Digital Landscape in European and American Corrections

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A celebration…

- Solution focused
- Enhancing correction environments to meet complex demands:

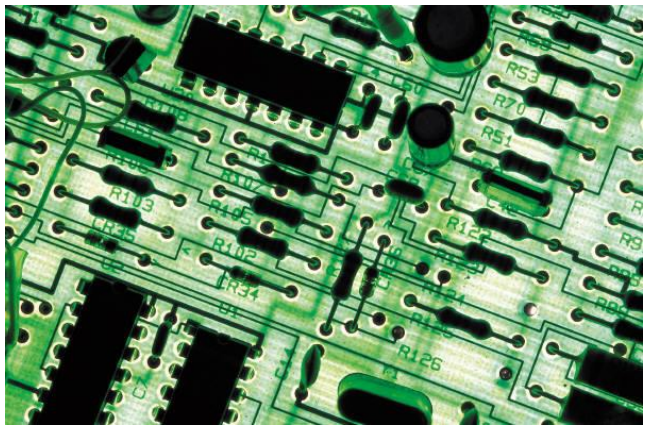
Prisoner	Prison	Policy
Digital literacy	Info sharing	Evidence based
Family contact	Public confidence	Research-design-development
Well-being	Cost benefits	

Themes of the Conference

1. Information management
2. Enhance security
3. **Offender engagement**

Background to research

- Role of TV in prison- sociological studies (Knight 2012; 2015)
- Nature of prisoner interactions
- TV and other forms of prisoner communication as privilege
- Mechanism of control
- Therapeutic benefits/costs
- Challenges to capturing changes and developments in use and access to digital technologies
- Digital-lag
- Care vs. Control
- Cultural and institutional differences explained by attitudes to incarceration



Are our prisons..

DIGITALLY READY?

Challenges

- Digital lag
- Resistance
- Nervousness
- Luxury
- Staff labour

Benefits

- Social interaction
- Therapeutic
- Normalising
- Better control
- Purposeful activity
- Administrative

Europe & USA

SOME OBSERVATIONS…

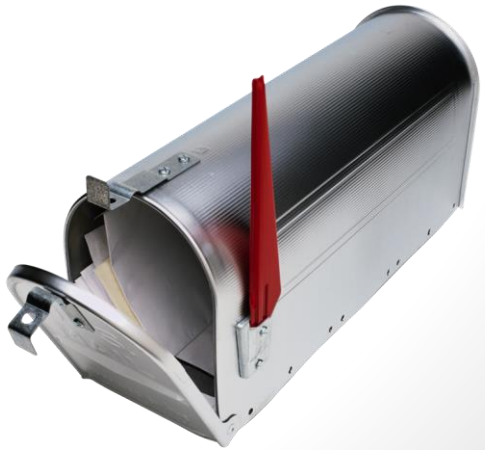
TV

Boredom is poisonous, it is mental poison. You can easily get distressed and suicidal in here. TV keeps you occupied. Even just changing the channels using the remote, it keeps you focused. (Leon-prisoner)

- 60+ hours of TV consumed in-cell by male adult prisoners (also USA- Gersch 2006)
- Complex therapeutic instrument for emotional and social control (also Belgium- Vandebosch 2002)
- Financial cost to prisoner
- Misunderstood medium – purposeful activity
- Normalising the cell
- Withdrawing from social life
- TV as a vehicle to deliver other other digital technology

Email

- UK- 2006 *emailaprisoner* introduced to HMP Guys Marsh
  - Approved sender
  - Cost for sender
  - Printed out
  - Reply service –scanned hand written letter
- US- 2007 TRULINCS
  - Cost for receiver to read and write emails
  - Character limits
  - Approved sender
- Belgium – *PrisonCloud*- under development
  - Single platform
  - Can't be read by staff- statute
- Netherlands, Georgia, Lithuania- *Prisonmail*
  - Global directory
  - Reply services (in Ireland too)
  - Cost



Internet- www.

- UK- heavily restricted ‘not allowed uncontrolled access’
- Small pockets of access
- Education and vocation focus
- Smartphones and social networking- criminal behaviour
- Twitter- The Lifer- who tweets from jail
- Charlie Bronson- own website managed by third party
- US- pen pal services
- Belgium- close to real life as possible

Video Visitation

I have a 3 year old son and I've asked not to bring him here so much. I want to see him, but I worry how it is affecting him. We need to maintain a bond, but I worry about him growing up and that it is damaging him. It is about balancing it. (Leon, prisoner UK)

- Tremor of 'pain'- family
- UK-
  - limited to courts and sometime foreign national visits
- Ireland, Belgium and Netherlands – under development
- US- 1990s
  - Cost to family $15 for 30 minutes
  - Enhance family communication (Doyle et al 2011)
  - Abolishing face-to-face visits- county jails
  - Distance, cost, co-presence
  - Growth industry 500 prisons in 43 states (Rabuy & Wagner 2015)

e-learning and t-learning

- UK- *Virtual Campus*
  - Through the gate experience?
  - Regime and routine barriers
  - Replication of the internet is poor
  - Transformational qualities (Adams and Pike 2008)
  - Use of cell time (Knight and Hine 2009)
- Europris- ICT expert group
- Sweden – accessing the teacher in varying locations
- Convergence opportunities

Kiosks & Tablets

Here we are restricted to a PowerPoint type presentation that just flicks over; that would do my head in if I was waiting for one bit of information to come up, once they have got it, it flicks over and I have lost it and I have got to wait for another 100 pages for it to come back round. I don't think that side of it has been utilised to its full. (Tony, Deputy Governor)

- WiFi dependent- good quality bandwidth
- UK- approx 20 prisons
  - In-cell provision being trialled
- Paperless environment
- Self-management
- Performance management
  - Data collection- use, temporal and spatial accounts

Single Platforms

- User focused
- Targeting services
- Cost
- Data management
- WiFi
- Consolidation- easier to manage, implement
- Local control and reaching the right audience with the right products
- Belgian and Irish models are currently demonstrating most advancement towards this.

Exploiting Digital Technology

- Sensitivity to the levels of control
- User-focused
- Empowerment of users- ‘self-service’
- Morality and ethics- *Internet of Things*
- Attitudes towards technology
- Manage public opinion pro-actively
- Legal frameworks
- Machine vs. People
- Widening remit of use- not just educational and rehabilitative
- Soft outcomes
- Single platforms
- Multifunctional mobile devices

Co-production?

- Modes of address- speaking to the prisoner (and staff)
- Community- sociality
- National Prison Radio
- Digital literacy
- Cost

National Prison Radio
Radio made by prisoners, for prisoners

Thank you

Enjoy this conference