

Deconstructing the mental health dimension of community-oriented policing

Dr John McDaniel

Community-Oriented Policing

- The police should treat each and every individual within a neighbourhood as valued and distinctive service users, each with their own distinctive crime problems and resident concerns which fluctuate over time
- It demands a relationship of partnership or 'inter-dependence' not just between civilians and the police, but between the police and other agencies of civil society

(Loader and Mulcahy, 2003)
(Brogden and Nijhar, 2005)

[illegible]

Policing and Mental Health (well established)

- The official mandate of the police includes provisions for dealing with mentally ill persons
- In suitable circumstances the signs of mental illness, or a competent allegation of mental illness are in themselves the proper business of the police and can lead to authorised intervention

(Bittner, 1967)



Increasing Interactions

2015 - on average between 20% and 40% of police time involves a mental health element

2017 – No. 1 issue for some police forces

(HAC, 2015)

(Punch and James, 2017)

Police dealing with record level of phone calls on mental health

Forces left to pick up pieces, with senior officer saying cuts and rising demand mean NHS is struggling to cope



... But things have been going very wrong
(in England and Wales)

Police perceptions (limited awareness of illnesses)

- ‘behaving badly’
 - (which suggests a coercive police response - ‘go in hard’)

... rather than

- ‘not being rational’
 - (which suggests a more compassionate mental health response – provide safe space)

(Martin and Thomas, 2015)
(de Tribolet-Hardy *et al*, 2015)





Use of Force

- The use of force (restraints, tasers and firearms) is far more likely to be used on persons who are suffering from mental health problems
- Almost every time that a taser was drawn during an interaction with a vulnerable individual, it was subsequently discharged and most often towards the back of the individual's body
- People with mental illnesses were four times more likely to die after police use of force than any other demographic



Section 136

... even when mental illness was suspected

- s. 136 used rather than police discretion (uncertainty)
- Custody suites filled with s. 136 detentions
- Custody officers disrespecting, disempowering, disbelieving and discrediting people (questionnaire)



Wave of Reforms

1. Street triage scheme
2. Liaison and diversion scheme
3. College of Policing Guidelines 2016
 - Early police recognition of the possible mental health problems, learning disabilities or suicidal intent is crucial
4. Policing and Crime Act 2017
 - Must, if it is practicable to do so, consult a registered medical practitioner, a registered nurse, an approved mental health professional (s. 136)
 - Police custody suites shouldn't be used (has led to major reduction)
5. HMICFRS 2017
 - Mental health considered in PEEL Reports for the first time
6. Angiolini Death in Custody Report 2017
 - IPCC culture and delays/ police training/ BAME



Entrenched Problems?

- Inaccurate systems/ databases/ inter-operability
 - Limited time
 - Call Handlers & Dispatchers
- Police Culture
 - Not a 'proper task' or 'accomplished craftsmanship'
- A lack of public/ political awareness
 - Lord Adebawale - chair of the *Independent Commission on Mental Health and Policing* 2012 – thought mental health had “little to do with policing”
 - “core police business”

Misinformation?



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The police can't continue to pick up the pieces of Britain's mental health cuts

Ian Blair

Officers' duty to protect the community from crime and terror is being jeopardised by the time they spend on people in crisis



▲ 'Police across England and Wales are now using powers under section 136 of the 1983 Mental Health Act 50% more than they did a decade ago - nearly 30,000 times in 2014-15.' Photograph: Janine Wiedel/Rex Shutterstock

In my time as the deputy and then commissioner of the Metropolitan police, my primary concerns were with terrorism and issues around diversity. But a constant problem for my officers was dealing with

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Misinformation?

Officers failing to receive bare minimum mental health training, says College

'Some are saying mental health does not need two days, have they not read the deaths in custody reports?'



Police Governance (PCCs)

David Charles Jamieson

Labour Party Candidate



Election statement:

My promises to you:

- I will recruit Police Officers, despite the Government's cuts.
- Keep Police Community Support Officers, as they provide vital support to Police Officers.
- Protect Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
- Stop privatisation of the Police, by ensuring they are accountable to the community, not to company shareholders.
- Make sure that Police Officers are on the beat, not behind a desk.
- Ensure victims of crime always come first.

I am born, bred and live in the West Midlands with my wife Pat.

I qualified as a teacher from St Peter's C of E College, Saltley, Birmingham and taught in schools across the Midlands.

I served as an MP from 1992 to 2005. From 1997 to 2005

I was a Government Minister.

I am greatly experienced in issues relating to community safety and policing from my roles as an MP, local Councillor in Solihull and as a member of the West Midlands Police & Crime Panel. As a Transport Minister I worked closely with the Police on road safety issues.

If elected, I will recruit Police Officers, keep our Police on the beat and put victims before criminals. I will work to make sure your voice is heard in how your community is policed.

This is a by-election that no-one wanted to take place. The death of Bob Jones was sudden and tragic. It comes at a worrying time. With 1,338 Police Officers cut by David Cameron, recorded crime in the West Midlands is once again on the rise. Violent crime, sexual offences and theft, all are up. This Government is letting you down. As your Labour PCC, I will put you first. What matters to me is your safety and security where you live and work.

Prepared by Keith Hanson, Election Agent, Labour Party, Thomas Street, West Bromwich B70 6NT.

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Mentally ill held without charge for lack of NHS beds



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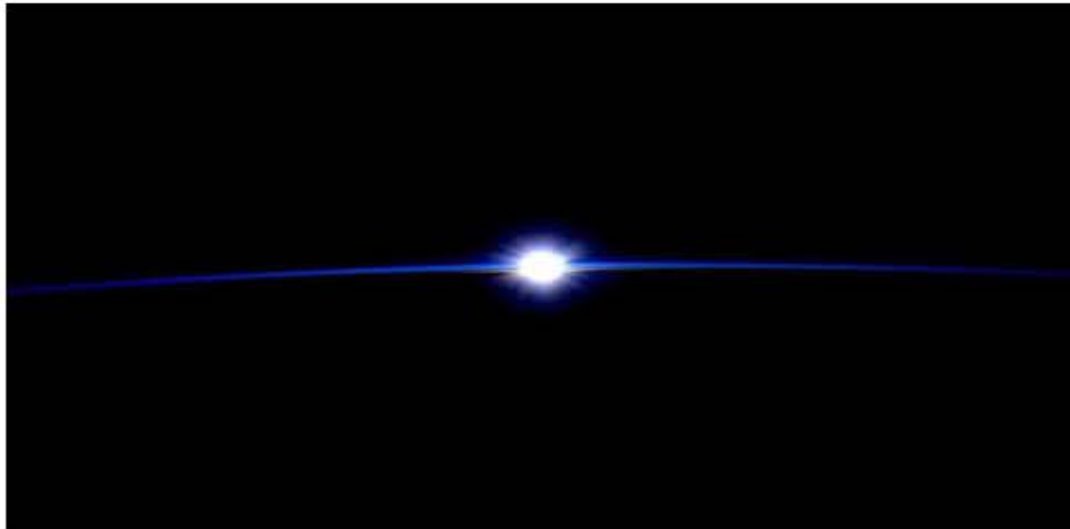
Conclusions

- The mental health function of public policing has become blurred and contested over time
- An unethical cultural attitude towards mental health care and policing has developed

Need for more understanding

MENTAL HEALTH COP

A VENN DIAGRAM OF POLICING, MENTAL HEALTH AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE



ACUTE INTOXICATION IS A MENTAL DISORDER

The longer I work on policing and mental health, the less frequently I experience certain things which used to hit me square in the face every time I went near the topic as a PC: a new piece of knowledge that leaves you entirely confused and thoroughly re-examining the paradigm you're trying to get your head around. Having done a fair few talks over the years to professionals in policing and in

Need to deconstruct

Misconduct investigations and police officer wellbeing



(John McDaniel, Kate Moss, Ken Pease, Pram Singh)

Need for protection/ theorizing

Advances in Police Theory and Practice Series

Policing and the Mentally Ill International Perspectives



Edited by
Duncan Chappell

CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group

POLICE PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Police Responses to People with Mental Illnesses

Global Challenges

Edited by
Duncan Chappell



Policing Encounters with Vulnerability

*edited by Nicole L. Asquith,
Isabelle Bartkowiak-Théron,
and Karl A Roberts*



Policing and Mental Health (Routledge, 2019)

Eds: John McDaniel, Kate Moss and Ken Pease

Questions