

# Policing, Health and Social Care consensus: working together to protect and prevent harm to vulnerable people

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This consensus statement was developed by: Association of Directors of Public Health, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Clinks, College of Policing, Faculty of Public Health, Local Government Association, Nacro, National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, National Police Chiefs Council, NHS England, Public Health England, and the Royal Society for Public Health.

It provides a focus for the police service, health and social care services and voluntary and community sector to work together to improve people's health and wellbeing, prevent crime and protect the most vulnerable people in England.

The *Policing Vision 2025*, published at the end of 2016, described an increasingly diverse and complex policing landscape requiring a more sophisticated approach to tackle new and evolving challenges. Whether it is child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, cybercrime or new threats from serious and organised crime such as human trafficking or terrorism, the service acknowledges that working collaboratively across the system is key to preventing crime and protecting vulnerable people in the modern policing environment.

The public health system is also seeking further collaboration with other public services to address the wider determinants of health – the factors that can set people on the path to ill health and premature death from childhood, or even earlier.

Health outcomes are influenced by a complex interaction between the physical, social and economic environment we live in; our lifestyles; and our individual characteristics. There is also a clear social gradient to health: the better our social status, the better our health is likely to be. The social determinants of health such as housing, education, work and income overlap with the social determinants of crime. Key risk factors for poor health align closely with risk factors for offending; and those who are or are at risk of offending as a group are more likely to suffer from multiple and complex health issues, including mental and physical health problems, learning difficulties, substance misuse and increased risk of premature mortality.

By working together and intervening early to address the common factors that bring people into contact with the police and criminal justice system and lead to poor health we can improve public safety, prevent offending and reoffending, reduce crime and help to improve outcomes for individuals and the wider community.

Public health priorities are therefore clearly aligned with those of police forces across England, and this consensus agreement sets out our joint commitment to embed prevention across the system, building trust and sharing knowledge across professional and organisational boundaries to make a real difference to improving health and wellbeing outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

- To move beyond single service-based practice to whole place approaches to commissioning and delivering preventative services in response to assessments of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability.
- To get better at identifying and supporting vulnerable people through the millions of interactions between community members, health and police services and our partners each year.
- To enable the police service, public health teams and other partners to work better together to support families enrolled in the troubled families programme, domestic abuse victims, children subject to Child Protection Plans and the management of sexual and violent offenders and those with complex dependencies such as drugs, alcohol or mental health.
- To identify and explore opportunities where national bodies can promote guidance, promote the sharing of information, support education and training needs and share learning to improve local services.
- To ensure staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, recognise risk factors earlier, protect the public, improve health and wellbeing and secure public trust.
- To work together to use our shared capabilities and resources more effectively to enhance the lives of those with complex needs and the people they interact with.
- To offer an integrated approach through the better co-ordination, prevention and early intervention that will increase the reach and impact of all services.

This consensus is specific to England, however we will work with our counterparts in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, wherever possible and appropriate, to share learning and address joint objectives.

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