receiving appropriate mental health care, they may end up incarcerated, where their mental health needs may go unaddressed or worsen.
- 6. Intersection of Law Enforcement and Mental Health Services.** Some communities have implemented programs such as Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) or mental health courts to divert individuals with mental health issues away from the criminal justice system and into treatment programs. These initiatives aim to provide appropriate support and resources to individuals in crisis rather than solely relying on punitive measures.

Overall, addressing the intersection of mental health and criminality requires a holistic approach that considers the underlying social, economic, and environmental factors contributing to both mental health issues and criminal behaviour. It involves promoting access to mental health care, addressing substance abuse, reducing stigma, and implementing strategies to prevent and intervene in instances where mental health issues may contribute to criminality.



Mental health in the criminal justice system: it's time for reform

ABSTRACT CONTINUED

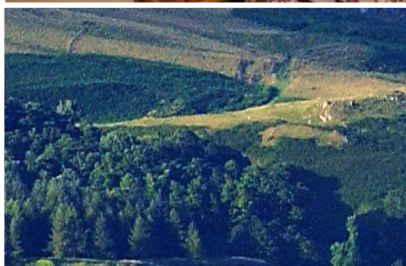
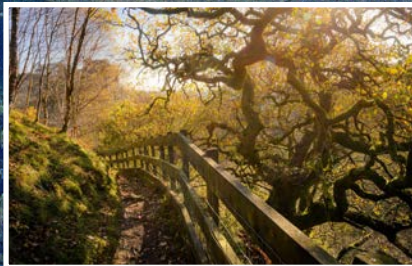
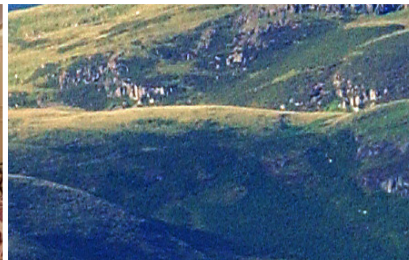
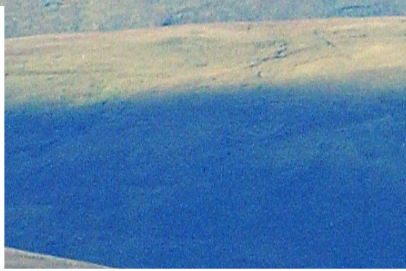
The Children's Panel System in Scotland

The success of Scotland's Children's Panel System can be attributed to several key factors:

1. **Holistic Approach.** The system takes a holistic approach to addressing the needs of children and families, recognizing that issues such as neglect, abuse, and family dysfunction often have complex underlying causes. Instead of focusing solely on punitive measures, the Children's Panel System aims to support children and families by providing access to a range of services and interventions.
2. **Community Involvement.** The Children's Panel System involves volunteers from the local community who are trained to serve as panel members. These volunteers, known as panel members, come from diverse backgrounds and bring a range of skills and perspectives to the decision-making process. This community involvement helps to ensure that decisions are made with the child's best interests in mind and reflect the values and needs of the local community.
3. **Focus on Welfare.** Unlike traditional court systems, which are primarily focused on determining guilt or innocence, the Children's Panel System is centred around the welfare of the child. Panel members are tasked with making decisions that promote the well-being and development of the child, taking into account their individual needs and circumstances.
4. **Preventative Approach.** The Children's Panel System emphasizes early intervention and prevention, aiming to address problems before they escalate and become more serious. By identifying and addressing issues at an early stage, the system can help prevent children and families from becoming further entrenched in the social welfare system.
5. **Flexibility and Adaptability.** The system is designed to be flexible and adaptable, allowing decisions to be tailored to the specific needs of each child and family. This flexibility enables panel members to consider a wide range of factors when making decisions, including the child's age, background, and individual circumstances.

Overall, Scotland's Children's Panel System's success can be attributed to its focus on children's welfare, community involvement, preventative approach, and flexibility in decision-making. By addressing the underlying needs of children and families in a supportive and inclusive manner, the system has made a positive impact on the lives of countless children across Scotland.





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