

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Iechyd, Gofal Cymdeithasol
a Chwaraeon
Ymchwiliad i iechyd meddwl yng
nghyd-destun plismona a dalfa'r
heddlu
HSCS(5) MHP AI 01
Ymateb gan False Allegation Support
Organisation

National Assembly for Wales
Health, Social Care and Sport
Committee
Inquiry into Mental health in Policing
and Police Custody

Evidence from False Allegation
Support Organisation

Mental health in policing and police custody

Purpose of the consultation

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's spotlight inquiry will focus on partnership working between the police, health and social care services (and others), to prevent people with mental health problems being taken into police custody, to ensure their appropriate treatment while in custody, and to help ensure the right level of support is provided when leaving custody. The inquiry will consider:

The False Allegations Support UK response is below:

- Whether there are sufficient services (i.e. health and social care services) available to support police officers in Wales to divert people with mental health problems away from police custody.

Response; In FASO experience from our helpline, there is not sufficient services to support the police; for the lack of identifying those with mental health and disabilities. Those arrested, in our experience are not away to elsewhere and out of police custody. Neither is there recognition of those who have to take medication at certain points as the police often deny the accused's access to it. This and lack of mental health awareness leads to perceived aggression/shouting inability to respond to question (such as in autism) see Autistic reasons for not co-operating <https://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/others/criminal-justice.aspx> the police do not divert relevant people elsewhere.

- The number of people arrested under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983, and the extent to which police custody is being used as a place of safety for people in mental health crisis.

Response; Those who speak to us about police custody is a frightening place. They consider that being locked up, they are incarcerated, but never under mental health rules, not listened to (nor the family) about closed spaces affecting their disability, not allowed to take medication on time and being denied it etc. this can lead often to lack of control of their emotions, bought on by lack of medication or understanding of what is happening. Being placed in situations they are not

listened to, and being identified as having either mental health or medical problems. This is not considered a safe place for those in crisis.

- Whether local authorities and health services are meeting their duties and complying fully with legislative requirements to provide appropriate places of safety to which the police may take people detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

Response; Our callers say, they are not referred under the mental health act so whether there are places of safety FASO are not aware of it, nor are there apparently at police stations.

- Adherence to the Code of Practice to the Mental Health Act 1983 which requires that people detained under that Act should always be conveyed to hospital in the manner most likely to protect their dignity and privacy - taking account of any risks (i.e. by ambulance which should be made available in a timely way, as opposed to police transport).

Response; As in most cases, the police cannot identify this issue and there are no triage nurses at each police station to suggest this to them those who are vulnerable, and one suspects they never convey those with mental health issues to hospital. Dignity and privacy are not part of the roles the police carry out for those who are accused of sex offences or child protection issues

- How effectively police forces in Wales work with partners (such as health or social care services) to safeguard vulnerable people in police custody, and how well the police themselves identify and respond to vulnerable people detained in custody, specifically those arrested under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

Response; Police do not identify those with mental health or other health issues so do not forward them. They treat them as normal threats, when they become aggressive because of their health condition - and act against them accordingly

- The effectiveness of multi-agency care planning for people with mental health problems when leaving custody, specifically for those detained in police custody under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 to help to prevent repeat detentions.

Response; FASO have no information of the integration with multi-agency care planning strategies. It has not happened for those falsely accused of sex offences or child protection issues to our knowledge.

- Whether effective joint working arrangements are in place, with a specific focus on implementation of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, including whether the Welsh Government is providing sufficient oversight and leadership.

Response; From what FASO are told, there is no oversight into what happens to those who claim mental health issues, including ADHD, Autism and medical treatments, such as diabetic's, where medication is routinely confiscated. The accused are not automatically given/allowed an appropriate person when being interviewed. There appears no ongoing robust training for police officers or provision of such as a triage Dr/nurse to check out immediately those who state they suffer mental health problems, ADHD, Autistics, special needs, or have panic attacks when in enclosed spaces. The Police have no listening ear, when friends or family confirm what the accused persons are saying. The rules for caring for the vulnerable adult, do not work.

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FASO UK Director

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Data protection laws have changed and that's great news for you. It means you'll have more control over your personal information and organisations like FASO must be clearer on how they collect and use that information. We have to ensure that you are happy for your address to remain on the FASO database, please let us know in your response. Here is a small portion of the anonymous statistics that prisoners, families, and those accused and contacted FASO have contributed to. Further statistics are due from the university. . Donations in order to progress further statistical analysis would be gratefully received.

<http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/25256/1/False%20allegation%20paper%202%20October%202017.pdf>