Dear Colin

National Prisoner Healthcare Network Report on Brain Injury and Offending Implementation of Research Recommendations at University of Glasgow

This short interim report indicates progress with implementation of the NPHN Report on Brain Injury and Offending (July 2016). As you know, the Scottish Government provided funding to support ongoing work on 1 July 2017.

As you might expect, progress in the first 6 months has focussed on obtaining permissions and administration. This includes hiring the research worker, in obtaining NHS and SPS ethics approvals and in obtaining agreements from SPS and CJSW partners and in obtaining locality NHS R+D approval. We will be recruiting in six prisons in four Health Board areas, making all of this time consuming. Hira Aslam was appointed to the research worker post and started work on 16 October. She will support the clinical psychology trainees on the various projects. All researchers have completed the necessary SPS safety training and approvals process to work in prisons for the studies due to start in early 2018. Progress with regard to the specific studies is given below:

R1 (Research): To examine the relationship between prevalence of head injury in prisoners by self-report and by record of hospitalisation in relation to symptom complaint and disability outcome and to repeat offending. To also specifically investigate head injury in women prisoners in terms of epidemiology and outcome (see section 4.2)

and

R5 (Research/Clinical): A pilot study should consider the practicality and validity (in terms of detecting disability) of the OSU-TBI-ID-Short form and the BISI to decide which should be recommended as a screening tool to be used when indicated by initial triage. Providing the pilot study confirms the usefulness of one of these tools, it should be used by NHS staff in prisons (R4); (see section 7.3).

Approvals have been obtained from NHS Ethics and SPS Ethics. We already have data on 80 male prisoners in HMP Shotts and have agreement from HMP Low Moss that we can complete the study there. Work at Low Moss is due to start in early January. The proposal detailing these studies is complete.

We have approvals now also for the studies on females, who are distributed in five prisons (HMP Cornton Vale, Edinburgh, Greenock, Polmont and Grampian). We have agreement from SPS and NHS
partners in the first four of these with Grampian SPS pending. Work is due to start in early January 2018.

It is anticipated that data collection for the male study will be completed by the end of May 2018 and on the female study by the Autumn 2018, depending on recruitment rates.

R8: Pilot the two step screening for brain injury (as in prison reception) in the CJSW interview; to establish links with local brain injury and neuropsychology services which can offer a more detailed assessment if required. Explore informing health of CJSW reports to prevent duplication of resources should a subject who has a disabling head injury become a prison inmate.

This project is due to begin as planned in late 2018 and to be completed mid-2019. We now have agreement to collaborate in principle from CJSW in East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow and Highlands. At this time the proposal for this study is being developed. West Dunbartonshire have shown particular enthusiasm for these projects which will look at identification of head injury and the relevance of this to the Court process (informing criminal justice social worker reports to the Courts) and release from prison (the prisoner support pathway).

It was indicated that in addition to the above ‘it is expected this work will assist in meeting the following recommendations’:

R9: There is a need to develop an empirical basis for psychological interventions for people with brain injury in general and in offender populations specifically.

As an initial step towards this a feasibility study has been devised which will look at prisoner’s knowledge about brain injury and the effectiveness of education that can be administered to groups of prisoners with ease. Agreement for this work has been obtained from SPS Ethics and HMP Low Moss and Grampian and submission has been made to NHS Ethics. Recruitment is due to take place in the first half of 2018.

R13: There is a need to conduct a training needs analysis (consultation required with wider NHS and others) to allow the development of Scottish specific educational materials for a range of staff. This may initially consider use and development of existing resources. These should be web based possibly using the NES portal.

Following discussions with NES, it would seem that in order to develop this there needs to be a training needs analysis. NES tend to use independent contractors to develop training modules and I am exploring whether this might be carried out in-house at UoG, with the modules being piloted and later available on the Forensic Network Website and accessible via Touras. Funding would be required in order to develop this beyond a proposal stage. It is clearly important that as we implement assessments and triage for brain injury in the CJS that there are training resources available for staff.

**Timescales:** We had hoped to begin recruitment for the female study and to have increased the sample in the male study in November and December 2017 but this has not been possible because of the complexities of the ethics and R+D approval processes and difficulty in accessing prisons between mid-December and mid-January.
Update on Other Relevant Ongoing Work

R2 (Research): A pilot of the use of an additional question in two or more custody centres in two health board areas (see section 7.1)

This study has been completed by UoG in liaison with Police Scotland and a report completed and distributed to police and NPHN.

Systematic Review of the Literature on the Prevalence of Brain Injury in Prisoners: This work was recently been published online ahead of print in an international peer reviewed journal.


Epidemiology study on the Scottish Prison Population: This work was recently submitted for publication in an international peer reviewed journal.


Yours sincerely

TM McMillan
Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology
Institute of Health and Wellbeing
University of Glasgow

C/C Tom Byrne, National Prisoner Healthcare Network