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Presentation by

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#correctionresearch

10<sup>th</sup> May 2018

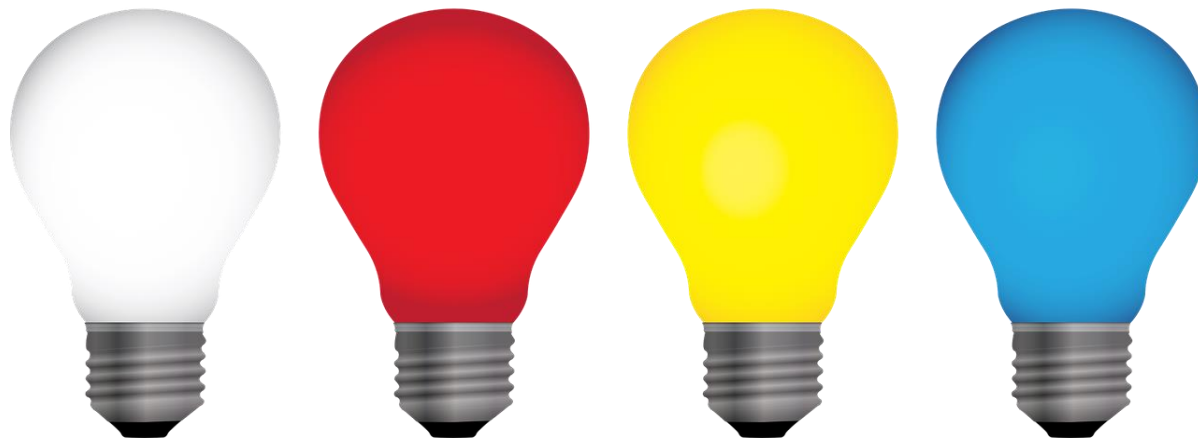
# What is Good Prison Research?

## A PhD/Early Career Perspective

# My backgrounds

- PhD Researcher at UWE Bristol
  - Research topic
  - Funding
  - Keen interests in interdisciplinary elements of the project
- I previously worked as a Substance Misuse Commissioner at various local authorities in the South West of England for nearly 10 years. This included a prison remit.
- Prison research is still new to me
  - MSc Public Health
  - PhD – I recently completed the first phase of the research project.

# What does good prison research look like?



# Good prison research addresses the current sectoral concerns

- Good prison research is grounded in reality:
  - It is situated within the methodology of the research
  - It feeds policymaking processes and vice versa
- The process starts early and is continuous:
  - Planning for the research project
  - Putting together a research proposal
  - Formulating research questions
  - Gaining access to the field
  - Undertaking fieldwork
  - Disseminating the findings

**Your research questions articulate some of the issues that we've all been skirting around.** We know that there have been austerity measures, reductions in budget, and challenges in prison.

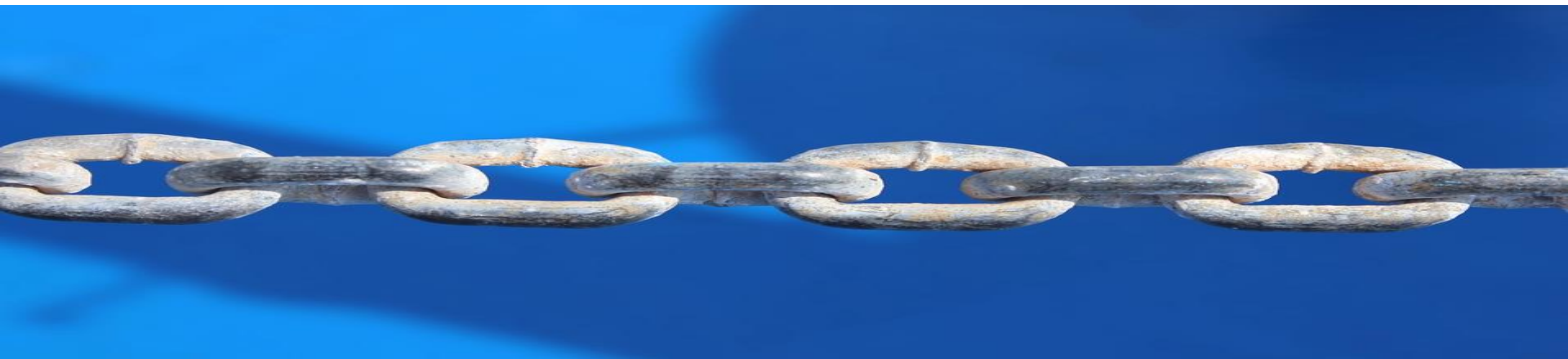
Participant 20

I think many of the people who we work with perhaps haven't even considered the questions that you're asking in your research. I think it's kind of that – **what's the question policymakers need answering, what can academics do to help, and what can other supporting entities, like NGOs and international organisations, do to support that?**

Participant 9

# Good prison research should be relatable

- “Relatable” has many dimensions:
  - Funders (and the interviewer panel)
  - Department and faculty
  - Research participants
  - Members of the public



Working on the cold face of prison, it's a tedious thing, and it's important that we get to the bottom of why things [in prisons] are deteriorating. [S]o **this project appealed to me because it attempts to deal with the core problem I think that underlies much of what's been happening over the last eight years.**

Participant 12



The impact of what happens in wider society on the criminal justice system and the prison systems [is] a very important issue that's often neglected...**a lot of people tend to view [it] as something completely separate and outside of normal society.**

Participant 27

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**Prisons Under Austerity** @prisonausterity · Apr 11

Prisoners at HMP Leicester and Gartree Prisons could be allowed to Skype families if they behave: [bit.ly/2H8p0mc](https://bit.ly/2H8p0mc) #prisons #prisoners #England #Skype #Leicestershire



1 3



**Matilda** @meejamrare · Apr 11

Contact with family should never be a bargaining tool based on behaviour the contact for families matters to

1 1 2



**Tracey McMahon** @MAFTC · Apr 11

Yes. Good plan, but the threat of 'behaving' spoils the initiative. Poor headlining there. It doesn't encourage the public to get behind such schemes.

1

Link: <https://twitter.com/prisonausterity>

# What are the barriers to good prison health research?



# Finding and working with research collaborators

- How can we identify which organisations and individuals are interested in collaboration? What's in it for them?
- Do they represent interdisciplinary variations?
- Do they get along with each other?
- In what ways can the collaborators support the research?
- How can the researchers give back to the institutions?

# Thank you for listening!

