

The Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association

Special Interest Group on Neurodisability Law Enforcement and Public Health

SiG Annual Report Newsletter -
2024

Connecting Global Expertise in
Neurodisability and Justice



In a world where justice systems often struggle to accommodate the needs of neurodivergent individuals, the importance of a global special interest group like this SiG cannot be overstated. By bringing together experts and practitioners from both the Global North and South, the SiG fosters cross-cultural collaboration and knowledge translation, leading to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals in contact with the law. This global perspective is crucial in developing effective strategies and interventions that promote fairness, equity, and inclusivity within justice systems worldwide.

With over 70 members spanning the globe, the SiG continues to be a vital platform for driving positive change and ensuring that the voices of neurodivergent individuals are heard and respected.

This year has been particularly enriching, with four insightful quarterly meetings featuring experts from diverse fields.

A Year in Review: 2024 Quarterly Meetings

- **February:** Dr Ching-Yu Huang, Lecturer in Psychology at Keele University, presented on "Vulnerable Witness Investigative Interview and Courtroom Questioning – Practice Evaluation and Future Directions." Dr. Huang shared her research conducted with the Ministry of Justice in Taiwan, evaluating the effectiveness of vulnerable witness interview training and special measures. The study examined real-world cases of sexually assaulted vulnerable witnesses, analysing interview techniques, courtroom questioning, and case

outcomes. The discussion also highlighted the importance of understanding neurodiversity to improve support and safeguards for vulnerable witnesses in accessing justice.

- **May:** Gemma Buckland, Policy and Research Manager for ABI Justice Network and Director of Do it Justice, led a session focused on the "Transition to Adulthood for Young People with Acquired Brain Injury" report (accessible at: <https://cdn.ymaws.com/ukabif.org.uk/resource/resmgr/abijn/t2a-brain-injury-report.pdf>). The presentation explored the report's findings and UKABIF's future plans for supporting young adults with acquired brain injuries.
- **September:** Dr Hope Kent, Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Exeter, presented her research on "Neurodisability and Poverty in Children who are Criminalized." The findings revealed a synergistic relationship between poverty and neurodevelopmental delay, significantly increasing the risk of criminalization in children. The discussion emphasized the need to address structural inequalities and consider public health approaches, drawing inspiration from Marmot's "social determinants of health," to prevent the criminalization of children with neurodisabilities.
- **December:** We are excited to announce that Dr Arthur McLuhan is our potential speaker for the December meeting [<https://maphealth.ca/mcluhan/>]. More details to follow!

Also in December: Professor Stan Gilmour, SiG co-convenor, will be speaking at the African Regional Conference on Law Enforcement and Public Health about Neurodisability and Violence Prevention.



Looking Ahead: SiG Activities in 2025

The SiG is actively planning for 2025, with a focus on impactful conferences and workshops.

LEPH 2025 Ottawa - Pre-conference Symposium/Workshop: Empowering Police Response to Domestic Abuse and TBI

- **Date:** 12 July 2025
- **Location:** University of Ottawa
- **Objective:** To develop a practical toolkit for police officers, enabling them to effectively respond to potential domestic abuse victims in the critical first 10 seconds of interaction, with a specific focus on recognising and addressing Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
- **Target Audience:** Police officers who frequently handle domestic disturbance calls.



Stay Connected

We encourage all members to actively participate in SiG activities and contribute to our shared mission of promoting justice and understanding for individuals with neurodiverse needs. We look forward to another year of collaboration and impactful engagement in 2025.

