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Title: The blurring of boundaries in the Belgian internment field: a hybridisation of justice and healthcare professionals' discourses and representations?

Authors:

Coralie Darcis, Assistante et Doctorante à la Faculté des Sciences Sociales de l'Université de Liège

Frédéric Schoenaers, Professeur à la Faculté des Sciences Sociales de l'Université de Liège

Abstract (100 words max.)

The Belgian internment measure has been oscillating between justice and health since its first formulations. The 2016 Internment policy plan and legal framework emerged as, even if remaining hybrid, devices indicating and supporting a *paradigm shift* from a prevailing judicial approach (protection of society) to a central care approach (recovery) of those patients. The arrival of new hybrid devices and professional roles come to foster the blurring of mental health and justice sectors' respective boundaries. Therefore, thanks to qualitative empirical material, we would like to ask to which extent this hybridisation pervades health and justice professionals' discourses and representations?

Summary (500 words max.)

Likewise to other authors, Rutherford (2010) states that "these last two decades there has been a convergence between mental health and criminal justice policy, legislation, systems and practice, [...] boundaries between the two systems are becoming increasingly blurred." With this communication, we suggest to approach this question by replacing it in the context of the internment field, which currently undergoes a process of deep reorganisation and transformation.

Historically, the Belgian Internment measure has been **oscillating between justice and health** since the first regulations of the measure (Cartuyvels & al., 2010). However, the underlying logic of the approach was mainly based on a model in which the protection of society was predominant. This perspective leads to inadequate treatments toward this group of patients and leads to multiple convictions of the Belgian state by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Following this, a new legislation came into effect on October 1st, 2016. Regarding the political arena, several policy initiatives have been directed toward reorganising the care offer for MIOs. In 2016, this political will became concrete through the *Masterplan Internment* at the initiative of the Ministry of Public Health.

With the arrival of those new legal and political regulations, we observe a **paradigm shift** in the way the approach toward this public is conceptualised in Belgium: the notions of social reinsertion and care recovery through adapted and individualised care trajectories are becoming central. The legal framework as well as the policy plan constitute **new hybrid devices** (Pans & al., 2016) whose objective is to stimulate collaborations between the mental health and justice sectors professionals in order to foster the MDOs reintegration pathway. With those regulations emerged **new hybrid professionals**, as for example local network coordinators and healthcare mobile teams, positioned at the crossroad of justice and mental health fields, moving through care and justice spaces and places (prisons and mental health facilities). By penetrating both sectors through active collaboration with professionals from both sectors, they play a

role of boundary spanners and knowledge brokers, connecting together several entities previously separated by a boundary – organisational or sectoral (Kislov et al. 2017; Williams, 2002).

Since these new regulations, we perceive an important acceleration of collaborations between mental health and justice professionals – justice assistants, mobile teams, psychiatrists, staff of psychiatric hospitals and other mental health facilities, and so on. We argue that those new hybrid devices and professionals play a key role within the **opening up of the sectors** and come to **foster the blurring of** mental health and justice sectors' respective **boundaries**. Therefore, we would like to ask **to which extent does this hybridisation pervades health and justice professionals' discourses and representations?**

Regarding the empirical material, three different methods of data collection have been combined. It includes document analysis, more than fifty semi-structured interviews with stakeholders from both fields and observations of meetings gathering policy makers and/or professionals from both field. We suggest that this methodological triangulation was necessary to understand the ongoing transformation of cross-sectoral collaborations in a more comprehensive way.

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