The Experiences of Autistic Individuals in Police Custody

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Overview

• Autism spectrum conditions

• Police custody

• Wider rights

• Experiences of autistic individuals

• Research methods

• Conclusion
Autism Spectrum Conditions

- Social Communication
- Social Imagination
- Social Interaction
- Sensory Sensitivity
- Behaviour
Police Custody

• No official statistics

• Number of autistic individuals will be detained

• May experience difficulties in custody

• Duties under Police and Criminal Evidence Act Code of Practice C
‘Mental Vulnerability’

“any detainee who, because of their mental state or capacity, may not understand the significance of what is said, of questions or of their replies”

OR

any detainee who has “any disorder or disability of the mind”
The Appropriate Adult

- Advise
- Observe
- Communicate
- Assist
The Appropriate Adult

IDENTIFY

APPROPRIATE

PROVIDE

TRAINING
Wider Rights

- EQUALITY ACT
- UNCRPD
- INTERMEDIARY
## The Equality Act 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
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| EQUALITY                  | • Eliminate discrimination  
                           | • Take account of disability                                       |
| DISCRIMINATION           | • Direct and indirect  
                           | • Failure to provide adjustments                                    |
| REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT     | • Avoid disadvantage  
                           | • Remove/alter physical barriers                                    |
UNCRPD

**Reasonable Accommodation**
- Modification and adjustment
- Equal basis

**Access to Justice**
- Facilitate participation
- Equal basis

**Rights in Detention**
- Deprivation of liberty
- Entitled to guarantees
Intermediaries

ASSESS

MATCHING

ASSIST

COMMUNICATE
Experiences in Custody

• Little is known about actual experiences of autistic individuals in police custody

• Research into the experiences of autistic individuals and difficulties encountered

• Consider whether improvements are needed
HOW SHOULD AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS BE SUPPORTED IN POLICE CUSTODY?
Online Survey – part one

The Experiences of Autistic Individuals Detained in Police Custody

This survey will ask you about your previous experience in police custody and any difficulties you may have encountered. This study is part of my research at the University of Nottingham and is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

It is hoped that findings from this research will improve the understanding and awareness of the difficulties autistic individuals may encounter in police custody and the ways they can be supported.

You must only complete the survey if you:

- have a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Condition or Asperger’s Syndrome
- are at least 18 years old
- have been arrested and detained in police custody as a suspect of a criminal offence in England or Wales
- are not currently awaiting trial or on trial for a criminal offence

There is no time limit for this survey but it may take around 15 - 20 minutes to complete. You can spend longer answering some questions if you wish to.

In creating the survey, two autistic individuals were consulted about how the survey could be made more autism friendly. Steps have been taken to reflect their feedback in the design.

This survey will close on Sunday 2nd July.


CLOSES SUNDAY 2nd JULY 2017
Online Survey – part two

Supporting Autistic Individuals Detained in Police Custody

This survey will ask you questions about the ways in which autistic individuals are supported in police custody and whether improvements could be made.

This study is part of my research at the University of Nottingham and is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. It is hoped that findings from this research will improve the understanding and awareness of the difficulties autistic individuals may encounter in police custody and the ways they can be supported.

To complete the survey you must be at least 18 years old.

Anyone with an interest in the ways autistic individuals are supported in police custody is invited to take part. You do not need to have a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Condition or Asperger’s Syndrome or previous experience of being arrested and detained in police custody.

If you do have an Autism Spectrum Condition/Asperger’s Syndrome and previous experience of being arrested and detained in police custody, you will be asked questions about the support you may have had when you were detained.

There is no time limit for this survey but it may take around 15 minutes to complete. You can spend longer answering some questions if you wish to.

In creating the survey, two autistic individuals were consulted about how the survey could be made more autism friendly. Steps have been taken to reflect their feedback in the design of the survey.


OPENS MONDAY 3rd JULY 2017
Interviews

ARREST

DIFFICULTIES

SUPPORT

CHANGES
Learning Exercise

BOOKING IN
- Risk assessment
- Decision to detain

PRE CHARGE
- DNA sample/fingerprints
- Photograph
- Search

‘DETENTION’
- Police cell
- Interview
Conclusion

• Number of autistic individuals detained in police custody

• Current support may not be appropriate

• Determine what difficulties autistic individuals experience

• Consider what ways they can be supported and whether reform is needed
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

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