



**University of Dundee**

## **Oral Health within the Justice System, Involving the Public in Research Design**

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# Oral Health Within the Justice System, Involving the Public in Research Design

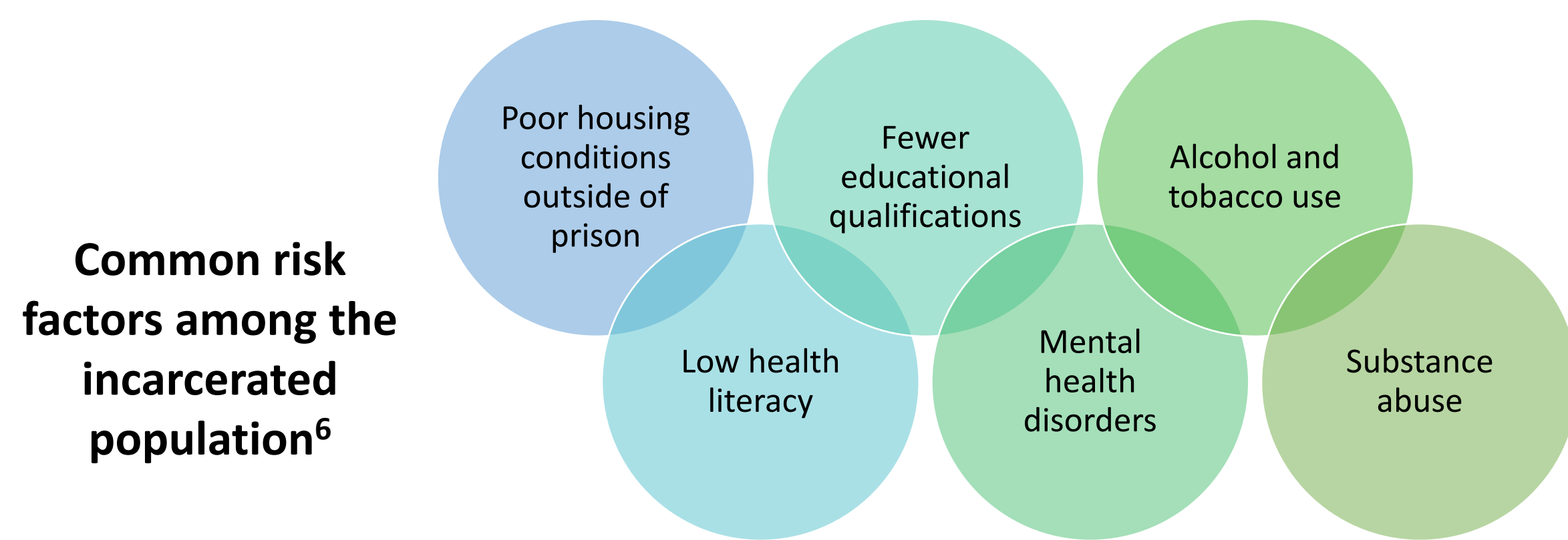
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## Background

- In England and Wales 132 per 100,000 of the national population are in custody; in Scotland this is 138<sup>1</sup>.
- The rate of dental decay is estimated to be four times higher for those in custody in comparison to the general population<sup>2,3</sup>.
- All prisoners reported that they had experienced painful aching in the mouth<sup>4</sup>.
- 23% of prisoners felt self-conscious about the appearance of their teeth very often<sup>4</sup>.
- Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) allows members of the public to be actively involved with the research process and improves the quality, relevance and impact of research<sup>5</sup>.



## Objectives

- To gain Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in the design of research that is focused on improving the oral health of people in custody.
- To involve and engage those with lived experience of the justice system and utilise their insights to shape research and set priorities.

## Methods

### Design

- 1) Discussions with PPI experts to determine recruitment, incentives, accessibility of activities, ethics and how to capture outputs
- 2) A semi-structured topic guide was created to explore research priorities and acceptability.

### Semi-structured guide:

- Where do they see the value in this research?
- Why do they think it important to do this project in prison populations?
- What impact would this study have on participants?
- How could the project promote participation?
- Do you think a long follow up period is feasible?

**Recruitment through the following groups:**  
Project ReMake  
Working Change  
Turning Point Scotland

### Recruitment

- 1) Electronic flyers distributed to third sector groups and NIHR PPI platform.
- 2) Prison officers recruited through previous relationships with the research team.
- 3) Incentives inline with NIHR guidance.

### PPI Activity

- 1) Two virtual one hour meetings were hosted on Microsoft Teams in Scotland and England.
- 2) A facilitator led the session and gave each participant the opportunity to contribute.

### Ethics:

Formal ethical approval was not required as the work was PPI but the activities were carried out in the spirit of ethical research.<sup>7</sup>

### Outputs

- 1) Anonymised notes were taken of each meeting recording the question asked and the responses of the participants.
- 2) Outputs relayed to research team and used to guide research design.

### Community Returners

8x  
2x

### Prison Officers

2x

Figure 1. PPI process from planning through to output

## Results

The team were able to successfully recruit engaged participants with a lived experience of the justice system who were able to offer valuable insights into their perceived oral health needs and conducting oral health research in a prison setting.

### Key Themes to be Incorporated into Research Design:

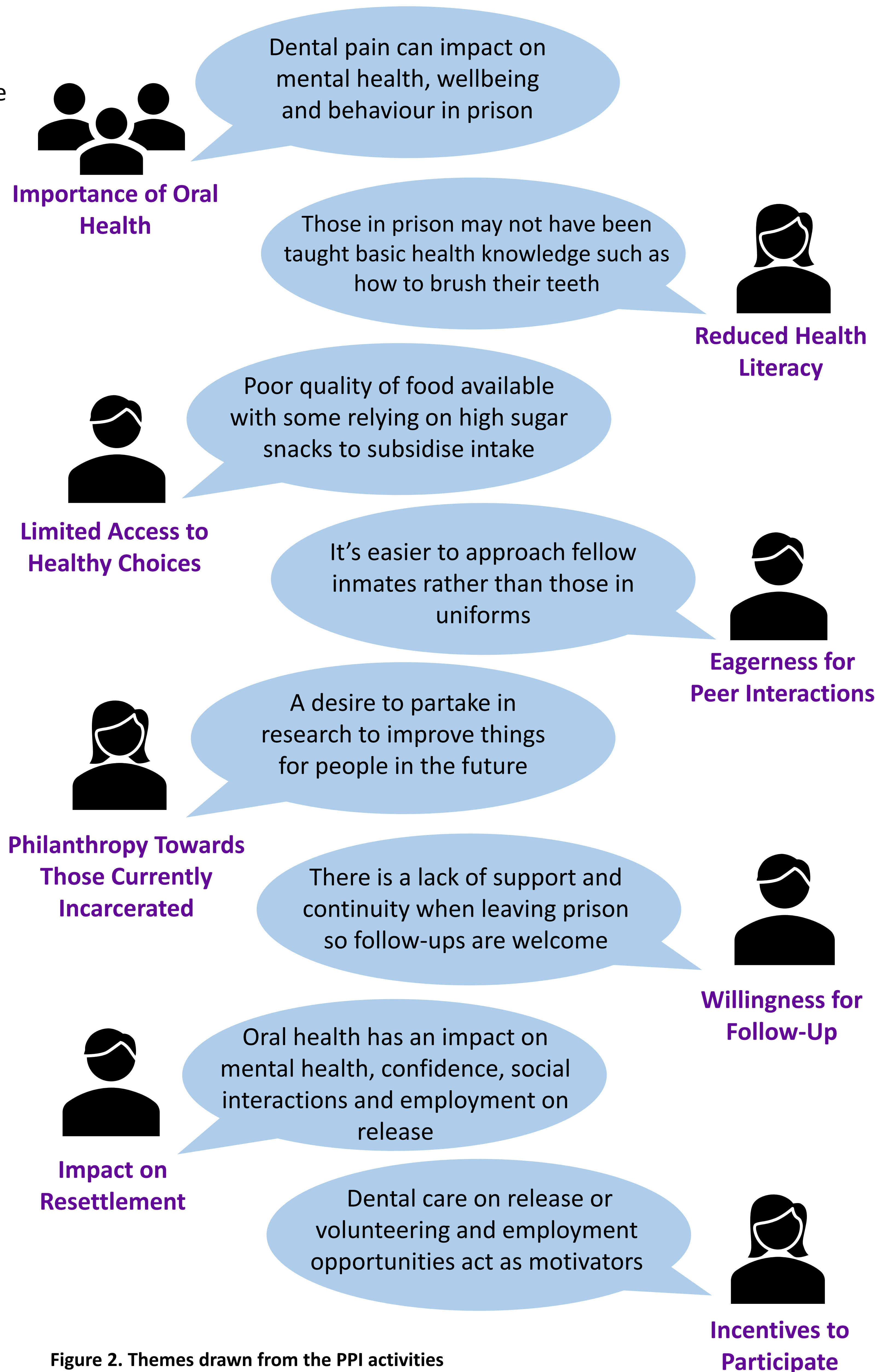


Figure 2. Themes drawn from the PPI activities

## Conclusions

- People in custody may have chaotic lifestyles and are less likely to access healthcare. Incarceration provides a unique opportunity to instill health promoting behaviours.
- When delivering an intervention in a prison setting programmes assisting with employment opportunities on release and leading to a qualification should be prioritised.
- Peer coaches were well accepted as they felt their peers were more approachable and may have more time than prison staff.
- Oral health improvement is a vital part of improving the mental health, wellbeing, social functioning and resettlement of those in custody.

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