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Title page:

How can Neurodivergent individuals and individuals with mental health issues be treated correctly within the criminal justice system in England and Wales.

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Findings

The Neurodivergency Action Plan (layout1) is a plan that looks to benefit neurodivergent individuals experience with the criminal justice system, they plan to instal third party sectors to help these individuals through their processing like how to improve how the police handle them, identify their needs and how to handle them accordingly. Action plan 1 also highlights how their needs to be measures in place to help the neurodivergent individuals with their communication skills throughout the criminal justice system and their rehabilitation after prison so they do not come into contact with the criminal justice system again.

The neurodivergency Action plan (layout 1) was looking to have a neurodiversity support manager in every U.K prison by 2024, and as of late 2025 majority of the U.K prisons have a neurodiversity support manager, this can assure that there is more staff training in prisons to handle these individuals as Young S (2015) found that there not only a high prevalence of individuals with ADHD in prison but it is also a number which is rising and disproportionately high, due to there being neurodiversity support managers this allows prisons to have better knowledge on how to de-escalate scenarios and how to support these individuals to make a safer and inclusive environment.

Greater support for neurodivergent offenders in bid to cut crime (2024) key findings are similar to the Neurodivergence Action Plan (layout 1) as the key challenges it focuses on tackling is lack of support for individuals with neurodivergent conditions and their findings support Young S (2014) finding that they estimate that half of the adult prison population may have a neurodivergent condition.

Yu Y et,al (2021) found that individuals with ASD are at higher risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system due to their characteristics of struggling to understand social cues, understanding others emotional states, poor emotional regulation, change of routines and rigid thinking, policies like the Neurodivergence Action Plan and Greater support for neurodivergent offenders in bid to cut crime (2024) support Yu Y, et,al (2014) findings as the key challenges they highlighted are what Yu Y, et,al (2014) found and the policy recommendations presented by the Neurodivergence Action Plan have been effective due to majority of prisons having a neurodivergent specialised worker in their prisons.

Impact on prison rehabilitation and reoffending found that ADHD is over represented in prisons in the U.K Young S (2015) findings that show that there is a over represented number of individuals with a neurodivergent condition in prison, the

impact on prison rehabilitation and reoffending also found that although 3-4% of the general public in Wales and England have autism 25% of prisoners have autism and 41% of women in prison have a neurodivergent condition this heavily indicates that although the U.K has neurodivergent specialists in majority of prisons their needs to be support before the neurodivergent individual comes into contact with the criminal justice system. Sreckovic M.A (2023) found that police officers should have adequate training for individuals with ASD, yet findings from Young S (2015) and The impact on prison rehabilitation and reoffending show that there is an over represented number of individuals with ASD and a neurodivergent condition in prisons, this indicates that the police in the U.K do not have adequate training and either need a new model of training to handle these individuals or to have an updated education and frequent training on how to identify and approach neurodivergent individuals. Hansard The impact on prison rehabilitation and reoffending also found that there is an issue that there are people in prison that have not been diagnosed with these neurodivergent conditions and that prisons are a worse environment for individuals with a neurodivergent condition as it is noisy, no structure and a lack of support when leaving prison this can be interpreted that the neurodivergent individuals with all these issues are even more likely to reoffend due to them having poor conditions within the prison and when they leave having a lack of support outside although they have neurodivergent specialists in prisons outside there is a lack of support for these individuals.

The prison service journal (2025) mentions that prisons in Wales and England are not designed for individuals with neurodivergent conditions due to it being noisy which overstimulates these individuals which can lead to them having a breakdown or acting antisocial Julie E.N (2025) found that some individuals with a neurodivergent condition will wear ear phones and black glasses to help them in prison to not get over stimulated and to help them block out light and noise because they are sensitive to these senses, while others wanted to have a quiet room with low lighting but Julie E.N (2025) recognised that this can cause jealousy with other inmates causing more harm.

The prison journal (2025) also recognised that individuals can miss opportunities within prison due to them either being excluded or overcrowding within their rehabilitation programme.

The mental health bill (2025) it reviews that the mental health bill is outdated and needs to cater to be less restrictive on people, give more choice and control to the individual and can be interpreted to undermine the individuals rights and needs, their

should be an updated version of this to improve their quality of life and how they are treated.

The Neurodiversity Member Guide (2024) highlights that prisons have got an education system for individuals with a neurodivergent condition as they may not have been educated accordingly, prisons also have a skills section to help them develop skills needed for when they leave prison and a work opportunities.

Recomendations.

Recomendations that would help the criminal justice system in helping the neurodivergent individuals. There should be a national screening that police, NHS and others need to complete for a better understanding of neurodivergent individuals, mandatory training in the criminal justice system for individuals with a neurodivergent condition so they can identify them correctly and handle procedures to the books, they should also be aware of Pace code C and how it does not only benefit the individual with the neurodivergent condition as it will also benefit the criminal justice system from not withholding their rights and causing more issues in the long term, prisons need to be more accessible for these individuals although it may cause some jealousy among other inmates it helps the majority of prisoners who have neurodiversity as the over representation of them in the statistics and prisons rehabilitation should not just stop when they leave prison.

Other recommendations such as a stronger release program for when they leave prison to stop them re-offending, increase funding for mental health services and an expansion of community-based alternatives to prison, for example groups of other neurodivergent individuals that have been through the criminal justice system to help each other by gaining knowledge to avoid it next time.

Contents page:

Executive Summary – To summarise what majority of the sources have said is that individuals with neurodivergent conditions need third-party organisations to further support them through the criminal justice system Neurodivergence Action Plan (layout 1), this shows that with the help of many agencies like the police, NHS and individuals with a neurodivergent condition that has experienced the criminal justice system first hand to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for them. Clasby B (2021) found that due to individuals with ADHD lacking skills in communication and taking words very literal, they have a higher chance of being incarcerated.

There are also dedicated neurodivergent support managers installed to help these individuals with Neurodivergent conditions, for example the Greater support for neurodivergent offenders in dib to cut crime (2024) reinforces the rehabilitation of those with Neurodivergent conditions, having specialised staff within the criminal

justice system to help support them and reduce their likelihood of reoffending and coming in contact with the criminal justice system again. Greater support for neurodivergent offenders in bid to cut crime (2024) also found that due to these individuals having a lack of communication skills they struggle to follow prison rules and these specialised staff help them de-escalate the situation and keep them on track for rehabilitation.

Other findings show that the criminal justice system has things installed to help individuals with Neurodivergent conditions like having an appropriate adult with them yet they are not being enforced and there is a lack of knowledge on how to handle cases with neurodivergent individuals and things that need to be installed to help them have a more secure environment withing the criminal justice system.

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