



Annual report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP Preston

for reporting year
1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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A Introductory sections 1 – 3

1 Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the secretary of state from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is specifically charged to:

- (1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- (2) inform promptly the secretary of state, or any official to whom they have delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) report annually to the secretary of state on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact this has on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

2 Executive summary

This report presents the findings of the IMB at HMP Preston for the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys and prisoner applications.

Overall, the Board finds Preston to be a well-run prison, with generally good relations between officers and prisoners.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Overall the prisoners receive fair treatment in this establishment as shown by the low number of complaints concerning discrimination (5.1).

Are prisoners treated humanely?

The introduction to the prison through the reception area cannot be thought of as humane due to its very restricted nature (4.1), and the Victorian accommodation overall is in need of work (7.1) to meet modern standards e.g. space and toilet decency. The increase in the number of complaints against staff, which is disappointing, but does not alter the overall view that the prisoners are treated fairly and humanely and have an opportunity for education and employment (9 and 10).

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

As HMP Preston is a local prison in which resettlement is an important function, the preparation of prisoners for release is an established function which is carried out well (11).

Main areas for development

To the Minister

Will the Minister ensure additional resources are provided for capital projects necessary to maintain the fabric of the prison, allow the installation of air conditioning in the visits hall, and ensure the living conditions of prisoners are improved with respect to the findings paper by HM Inspectorate of Prisons: Life in prison: Living conditions with particular regard to the showers and privacy whilst using the toilet (7)?

To the Prison Service

Due to its Victorian construction, the accommodation for prisoners in many cases cannot meet modern decency standards. Consideration should be given to variation of the cell certificate for the worst of the cells to single occupancy. (Section 7.1)

Issues around prisoners' property remain a source of frustration and sometimes disillusionment with the Prison Service for many prisoners. Property was again one of the most common subjects of both complaints to the prison and applications to the IMB (77 applications, 16.8% of the total) in 2018 – 2019. The rules regarding prisoners' property are covered by Prison Service instruction (PSI) 12/2011. The rules are very comprehensive, but they do not define the rights of prisoners to have their property kept safely and transferred with them if they move from one prison to another, or if they are moved from one part of the prison to another (e.g. the segregation unit) or indeed, if they are rushed to hospital.

There is scope for more detailed instructions as to how prisoners' property is handled and for the introduction of time limits for property transfers from prison to prison, which may be a way of addressing this (section D).

To the Governor

How can the control of prisoners' property be improved when prisoners are moved to the segregation unit under restraint (section D)?

To the provider (of maintenance etc.)

The second half of the year saw improvements in the timeliness of repairs and maintenance and the communication of progress on reported problems. There is still more to be done, and these improvements should be continued and built upon in the coming year.

Improvements

Healthcare provision was identified as a continuing source of concern at the time of our previous report, despite having significantly improved since the current provider assumed responsibility in April 2017. There had been a 23% increase in applications to the board about healthcare over the previous year. The provider has taken steps to address this over 2018 – 2019, resulting in a 25% reduction in applications (i.e., to slightly below the pre-2017 level). It is anticipated that the improvements made will show reductions in complaints in future years (8).

The introduction of the first stage of the offender management in custody (OMiC) initiative, by appointing, training and incorporating key workers into the regime, has already started to improve staff-prisoner relationships and provide a framework for sentence planning.

The showers have long been a source of concern. It is pleasing to note that a start has been made on an enhanced maintenance of programme for them, but monies need to be released for the project to be completed (7).

3 Description of the prison

3.1 Overview

HMP Preston is a predominantly Victorian radial prison, constructed between 1840 and 1895. It operates as a category B male local and resettlement prison, servicing courts across north west England. It holds male prisoners aged 18+ who have been remanded in custody, are awaiting trial, serving sentences of 12 months or less, or are awaiting transfer to another prison after sentencing. It is situated on a very confined site near to Preston city centre, and experiences all of the difficulties typical of this style and age of establishment. Its location, however, allows good transportation links for visitors.

3.2 Prison roll

At the time of this report, the prison roll averages around 700 with an operational capacity of 811, against certified normal accommodation of 433.

3.3 Prison facilities

In addition to the core residential accommodation and prison facilities, the following are available to the prisoners:

- 30-bed healthcare centre with regional beds for north west prisons
- 28-bed recovery wing for those with addiction problems
- dental surgery meeting current NHS guidelines
- a well-stocked and managed library and a resettlement area
- an education department which includes an IT centre with 48 computers and an art suite
- well-equipped PE facilities inconveniently on three sites, but well managed and delivered
- a textile workshop
- a horticulture centre

3.4 Partner agencies

3.4.1 Education and training

The education function is run by Novus, part of The Manchester College. It provides a mixed and balanced curriculum focusing on enhancing the employability prospects of prisoners on release and reducing reoffending. The training function is run by HMP Preston.

3.4.2 Healthcare and drug and alcohol recovery

HMP Preston operates a regional hospital facility, which includes a general medical ward with 12 beds as well as a mental health ward with 18 beds. It takes prisoners from other prisons who have serious conditions or who are recovering from operations, and it has a palliative care role.

Since 1 April 2017, these services, along with those in other prisons in the north west and elsewhere, are run by Spectrum Community Health CIC (Spectrum). Spectrum provides primary care services, including integrated substance misuse services, pharmacy services and GP sessions. Spectrum is also responsible for the provision of the following services:

- mental health services (with their partners Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust)
- non-clinical substance misuse services
- optical services
- dental services
- a range of therapies (including physiotherapy and podiatry)

The integrated mental health team (IMHT) offers prisoners a full mental health assessment from initial reception through to discharge and also a crisis resolution service. The IMHT also attends all assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) reviews (for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm). The team is wing-based to facilitate access by wing staff and prisoners.

3.4.3 The library service

This service is provided by Lancashire County Council. The library is operating well, with very enthusiastic and committed staff, and now has books in 27 different languages, which reflect the needs of the prison population. The library is a particularly good place for orderlies to learn new skills because of the complexity of the job and the close supervision available.

3.4.4 Housing, debt and financial advice

This function is the responsibility of the community rehabilitation company (CRC) Sodexo, which has subcontracted the work to Shelter.

4 Safety

4.1 Reception

HMP Preston operates as a local prison taking remand and convicted prisoners from both magistrates' and crown courts in the north west of England. Due to a reduction in capacity at HMP Liverpool owing to refurbishment and lock outs at other prisons, Preston has received prisoners from outside its designated catchment area from courts in Merseyside, Carlisle and Durham. This can mean that the time the last prisoner arrives at Preston can be as late as 9pm. It is a credit to all staff on reception and in the first night centres that processing is done as efficiently as possible in such circumstances.

The physical layout of reception is unaltered, so our concerns about its suitability (as clearly identified in previous annual reports) remain. The prison operates two first night centres, one general and one offering support to those prisoners who use addictive substances. In both centres there are Listeners (prisoners who provide emotional support to other prisoners) and good access to the Samaritans phone service. Work with the healthcare provider Spectrum has reduced the time prisoners spend in reception. The target is now 60 minutes, which is achieved in most cases. A prisoner is assessed on reception as to whether or not they have an addiction problem. Once assessed, they are now directed to the relevant centre, where their full medical screening is carried out.

In total, 3413 new prisoners entered Preston prison in 2018 – 2019, with a total of 11924 movements through reception, which include those for court visits, police interviews and hospital visits.

This year the prison was subject to a safer custody audit, which assessed its performance in reception, the first night centres, safer custody and violence management. It attained a green rating, the highest level. Only two prisons in the country hold the green rating, and Preston is the only local prison to hold this rating, which is a compliment to the staff involved.

4.2 Psychoactive substances

The prevalence of drugs in the prison is an ongoing problem. The main problems are psychoactive substances (PSs) and cannabis. The PSs are difficult to detect due to their ever-changing chemical composition. Some prisoners are not scared to experiment in making their own PS by combining everyday products and either smoking them or inhaling the fumes when they are boiled. This is a highly dangerous occupation, not least because if things go wrong, the healthcare staff have no clear treatment available to treat the variable symptoms. Since the introduction of PSs, healthcare staff have become more proficient at triaging patients under the influence, and not referring them to the local hospital.

New initiatives are constantly being looked at to reduce the potential for PSs to be introduced into prison. The cells in the first night centres are searched daily, stopping items getting into the general prison. Prisoners' incoming mail has always been accepted by email. New facilities are being installed in the mail room to enable prisoners' replies to be scanned and sent electronically.

4.3 Use of force

Last year Preston was one of four prisons to trial the use of Pava spray (an incapacitant consisting of a 0.3% solution of pelargonic acid vanillylamide). The trial finished this year, and the prison and the Board agreed with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service that PAVA provides a useful addition tool for a prison officer to help control prisoner violence. PAVA inflicts temporary discomfort and leaves no permanent injuries, unlike a baton. The new guidelines will make its use clearer.

Use of force instances have risen from 342 last year to 436 this year, a 28% increase. Preston monitors use of force very closely, with regular meetings reviewing the number of incidents and the appropriateness of the force used, as well as a quality assurance/learning review of all paperwork.

There are two main reasons for this: firstly the continued use of psychoactive drugs, and secondly the number of security transfers and an increase in the number of out-of-area prisoners coming to Preston.

In June 2018, HMP Liverpool reduced its capacity by approximately 50%, which had the effect of additional prisoners from that area being held in HMP Preston. From that date the number of use of force instances per month increased and has not subsequently been reduced to the previous (April/May) levels. Also during the year, HMP Preston has held a number of prisoners from the Durham area. Out-of-area prisoners are subject to additional stresses other than just imprisonment. They go to court, perhaps with an expectation of not being sentenced, and then serve a sentence, not locally, but (in the case of Durham) over 100 miles away from home and family, which means that family visits will be less frequent. For those who have been in prison before, the regime and what is acceptable behaviour will be unfamiliar, leading to increased stress and hence more reaction against it. Prisoners often tend to associate with like-minded people from their own area, and where there are multiple local areas with which to self-identify, this leads to an increased likelihood of a gang culture, with several competing gangs, starting to form. This leads to conflict, which shows itself in the use of force figures, indicating that approximately 25% of the figures are caused by either security transfers or out-of-area prisoners.

4.4 Deaths in custody

There have been three deaths in custody this year. Two were of prisoners from other prisons who had been transferred to the regional hospital, and one was an HMP Preston prisoner. All three deaths were initially classed as due to natural causes and are awaiting the final report of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

4.5 Substance misuse and recovery

HMP Preston is committed to supporting the recovery of prisoners with a history of substance misuse who are motivated to address these issues. A dedicated recovery unit is located on a small separate wing of the prison, isolated from the main prison. The unit has a population of 28 men and is run jointly by the prison and by Discovery Drug and Alcohol Services. All prison officers who work on this wing volunteer to work there and contribute strongly to a therapeutic and enabling environment that encourages rehabilitation. Both prisoners and the IMB are very positive about the successful work done by the unit.

5 Equality and fairness

5.1 Disadvantage and discrimination

Neither our monitoring nor applications received have indicated concerns in relation to any aspect of equality during the year. The prison's own discrimination incident reporting process is widely publicised on wings and forms for prisoners to highlight concerns are readily available. During 2018, a total of 50 discrimination incident reporting forms were submitted. This is an increase on last year's 29, but largely accounted for by 15 complaints submitted in April complaining about sausages not being halal, which was proven incorrect. Throughout 2018, complaints concerning racism seem to have been consistently more common than discrimination on the basis of religion or sexual orientation. Due to the relatively small number of complaints being received, trends are difficult to monitor.

The prison aims to promote respect for diversity, and monitors it by holding staff and prisoner focus groups reporting to the quarterly inclusion, diversity, equality, access and leaders (IDEAL) meeting.

5.2 Faith and religious activity

The prison chaplaincy is well regarded by the IMB. It caters for all faiths and prisoners can observe festivals of all faiths recognised by the Prison Service. The chaplaincy's pastoral support is readily accessible to both prisoners and staff, and an average of 2,000 contacts per month are made. The chaplaincy is also a great source of comfort to prisoners and their families at times of bereavement or distress.

The prison houses a regional healthcare unit, and the chaplaincy arranges the visiting protocol for families of prisoners residing there, especially those receiving palliative care, by arranging security clearance for them so they can have unrestricted access to the bedside of their relative when required. The chaplaincy continues this support after the death of the prisoner.

5.3 Prisoners' rights and consultation

Prisoner consultation is well organised through a system of prisoner consultative groups, including an overview committee, chaired by the prison Governor, to which the consultative sub-groups for specific aspects of prison life report. Each of the sub-groups meets monthly and each is chaired by the relevant functional head (residential, reducing reoffending, safety and equality, and healthcare). Prisoner representatives from each wing are invited to each of these meetings and are responsible for consulting other prisoners and communicating outcomes. These arrangements give prisoner representatives the opportunity to raise relevant issues directly and to have them resolved in a timely manner; they also give them direct access to the governor if necessary.

There is a well-established complaints process within the prison, although prisoners are encouraged to speak to wing staff or to their key worker to resolve complaints informally before resorting to the formal process. The process is monitored by the Board and appears to function well. There is a separate complaints process in place for healthcare complaints to the provider Spectrum. All forms relating to these processes, along with information about the Prison and Probation Ombudsman and IMB, are available on each wing through a prisoner information desk (PID). A prisoner representative on each wing has the function to ensure that this information is fully up to date and available. This does vary from wing to wing – for example on some wings, information and standard forms are freely available, on others they are only available on request. Prisoners would benefit from improved quality control and an overview to ensure a good standard of provision across the prison.

5.4 Family relationships

The prison takes its responsibility to maintain family ties seriously and holds six family days per year. These days all have different themes aimed at strengthening family relationships. The prison is helped by volunteers from Crossgate church and staff from the charities Prison Fellowship and the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT). Unfortunately, attendance at these days is not always as high as it could be. Prisoners having domestic violence alerts, no child contact alerts and general restriction orders reduce the numbers eligible for attendance. In addition, being a local prison means the population is not static due to transfers after sentencing.

The prison also runs programmes, organised by partners, such as PACT and the Probation Service, to help prisoners manage their anger and rebuild family relationships.

The visits hall still suffers from lack of ventilation as reported regularly over previous years, and in the summer period it is extremely hot and stuffy. The bid for the installation of air conditioning has been approved, subject to funding being made available. This year did not see the release of any funds for this, and so another hot and stuffy summer was experienced.

Partners of Prisoners (POPS) continued its partnership with the prison. It is hoped that the organisation's access to resources will eventually enhance the visits experience for families with young children. Crossgate church, in partnership with the prison, has opened Redwood Café, which is located opposite the visitors' centre. Visitors call into the café met by POPS staff who can give advice and guidance regarding visits, and are given a booking-in number; therefore queuing in the open outside the visitors' centre is no longer necessary. Within the visits area they have created a play area for 2 - 16 year olds, and provide a play worker during visits.

6 Segregation/care and separation unit

The care and separation unit (CSU) at Preston has 16 cells. The unit has established staff who are professional and patient with what can be the most taxing of prisoners, showing sympathy and common sense, despite the violence and abuse they sometimes have to face. The Board member on rota is contacted promptly with information about prisoners segregated under rule 45 (good order or discipline), enabling us to visit them appropriately, and officers facilitate our speaking to prisoners on request. Documentation is well organised and kept properly completed and up to date, including ACCT monitoring.

The prison makes every effort to keep time in segregation to a minimum, and there were only two instances during the year where a prisoner was segregated continuously for over 42 days. Special accommodation was used on four occasions in 2018 - 2019, typically for very short periods.

The shower facilities were noted as particularly poor last year, but they have seen good improvements this year.

The IMB has regularly attended segregation review board and adjudication meetings throughout the year. The number of adjudication meetings conducted this year has increased by 154%. This is a substantial rise and has placed an increased workload on the staff in the CSU. The increase has been caused as a result of the success of the dedicated search teams in finding drugs and mobile phones, especially through their daily searches of the first night centres. Also, as a result of a directive from the independent adjudicator, all items found on a search, have to be logged separately on individual charge sheets. The reason for this is that if a charge sheet contained multiple items, and a prisoner was found not guilty on a single item, then he had to be found not guilty for all of the items. Segregation reviews are conducted in a thorough and professional manner and give the prisoner every opportunity to contribute. A member of the mental health team is always in attendance.

7 Accommodation (including communication)

7.1 Accommodation

Preston prison is a Victorian prison, built to the standards of the time. The cells were designed for single occupancy with no internal sanitation. Over the years, the prison has tried to improve its physical condition. Internal sanitation was installed in the 1990s, by which time the cells had been classified as double occupancy. Some of the toilets can be viewed directly from the doors' observation panels, and many of them have no lid. Shower curtain screening has been installed to provide privacy, but generally this does not have a long life due to

vandalism. These are the conditions that the prisoners have to eat their meals in, as there are no mess areas on the wings.

The prison is well aware of its defects due to its physical layout, but is striving to improve those conditions within its control. All cells have been measured in order to establish the true scale of the problem. It has been established in general that the cells do not meet international human rights standards in relation to floor space per occupant and decency, with some cells being more inadequate than others.

The prison has tried to address this situation by asking the prison group director in the autumn of 2018 to vary the cell certificate for the worst of the cells to single occupancy. To date no reply has been received, so the worst of the overcrowding continues.

A small number of cells have had rigid decency screens fitted to screen the prisoner using the toilet from being observed from the observation panel, and to screen them from the beds and chairs where the prisoners eat their meals. These have been reviewed and as a result in-cell decency screens have been ordered from the Prison Service's prison industries (PSPI). No delivery date is obtainable from PSPI so their installation will be well into the next financial year.

The toilets themselves are having lids fitted and are being subject to a deep clean. The latter is made more difficult by the restrictions on the cleaning products that are available for use in prisons.

The main area for improvement outside the cells continues to be the showers. They have been mentioned in previous reports and in last year's report were described as inadequate. A deep cleaning was completed in March 2019, and the showers in the CSU have been improved to a decent standard. All other showers have had materials procured and an exercise to cost similar improvements is under way. Money will be applied for, once the costs are fully identified.

In July 2018, a national initiative drove the introduction of a rehabilitative culture, with the aim of addressing the reasons why people commit crimes and helping them to think differently. To achieve this, the relationship between staff and prisoners has to be good. The introduction of key workers is an important part of this process. The first step towards a rehabilitative culture, however, is a prison being safe and decent. With this in mind, a 'J cloth league' has been introduced. Each wing is inspected on an unannounced day each month for cleanliness, the updating of log books in the serveries etc. On the best-kept wing, the staff win vouchers, and wing cleaners receive a 'goody bag' from the kitchens. The aim is to raise the self-esteem and confidence of prisoners.

Due to the aging population of the prison, more facilities for older and infirm prisoners are required. Preston was given money in 2017 – 2018 for the conversion of five cells into three Equalities Act 2010 compliant cells. The conversion of these cells has been behind schedule, but they were eventually finished towards the end of 2018 – 2019. However, they still required remedial works to be carried out in order to meet required standards and to be accepted by the prison. In one cell in particular, further work was identified as necessary, as it could not meet the required standards due to floor levels. This cell has still not been accepted by the prison, even though it was eight months late on delivery.

Last year, it was reported that three roofs had been leaking and only one had been repaired. The remaining two have now been repaired, along with another flat roof that started leaking this year. The offices on three floors, which were damaged due to one of the leaking roofs, have now been refurbished, some nine months late.

Some delays in the progress and delivery of these items of works would have been mitigated by the contractor having a permanent or dedicated site manager in post over the last 12 months. However, lack of continuity has limited tackling of poor performance by third party service providers across the contract. This has had a significant impact on the delivery of

additional work and planned maintenance, with kitchen equipment servicing in particular noticeably suffering as a result.

The general performance of the works contractor, Amey, has been poor, both in tackling the major items of works, such as those listed above, and in the general delivery of services. The continued low performance resulted in official escalation processes from August 2018 and the drawing up of an improvement plan by the regional estates manager. This is being reviewed quarterly. The outcomes of the improvement plan identify the underlying root causes of the lack of performance and have resulted in the appointment of a dedicated site manager, improved stores management and a drive to upgrade all shower facilities. A steady increase in key performance indicator (KPI) performance has been tracked whilst under this programme. By the end of the year, reactive maintenance had improved from an average of 75% to 87.5% of the original target with further KPI gains made thereafter. Tighter control was also maintained on Amey's subcontractors, which also showed an improvement towards the end of the financial year.

Additional funding bids were submitted during January and February 2019, one of which was successful, to provide body scanning equipment as a regional asset for the central north west. Major maintenance bids have also been acknowledged pending funding priorities over the next three years, but are not yet funded. This is a reflection of the strict budget constraints that the service currently faces across the region.

7.2 Catering

One of the more important items for prisoners is their food. Menus provided by the catering department meet national nutritional guidelines, supplying three meals per day. Menus state all food allergens and tolerances and are pictorial, making them easier to understand especially for prisoners with literacy problems or those for whom English is not the first language. Menus are created on a four-week cycle, and where possible reflect seasonal and all faith-related and dietary requirements. The kitchen provides diversity meals each month, in addition to the main prison menu. They consist of celebration foods for religious festivals and events. The catering food budget was £2.04 per prisoner per day for the financial year 2018 – 2019.

The catering department delivers recognised training to level 2 in food safety to prisoners, after which they receive a certificate valid for three years as a foundation for catering services work on their release. Each member of kitchen staff has an allocated wing servery that they visit and check to ensure that all hygiene practices are being adhered to. Monitoring is documented and retained for audit requirements.

The kitchen manager has introduced tin foil cartons for the transportation of hot food provisions. Curries, stews and homemade pies are placed into these tin foils to keep the food hot once it arrives at the wing servery. This has proved a success as the food is hotter than previously and portion controlled, which helps to ensure prisoners get the full portion they are entitled to.

There have been concerns about the cleanliness of some of the wing serveries throughout the year and there was a significant period when the servery on B wing was infested by mice. This has now been dealt with. The kitchen received the highest award of five stars for food safety from the local environmental health department. At the beginning of the year the main kitchen raised issues with Amey, as catering equipment was taking too long to be repaired and small repairs were not being carried out. As mentioned above, Amey's performance has improved in the last quarter.

7.2 Staff concerns

Numbers of applications to the IMB expressing concerns about prison staff have increased significantly over previous years (79 in 2018 – 2019 versus 39 in the previous year).

The Board identified this trend as a concern during the year, and continued to monitor it. A quarter of the complaints against the staff were about the more serious complaint of assault. The remainder concerned bullying, aggressive or rude behaviour or discrimination. All complaints were investigated by the prison under PSI 06/2010. A prisoner can request that an assault is investigated by the police, or if the complaint is deemed serious enough, the prison authority can refer it to the police for further investigation. This year there were two instances where the complaints were referred to the police and during one investigation a member of staff was suspended from duty. In neither case did the police recommend further action. No member of staff has been dismissed due to a code of conduct investigation. When requested, the governor has briefed the Board on the progress of the investigations.

8 Healthcare (including mental health and social care)

Since 1 April 2017, Spectrum has been responsible for healthcare provision. Spectrum, having made much effort in 2017 – 2018 to establish sound arrangements, has maintained and built on these in 2018 – 2019:

- Spectrum has built on the improved staffing levels achieved last year and optimised frontline service provision by changes to its rota system. At the end of the financial year, it was aiming to achieve full staff levels, despite a national shortage of band 5 nurses. Examples include the addition of two paramedic posts, with the aim of providing more treatment in-house, reducing the frequency with which prisoners need resource-intensive escorts to take them out of the prison to receive secondary care, and an increased use of advanced nurse practitioners running clinics, reducing waiting times. There is still some use of agency nurses to maintain staffing numbers, but this is in most cases using agency staff who are familiar with Spectrum and Preston prison.
- It is also encouraging to see that effort is put into building the skills base of the healthcare staff within the prison, which as well as hopefully aiding retention, facilitates responsiveness to changing demands on the service. Examples this year included further training of nurses as assistant practitioners, again enabling better clinic provision.
- Triage clinics have been introduced to assess and treat minor ailments outside the core day, which supports the prison in ensuring high attendance rates for education, training and employment.
- A 30% increase in blood borne virus screening for prisoners is helping to contribute to national healthcare targets.
- In-house retinal screening and x-ray programmes have been introduced.
- A new mental health triage clinic has been established.

Healthcare services are accessible to prisoners, with all initial healthcare needs being assessed within 24 hours of reception. The waiting time to see a GP is no more than six days, and waiting times for both dental and ophthalmic services (both of which are subcontracted) are generally no longer than four to six weeks.

In 2017 – 2018, applications to the IMB concerning healthcare increased by 23% over the previous year, despite an overall reduction in the number of applications. It is pleasing to note that this increase has been reversed during 2018 – 2019, in parallel with a reduction in

complaints to Spectrum from prisoners. Some improvements have been made to the handling of and responsiveness to complaints over the previous year, although there is still room for improvement and it is still difficult or impossible to obtain clear information on, for example, the proportion of complaints that are justified or any issues identified from complaints that have been used to drive service improvements. Communication with prisoners has improved in 2018 – 2019, with well-run monthly meetings with prisoner representatives from each wing to discuss any suggested changes or address any concerns they raise.

Governance arrangements for healthcare are well structured, with a health delivery plan overseen by a joint local delivery board.

Work is continuing to establish wing-based triage clinics within the prison, which would reduce the logistical cost of moving prisoners around the prison, but no such clinics as yet take place. Suitable locations on each wing have been identified, and work is progressing on arranging access to patients' computer-based records from these locations. This initiative began in 2017 – 2018 and is taking some time, which is understood to be due to the cost and complexity of arranging secure IT communications access at locations around the prison, given the Victorian structure of the buildings.

9 Education and other activities

Novus provides education and training. It is an essential aspect of a prisoner's induction week and all prisoners are advised to enrol on a course that reflects individual needs. Individual courses are based on the following:

- literacy levels
- numeracy levels
- lengths of stay
- sentence plans
- areas of interest
- motivation

On average, 90% of the population at HMP Preston are at level 1 or below in English and 88% at level 1 or below in maths. This reinforces the importance of prisoners attending training in functional skills to address their educational needs in the key areas of maths, English and IT.

Key points of note:

- Education is viewed positively by prisoners and IMB discussions are held with them on a regular basis.
- Vulnerable prisoners have access to all the courses except mentoring and specialist IT courses.
- A large proportion of prisoners arrive with an entry level in functional skills.
- Every prisoner is offered a place of work or other activity.
- The prison ensures that functional skills are delivered by making it a conditional part of each work placement.
- Vocational training is delivered in a painting and decorating workshop and in an industrial cleaning workshop.

The average classroom efficiency rate this year was 61%. Weekly meetings are being held to continually improve this figure. The target set by the north west prisons is 64%. At the time of reporting, efficiency is 68%. As a local prison, activities such as visits, legal visits and court appearances are always going to have an impact on attendance. Class cancellations are

exceptionally low, at 0% in education, which places Preston top in the region and prison failures (to deliver prisoners to allocated classes) were 0.44% which places it third in the region.

10 Work, vocational training and employment

HMP Preston is a Victorian era category B local prison on a restricted inner-city site, and these factors influence the range of activities provided. The layout of the prison limits the number of workshops available for industrial work, and the local classification of the prison results in a high turnover of prisoners of relatively short duration. This means that the focus of activities is mainly on the development of prisoners' functional skills (as referenced in 9, above), although a range of vocational activities, such as sewing, catering, horticulture and painting and decorating is available.

In common with other prisons, HMP Preston functions with the assistance of prisoners in areas such as the reception, laundry, kitchens, serveries and library. They are also employed as cleaners and painters, and staff the PID on each wing, which act as a reference point for the prisoners, enabling them to obtain information about many aspects of the prison.

The Governor continues to ensure that purposeful activity is a key feature of prison life and has organised the regime to ensure maximum participation in education or work-related activities, whilst being mindful of the special needs of elderly or disabled prisoners. The prison is still intending to open a new (additional) workshop during 2019 – 2020 in support of this. Currently there are sufficient activity places to engage around 80% of prisoners in purposeful activity (work or education). The small number classified as being in full-time education are those on training courses. Painting and decorating accounts for 20 prisoners, industrial cleaning accounts for 10 prisoners, and horticulture accounts for 16 prisoners. Prisoners who are not involved in any form of purposeful activity are those who are currently awaiting security clearance, undergoing education screening or refusing to work.

A prisoner needs analysis was completed during the year and is shared with all services involved in the resettlement pathway. Available choices of activity are easily accessed by prisoners and applications are in general processed on the day of receipt, taking into account availability, any disabilities and security clearance. However, whilst activities are rarely cancelled, and IMB observation indicates that prisoners do in general engage positively with their activities, the prison would like to see an improvement in attendance. The prison is aiming to improve this through a combination of increased encouragement from staff, in particular through the key worker role, better management of attendance and links to the incentives and earned privileges (IEP) scheme.

Where possible, reputable and recognised qualifications are offered to prisoners in preparation for release (such as City and Guilds) within the constraints described above. The prison also arranges employer engagement days with local companies to provide opportunities for employment on release. Prisoners are equipped with a curriculum vitae to assist with potential employment on release.

11 Resettlement preparation

11.1 Offender management

A new approach, OMiC, was introduced to all prisons in September 2018 and phase one entailed recruiting and training key workers. At HMP Preston this has been fully implemented. By November 2018, over 1000 key worker sessions were delivered. Each key worker is responsible for developing prisoners' progression plans and initially 10% of these

were quality assured by the lead governor. Quality assurance is now undertaken by custodial managers. Following initial training, key workers are learning and improving through experience. Some progression plans are excellent, others display a lack of focus on the detail of planned activities. The board has suggested that providing opportunities for key workers to share good practice could be a way to progress towards consistently higher standards.

Key workers have on average a case load of four to six prisoners and are allocated 45 minutes per prisoner to perform their duties. Feedback to the IMB suggests that this time allocation is being honoured.

The regional OMiC team visited HMP Preston towards the end of last year and provided a very positive report. The team members were pleased with the feedback from key workers and prisoners. They felt that OMiC was successful in breaking down barriers and was leading to improved prisoner-staff relationships. They recorded some evidence of a reduction in prisoner applications, although subsequent monitoring by the IMB suggests that this trend may not have been sustained.

The regional team also noted that staff had welcomed dedicated time allocation for one-to-one work and felt that case notes helped to build up a picture of individual prisoners, so they became less one-dimensional.

The second phase of OMiC will be the appointment of prison offender managers. They will be responsible for prisoners serving 10 months or more. A training needs analysis has been conducted and a training plan is being developed by the senior probation officer, who will be the operational lead for this area, and the necessary complement of 5.5 probation officers has already been achieved. The lead governor will be responsible for OMiC at a more strategic level and will deal with transfers.

11.2 Reducing reoffending

Having subcontracted the rehabilitation function to Shelter, a housing charity, the CRC (Sodexo) has not been directly involved in this area of work for medium and low risk prisoners. This may well have limited the involvement of CRC workers who will supervise prisoners on release. Hopefully this will be remedied by the appointment of five Probation Service officers to work within the offender management unit, during the next period.

11.3 Housing

Sodexo has subcontracted entry and exit interviews with prisoners to Shelter, along with the work to provide accommodation, finance and debt advice and employment upon release. It was pleasing to see that Shelter was again able to secure settled accommodation for over 90% of those released.

11.4 Encouraging family links

HMP Preston has developed a new children, family, significant other and care leavers policy, which is intended to meet all the main recommendations in the Farmer Review. This involves having family and significant others involved in the management of a prisoner's sentence and being key drivers in supporting them in reducing reoffending, whilst also hopefully reducing intergenerational crime. In pursuit of this, the prison has partnered with POPS and will be looking to build on this partnership in the coming year.

C The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

The Board has lost five members during the year. A recruitment campaign was successful in adding one new member to the Board during the year.

During the reporting period, the Board has carried out its role via a variety of methods, including rota visits, dealing with applications from prisoners, attendance at segregation reviews, adjudications and prisoner consultative meetings, as well as through targeted monitoring of other areas, such as prison training exercises and some specific meetings.

We convene a Board meeting each month to review our work, and each meeting is attended either by the governor or his deputy to give us a detailed report on the previous month. Additionally, each meeting is preceded by a targeted training session on a specific aspect of the prison or our work.

Board statistics	
Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the establishment	420
Total number of segregation reviews attended	44

D Applications to the Independent Monitoring Board

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	24	18
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	4	5
C	Equality	8	5
D	Purposeful activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	16	26
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	39	49
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	11	20
F	Food and kitchens	10	8
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	61	83
H 1	Property within this establishment	56	25
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	21	28
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	15	5
I	Sentence management including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	31	37
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	79	39
K	Transfers	14	45
L	Miscellaneous	67	41
	Total number of IMB applications	456	434