# Digital Care Management

**Reducing Harm and Saving Lives in the UK's detention and prison estate**

## Executive Summary

Amongst the daily duties of dedicated prison staff lies the constant question of how to keep themselves and inmates as safe as possible.

It is well-known that mental ill health disproportionally affects the prison population, with up to nine in ten people experiencing a mental health problem at some point.

Inmates needs are often highly complex and figures on self-harm and self-inflicted deaths across the prison and detention estate go some way to revealing the harsh reality faced by prison employees and vulnerable people in their care.

Every death in custody is a tragedy and creates a traumatic ripple effect for bereaved families, friends, and fellow inmates. Also impacted are those prison colleagues who work tirelessly to safeguard individuals under their supervision.

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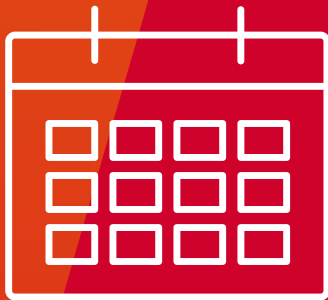
## Mental Health issues are widespread

Up to

# 90%

of prisoners have some form of mental health problem[5]

## Self-harm continues to reach record levels

# 72%

of prisoners self-harmed in the 12 months to December 2020[6]

## Preventative measures need strengthening

Every

# 5 days

a person in prison takes their life[7]**

**This presents a question – How can we work together to strengthen our care management processes and make vulnerable people even safer?**

In response, Sopra Steria has teamed up with experts working on prison front lines to develop a new Digital Care Management (DCM) tool which puts users at the heart.

Working together, we can help design bespoke DCM tools that directly answer organisations' needs.

These tools work to optimise existing processes and can bridge the boundaries between organisations.

They can; help practitioners to better record, identify and protect individuals considered at risk of self-harm and/ or suicide; ensure that the appropriate care and support is provided in a timely fashion; provide deep insight to continually learn and improve the process; reduce the administrative burden and; facilitate early preventative action.

Ultimately, these DCM tools have potential to help reduce harm and save lives.

\* Record number of self-harm incidents per individual continues to be 4.8. In the most recent quarter there were 14,167 self-harm incidents, up 9% on the previous quarter, comprising a 5% increase in male establishments and a 24% increase in female establishments.

\*\* Self-inflicted deaths are over six times more likely to occur amongst prisoners than in the general population. Prison Reform Trust, (2020), 'Who cares, Exploring Distress in Prison from the Perspective of People In Prison', Accessed at: http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/vw/1/ItemID/948

[5] House of Commons, (2017), 'Mental health in Prisons,' Available at: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmpubacc/400/400.pdf

[6] Ministry of Justice, (2021), 'Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to December 2020 Assaults and Self-harm to September 2020, , Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2020/safety-in-custody-statistics-england-and-wales-deaths-in-prison-custody-to-december-2020-assaults-and-self-harm-to-september-2020

[7] NQUEST, Truth, Justice & Accountability, (2020), 'New government figures show record levels of self-harm and high numbers of deaths in prison', Accessed at: https://www.inquest.org.uk/moj-stats-april-2020

# An urgent and complex challenge

Approximately 80,000 people are currently held in prisons and detention centres in England and Wales,[1] a number that will continue to increase as new prisons are built in the coming years. Up to 90% of those held suffer from poor mental health, with 58,870[2] incidences of self-harm and 67[3] self-inflicted deaths occurring in the 12 months to December 2020. Every case represents real damage, not only to the victims but also their families – personal tragedies that require huge resources to provide tailored interventions and within a pressured and delicate environment.

The care planning process for prisoners and detainees identified as being at risk of suicide or self-harm – the 'Assessment, Care in Custody/Detention and Teamwork' (ACC/DT) process - relies on committed and dedicated staff working hard to reduce and prevent harm to those in their care. Despite the enormous efforts, challenges remain.

Structural, technological, and organisational complexity can limit the positive impact those working in ACC/DT may otherwise have. Some barriers to improving the care management process are result from fragmented, inefficient and cumbersome paper-based systems currently in use. For example, research indicates that:

- **Staff are time pressured:** The ability to have meaningful interactions with individuals considered at risk is limited by the requirement to promptly record observation entries alongside other duties

- **Data quality can be poor:** There are concerns around the robustness of the physical ACC/DT documents, with individuals expressing issues with damage when used for pro-longed periods of time

- **Privacy and protection issues are difficult to address:** Confidentiality was of fundamental importance to those individuals considered at risk, many of whom expressed concerns regarding the bright orange colouring of the ACC/DT folder.[4]

[1] This includes the sentenced prison population, the remand prison population and the non-criminal prison population and is true as of the 30/09/2020. Ministry of Justice, (2020), 'Safety in Custody Statistics', Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

[2] True of the period 2019-20. Ministry of Justice, (2021), 'Deaths of Offenders in the Community, England and Wales', Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2020/safety-in-custody-statistics-england-and-wales-deaths-in-prison-custody-to-december-2020-assaults-and-self-harm-to-september-2020#fn:2

[3] True of the period 2019-20. Ministry of Justice, (2021),' Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody', Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2020/safety-in-custody-statistics-england-and-wales-deaths-in-prison-custody-to-december-2020-assaults-and-self-harm-to-september-2020#fn:2

[4] Ministry of Justice, (2019), 'The Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process in prison: findings from qualitative research', Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/787778/acct-process-prison-findings-from-qualitative-research.pdf

# Digital Care Management (DCM)

**Using technology to improve outcomes for all**

The current ACC/DT process relies on paper records, repetitive data entry and fragmented IT. A new case management system, tailored for the needs of practitioners and vulnerable people and integrated into partners' processes and existing IT, would transform the care management process and allow staff to collect and collate information on individuals considered 'at risk' onto a single digital system.

Sopra Steria has developed a DCM tool that helps practitioners to better record, identify and protect individuals considered at risk of self-harm and/or suicide; ensuring that the appropriate care and support is provided in a timely fashion, providing deep insight to continually learn and improve the process and reducing the administrative burden.
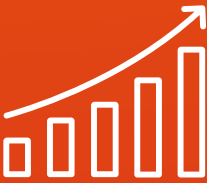
Improving the management of those with care needs: improves the lives of those needing treatment; creates a more transparent and less cumbersome process for staff and; as individuals are better managed, improves the overall environment in the prison.

# Benefits

## Optimised Process

Flexible digital data collection and offline availability ensures more practical and efficient care management processes
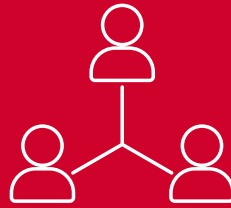
## Increased Data Accuracy

Digitised records ensure information is more up to date, ensuring greater accuracy and mitigating against discrepancies and duplicated effort.
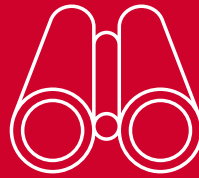
## Greater Accountability

Reporting functionality supports quality control measures as set out in the ACC/DT services order. Increased visibility and reporting encourages accountability and facilitates more rigorous quality audit.

## Increased transparency

Given the frequency and volume of transfers and court movements, the digital ACC/DT provides the ability to interface with associated organisations-allowing for the collection of data from multiple sources, devices and formats.

## Earlier Intervention

In creating digital detainee records, staff awareness around the nature of detainees in their care is increased – not only within organisations/establishments, but also across them. Automated tracking reports encourage preventative action as they provide early sight, drawing attention to those individuals who require the most urgent care and support.

# Implementation and Accelerating Digital

## Implementing a tailored DCM tool

Research indicates that women are currently at the highest risk across the prison and detention estate.[8] We therefore consider that initial implementation of the digital ACC/DT process in a female establishment (Prison or IRC) will derive the greatest value.

Based on our experience with the Northern Ireland Prison Service, we would recommend an initial pilot phase lasting 6-12 months. We would anticipate 120- 150 days mobilisation – working with a new client to tailor a solution to this specific needs - at an overall benchmark price of £200k.[*]

A typical delivery team, working alongside our client, would comprise of the following skill-sets:

- Business Analyst

- Developer

- Technical Architect

- SCRUM Master

- Change Manager

This is intended to provide a representative view for information purposes only and may be subject to change based on individual client requirements.

## Endless Opportunity

There are many other digital opportunities across the prison estate that we can help with.

For example, working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Prison we have also

completed the Agile Development of a Tablet Application which facilitates the capture of Inmate Needs Profile Interviews by a Prison Officer while in direct contact with an Inmate, removing the need for the use of paper records.

* Please note, this is a ROM cost and may be subject to change. Hardware and infrastructure costs have been excluded from the stated price.

[8] True of the period 2019-20. Ministry of Justice, (2020), 'Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody', Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/930458/safety-in-custody-q2-2020.pdf

*"This tablet application is the first project delivery under our new contract with Sopra Steria and demonstrates the partnership approach wanted by NIPS.  This first Agile project has provided an intuitive "Needs Profile Interview" application that aids interaction between an officer and a prisoner, in a short timeframe, with an expectation to undertake more projects using the same approach."* - Northern Ireland prison Service

# Innovation is nothing without impact

A great idea isn't an answer in itself. You need to deliver on that vision and turn it into a value-added reality for your department. For that, you need a consulting and IT services partner that has the passion, insight and pace to continually take you from ideation to impact. Ongoing innovation is only the beginning of what we can achieve together.

Sopra Steria does more to help you adapt in a changing world. We design, develop and deliver technology solutions that achieve your strategic outcomes and meet your specific challenges. By combining collaborative consultancy and strategic expertise with sector specialisms, digital best practice and accelerated delivery, we make a real difference to every client's challenges.

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