



Foreword

In 2012 the Department of Health provided funding to police forces in England to prepare for the transfer of police custody healthcare to the NHS. The decision to transfer responsibility for commissioning health care in police custody suites being a commitment made by the previous coalition Government but supported by the current Government. A pilot of NHS commissioned police custody healthcare was successfully evaluated in Dorset in 2010 (Viggiani et al)ⁱ and this helped inform a shift in Government policy towards NHS commissioning in police custody.

In London a partnership between NHS England (London), the Metropolitan Police Service and the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) was formed to oversee the preparations for this transfer which is scheduled to take place from April 2016. One strand of this work has been to produce a Health Needs Assessment to give the partnership a better understanding of the health needs of detainees going through police custody in London.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence defines a health needs assessment as *“a systematic method for reviewing the health issues facing a population, leading to agreed priorities and resource allocation that will improve health and reduce inequalities”*ⁱⁱ

A health needs assessment (HNA) is an essential for the health service as part of planning and commissioning health care and other services and support to promote well-being. It builds up a clear baseline of current needs and services so that decisions can be made about how to reduce any mismatch between what is needed and what is provided.

The work provides an opportunity to review services, to make services more responsive to needs, to identify newly-emerging needs, to take account of the increasing knowledge base about effective interventions, and to harness the interest and experience of different stakeholders. The end result should be agreed action that is designed to improve outcomes.

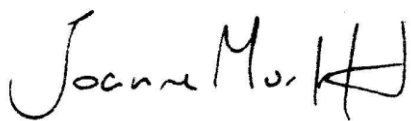
The HNA supported a range of other work to help us map the policing requirements of health services for those in custody and is one of several foundation stones laid prior to the commissioning of a new custody health service for the Metropolitan Police.

There has been a growing recognition that a disproportionate number of people with complex unmet health and social needs, particularly mental health are entering the

Criminal Justice System. This HNA provides a snapshot of those passing through the Metropolitan Police Custody suites.

The work has been well received by the partnership and is helping us scope the provision that will deliver safer custody, facilitation of the investigative process, as well as improving health pathways to reducing re-offending.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those involved, especially all the officers and staff from the Met Detention Command, including the clinical staff who contributed to the study. I would also like to thank Arun Sondhi and all at Therapeutic Solutions who have worked so hard to produce this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne Murffit". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'H' at the end.

Joanne Murffit

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ⁱ Viggiani N, Kushner S, Last K, Powell J, Davies J (2010) Police Custody Healthcare UWE Bristol

ⁱⁱ NICE (2005) Health needs assessment: a practical guide