

Improving the efficiency of
electronic monitoring: some
thoughts on good practice

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Limited evidence base

- Over a decade of operation and expansion in UK
- Large numbers of defendants/offenders are subject to EM at any one time and its use is increasing
- Lack of an evidence-base
- Research and evaluation

Research projects

- The new uses of electronic monitoring
 - Condition of community sentence
 - Requirement of licence when released early from prison
- Compliance and electronic monitoring
 - Curfew orders
 - Research methods
 - Administrative data
 - Observations of monitoring officers
 - Interviews with monitoring officers
 - Interviews with offenders
- Various studies on other aspects of the criminal justice process

Multi-agency working I

- EM not integrated into criminal justice process
- Criminal justice professionals lack understanding of EM
- Lack of coordination and information exchange
 - From the courts to EM companies
 - Between EM companies and offender managers and others
 - Enforcement/compliance

Multi-agency working II

- Examples of good practice
 - Secondments
 - Training
 - Information exchange/protocols
- EM companies access to criminal justice agencies databases and visa versa

Aims of EM

- Managing expectations/enhancing its profile
- What are we expecting EM to do?
- What does it do?
 - punishment
 - habit-breaking/stabilisation
 - support other interventions
- Potential is greater if used creatively

Compliance

- Clear boundaries
- Visible monitoring and enforcement
- Robust equipment
- Enforcement
- Families/friends
 - Negative and positive impact on compliance
 - Source of abuse/violence on staff
 - Householders consent
 - Need to be fully informed
 - Danger of overburdening and over-responsibilizing significant others

Monitoring Officers

- Responsible for putting EM into practice
- Public face of EM
- Generally viewed positively by offenders
- Working conditions
 - Vulnerability and safety
 - Range of strategies used to deal with their safety concerns
 - Impact upon effectiveness of EM

References

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