



**Annual Report of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP/YOI Downview
For reporting year
1 May 2019 – 30 April 2020**

Published October 2020



Contents

Introductory sections 1 - 3.....	4
1. Statutory role of the IMB.....	4
2. Description of the establishment.....	5
3. Executive summary	6
3.1 Background to the report	6
3.2 Main judgements	6
3.2.1 How safe is the prison?	6
3.2.2 How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?	6
3.2.3 How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?.....	6
3.2.4 How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?	6
3.3 Main areas for development	7
3.3.1 TO THE MINISTER.....	7
3.3.2 TO THE PRISON SERVICE	7
3.3.3 TO THE GOVERNOR	8
3.4 Progress since the last report	8
Evidence sections 4 – 7	9
4. Safety	9
4.1 Reception and induction	9
4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody.....	10
4.3 Violence and violence reduction.....	10
4.4 Use of force	10
4.5 Substance misuse	10
5. Fair and humane treatment	11
5.2 Segregation, special accommodation	12
5.3 Staff/prisoner relationships, key workers	12
5.4 Equality and diversity.....	13
5.5 Faith and pastoral support	13
5.6 Incentives and Earned Privileges.....	13
5.7 Complaints.....	13
5.8 Property.....	14
6.1 Healthcare: general	14
6.2 Physical healthcare	16
6.3 Mental healthcare.....	16
6.4 Exercise, time out of cell, gym	17
6.5 Drug rehabilitation	18

7. Progression and resettlement.....	18
7.1 Education, library.....	18
7.2 Vocational training, work.....	19
7.3 Offender management, progression	20
7.4 Family contact	20
7.5 Resettlement planning.....	22
8. The work of the IMB	23
9. Applications to the IMB.....	24
IMB application volumes, coding and descriptions	25

Introductory sections 1 - 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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 is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required 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 authority has been delegated 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 these have 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.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. OPCAT recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that States designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HMP/YOI Downview is a closed prison, which does not serve the courts, and, at the end of the reporting period, had an operational capacity of 307 (plus 16 on E wing) sentenced adult women and young offenders. There was a population average over the reporting period of 287.

Downview has five wings (A–E):

Wing	Function
A	Methadone treatment
B	prisoners on an enhanced regime
C	General population – with one area dedicated to induction and one floor dedicated to prisoners on an enhanced regime
D	prisoners on closed conditions and those suitable for open conditions
E	For high-risk transgender women

Works and maintenance at the prison are carried out by Gov Facility Services Limited. Healthcare services are provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), with drug and addiction treatment by the Forward Trust. Education facilities transferred from Novus to Weston College in March 2019. Resettlement support was provided during the reporting year through the London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), and the local Jobcentre Plus provided support and guidance relating to benefits claims

A number of charities offer support services within Downview, including the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT), CXK, Women in Prison, Working Chance, the Shannon Trust, the Samaritans (Listener scheme), the Koestler Trust, Hibiscus, Fine Cell Work, the Shaw Trust, Reflex and St Mungo's.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

On 24 March 2020, Downview moved to the exceptional regime management plan owing to COVID-19, when most activities (including education, non-essential employment and social visits) stopped. The last six weeks of the reporting period fall into this period of lockdown. Only where particularly relevant will we report here on the impact of the regime change during this period; otherwise, we have restricted our comments to our related monitoring observations and activity for next year's report. In some areas, this report is lacking in data owing to the restrictions in place from 24 March 2020. These prevented the Board from entering the establishment to access IMB records and the records of the establishment itself. The Board was also mindful of the limited prison staffing resources due to the new regime at the time of preparation of the report.

A performance improvement plan for the prison was instigated by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in September 2019. Downview achieved level 2 / borderline level 1 in December 2019. By the end of March 2020, the prison had reached level 3 (out of a total rating of 4). Achievement of the plan appeared to consume considerable amounts of senior management and other staff time.

3.2 Main judgements

3.2.1 How safe is the prison?

The Board considers that Downview is a safe prison, although it continues to receive a number of challenging women, with complex backgrounds and specific needs (see section 4).

3.2.2 How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

We are satisfied that during the reporting period, Downview treated its residents in a fair and humane way (see section 5).

3.2.3 How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

Our judgement is that the prisoners' physical and mental healthcare needs are substantially met, although our normal monitoring abilities were reduced during the second half of the reporting period (see section 6). The establishment creates opportunities to contribute to prisoners' general wellbeing, including purposeful activity (see sections 7.1 and 7.2), and opportunities for physical exercise (see section 6.4).

3.2.4 How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

With an average length of stay for prisoners of seven months, it is hard to make significant progress towards resettlement. Education and vocational courses can provide support for release but only if prisoners have long enough sentences to engage with them. It remains difficult to access meaningful performance data from Weston College (the new education provider) and from the CRC, for monitoring purposes. Accommodation (often into the London area, with its additional challenges) remains a significant source of (often last-minute) anxiety for prisoners about to be released. There has been a disappointing decrease in opportunities for working release on

temporary licence (ROTL) in the reporting period. Family engagement support is minimal (see section 7.4).

3.3 Main areas for development

3.3.1 TO THE MINISTER

- As with the rest of the female estate, many of the efforts to engage women in meaningful rehabilitation are stymied by the shorter average length of their sentences. In the reporting period at Downview, the average stay was seven months (see section 7). Prisoners serving short sentences have the highest reoffending rates and there is minimal time to engage with education, training or work opportunities. There is strong evidence that the impact of short custodial sentences on women is particularly significant. The Ministry of Justice Female Offender Strategy (2018) set out the Government's vision to see fewer women entering the justice system and reoffending; fewer women in custody, particularly on short custodial sentences, with more managed successfully in the community; and a custodial environment that enables rehabilitation. Can the Minister clarify what steps are to be taken to implement the recommendations in the Strategy; and, if none, the reasons for that?
- As was highlighted in our previous report, segregation is not suitable as a long-term rehabilitation environment for the prisoner mentioned in our report who has suffered significant brain trauma leading to specific medical needs. For such prisoners, national-level attention and coordination are required to identify and facilitate transfers to a more suitable location, where the individual can receive appropriate rehabilitative support, and within an acceptable time frame (see section 5.2).
- Despite being raised in three previous annual reports, the London weighting issue and its impact on recruitment and retention in the education department has still not been resolved and remains a real concern (see section 7.1). Given that this issue continues to have such a significant impact on the performance of the education department in the prison, is there any means whereby the Minister could intervene in the matter?

3.3.2 TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- The Farmer Review for women placed considerable emphasis on the importance of family ties in rehabilitation efforts. The implementation and monitoring by HMPPS of the recommendations in the Review seem to have been carried out in a half-hearted manner. What plans are there actively to embed family engagement as the 'golden thread', as per the recommendations in the Review? We are also concerned that, despite previous public assurances by the minister to rectify this, there is still no data collated by prisons on the numbers of dependent children of prisoners. It would seem to be virtually impossible to provide effective family engagement without having such accurate data. It should be mandatory to ask all women entering prison whether they have dependent children, and what their ages are (see section 7.4).
- Key working has not yet been implemented at Downview (along with the rest of the women's estate) owing to an ongoing national dispute with the Prison Officers Association (see section 5.3). In recognition of the enhanced need for focused support for women, can the Prison Service clarify the obstacles to, and timetable for, implementation?

- Sufficient funding should be provided to procure heating and electrical supplies that are reliable and fit for purpose for all the accommodation blocks (see section 5.1).
- As at the end of the reporting period, there were just two prisoners on E wing (with an operational capacity of 16); it remains unclear what the long-term strategy is for the wing?

3.3.3 TO THE GOVERNOR

- The induction process has, again, remained unsatisfactory for all of the reporting year. The Board would very much welcome improvements to this process, and also the return of the induction accommodation to a more appropriate location as soon as possible (see section 4.1).
- We look forward to seeing an updated family and significant others engagement strategy and its effective implementation in the new reporting period, with emphasis on a more family-centred approach. The Board would also welcome clarification and proactive management of the contracted PACT resource in the prison (see section 7.4).
- The Board continues to have concerns about the visibility of success rates, engagement and attendance at education classes. It is hoped that Weston College is able to provide thorough evidence of results and engagement (see section 7.1).
- The number of prisoners on working ROTL (both paid and voluntary) dropped over the reporting year, from a monthly average of 16 per week in May 2019 to an average of seven in March 2020 (pre-lockdown). To an extent, the ongoing restrictions in place from COVID-19 may affect the ability of prisoners to go out on working (or family) ROTL; however, the Board recommends that a meaningful ROTL programme is in place as soon as conditions allow (see section 7.2).
- The Board welcomes a renewed commitment in the area of equality towards the latter part of the reporting period. It is hoped that this will continue, and that appropriate resources will be made available to support this (see section 5.4).

3.4 Progress since the last report

In last year's report, the Board raised concerns that prisoners on E wing did not have access to undertake the same activities and education as those from the general prison population. This regime has now improved, and E wing prisoners are able to participate in a range of education and activities, while being suitably risk assessed and accompanied by the required number of staff.

We welcome the fact that, following comments in last year's report, a number of healthy improvements have been made to the food menu choices available. The frequency of chips has been reduced; fresh fruit is regularly offered instead of puddings; Monday is a 'veggie' day; and there are vegan options available every day (see section 5.1).

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

The safer prisons meeting takes place monthly. All functional heads of department are required to attend, as are the head of healthcare, mental health, drug services and the chaplaincy, and also the use of force coordinator, members of the assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) team, the Samaritans and Listeners. At the end of 2019, there was a period during which minutes of the meeting were not recorded/saved; however, this has now been rectified.

A multidisciplinary safety intervention meeting is held weekly with the same attendees as above, at which prisoners who are complex cases and those who require close monitoring are reviewed, and actions to reduce risk are allocated.

We have observed a lack of accuracy and completeness of records (such as daily operational reports and minutes of safer custody meetings). This has been an issue during the reporting period for accessing statistics. Towards the end of the reporting period, steps were taken to resolve this.

Of the 727 adjudications during the period, 76 charges were not proceeded with, 58 were referred to the independent adjudicator and 110 were dismissed. We were unable to access information about adjournments. By way of example, a list of offence categories by number of adjudications: assault – 76; absents herself – 21; assist in commission – one; attempt to commit – eight; consumes alcohol – one; denies access – four; destroy or damage – 22; disobeys a lawful order – 156; endangers health and safety – 32; fails to comply – seven; fights – 25; has in possession – 147; obstruct an officer – five; racial and threatening/abusive behaviour – nine; received a controlled drug – one; sells or delivers an unauthorised article – three; substance in urine – 69; threatening or insulting behaviour – 121; takes improperly any article – three; disobeys any rule or regulation – 16. We identified issues with the quality and availability of documentation and witness reports during the adjudication process, which at times impeded the process of adjudications.

4.1 Reception and induction

The reception area appears to be well managed and calm, with a small waiting room with limited displays of information.

Induction was moved from A wing (where it operated successfully) to various floors of C wing. It has not operated well in this location, owing to the proximity and access to other areas of the wing. There has been regular feedback from prisoners and staff that locating new arrivals on C wing has presented opportunities for more established prisoners to intimidate new arrivals. The Board receives regular reports of prisoners having no formal induction programme and not being supplied with written induction materials. Foreign nationals with limited English language capability experience particular difficulties. The Board is encouraged, however, to report that there are plans to relocate induction back to A wing, next to reception.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

There were 659 reported incidents of self-harm in the period from April 2019 to March 2020 (compared with 684 reported incidents in the previous reporting period). The 659 incidents of self-harm were reported for 99 individuals in total, including one prisoner with 89 recorded incidents, one with 54 recorded incidents and another with 33 recorded incidents. Most of the self-harm incidents were minor enough to be treated by wing staff, but some required healthcare staff to attend. From July 2019, 11 incidents required hospital treatment. There were two recorded near misses.

There were 236 ACCT documents opened in the nine-month period from August 2019 to April 2020, averaging 26 per month. ACCT folders are available on the wings for the Board to check – unless the prisoner has gone to an activity elsewhere, in which case their ACCT document should follow them. Training has taken place to improve the standard and monitoring of ACCT documentation.

The number of calls to Listeners across the prison has fluctuated, but has averaged 22 per month over the reporting period, compared with the reported 75 per month in the previous reporting period. The decrease, however, may be due to the issues identified in the reporting of the statistics.

During the reporting period, there have been four suicide and self-harm courses, two trauma-informed courses and also an ACCT assessors' course. The prison also recruited and trained a safety analyst.

There were no deaths in custody during the reporting period.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction

The challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) system was introduced in July 2019 and replaced the violence reduction form investigations. A full review of the process for coordinating information received about bullying and intimidation (ensuring timeliness and consistency of actions taken) followed from the response to recommendations from the inquest of prisoner who sadly died in Downview in August 2018. The aim of the CSIP regime is to support particularly challenging prisoners who are involved in violence to progress towards more positive behaviour.

During the reporting period, there were 22 applications to the Board in relation to bullying. This is an increase of five from the last reporting period.

There have been 52 prisoner-on-prisoner and 36 prisoner-on-staff assaults during the reporting period.

4.4 Use of force

There were 76 recorded incidents of use of force for the reporting period.

4.5 Substance misuse

There were 480 mandatory drug tests (MDTs) carried out in the reporting period, of which 63 were positive. This was an increase by 0.3% from the previous reporting period – although we do not have the data for April 2020, as no MDTs were carried out during the lockdown regime.

A variety of actions have been taken by the prison to reduce the inflow of drugs. Nevertheless, significant quantities of drugs still find their way in, in ever more innovative ways – predominantly spice, with some cocaine. We have been unable to access certain data owing to the lockdown; however, by way of anecdotal evidence, staff state that the volume of incoming post containing suspicious substances is considerably higher than in the previous reporting period. In the months between August 2019 and the end of the reporting period, there was an average of 20 positive finds per month in incoming post (increasing from four to 31 per month from March to April 2020 as lockdown began). There has been increased search dog resource during the reporting year. The impact of drug debts and the ensuing relationship issues remain a theme of reports from prisoners. We often receive reports of prisoners deliberately engineering a period in the segregation unit to escape from the fallout of their drug debts.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

All cells are single use, with toilet facilities. The implementation of the fire and general alarm project during this year has been a major challenge. Although the roll was slightly reduced, it necessitated in the region of 560 cell relocations, with the associated upheaval and safety issues that arise from this. Had this work been carried out prior to reopening in 2016, all of this disruption could have been avoided.

Owing to the age and condition of the infrastructure, heating and hot water for accommodation areas have failed from time to time, and prisoners have been without hot water in certain areas. Alternative arrangements were made for ablutions while repairs were carried out, but these were less than ideal. More recently (early in 2020), for example, the heating was turned off because of the warm spring weather – but when the temperature dropped suddenly it could not be put back on, in case the boiler could not withstand this intermittent use.

In the latter part of 2019, a respect and decency initiative afforded the opportunity for a full accommodation review, resulting in the redecoration of a number of wing areas which has improved the environment. Extensive maintenance issues in shower rooms in some wings have led to a full refurbishment being completed, which has improved the facilities noticeably.

Prisoners can wear their own clothing and have the opportunity to obtain additional items, accessories and some toiletries from donated and purchased supplies in Gladragz. Supply levels have fluctuated from time to time, but efforts have always been made to acquire items in demand (for example, coats in wintertime).

The standard of food preparation continues to be good, and prisoners are often complimentary about the food. The increase in applications to the Board relating to food largely concerned specific dietary requirements.

The distribution of canteen (sourced via DHL) on a Friday is a highpoint of the week for the prisoners. There have been complaints voiced about the freshness of fruit delivered, and the lack of opportunity to get refunds when the packaging has been opened to inspect. Canteen distribution remains a flashpoint for bullying issues.

There is a particularly limited regime at weekends (which starts at lunchtime on Fridays), about which we receive regular comments from prisoners.

The COVID-19 outbreak, occurring towards the end of our reporting period, has not only brought a number of plans to a standstill, but also imposed a considerable logistical challenge. The cohorting of prisoners and provision of isolation and shielding units all required accommodation plans and adjustments.

5.2 Segregation, special accommodation

There is an eight-cell segregation unit, with one cell used as a safer cell if necessary. Staff have been required to manage a busy unit during the reporting period: often full and with some extremely challenging prisoners, engaging a significant amount of staff resource. The physical conditions on the segregation unit and the exercise yard remain far from ideal for prisoners.

During the reporting period, 48 prisoners on open ACCTs were sent to the segregation unit, and three were placed on an ACCT while in segregation. The Board remains concerned about the significant proportion of prisoners on ACCTs being housed on the segregation unit – with complex backgrounds and specific needs, and at risk of suicide and self-harm, which can be heightened by isolation. The Board will continue to monitor this closely.

The Board continued to have significant concerns relating to one specific prisoner who, having suffered significant brain trauma in the past leading to specific medical needs, continued to be held in the segregation unit throughout the entire reporting period, pending transfer to a location more suitably equipped to meet her specific needs. This prisoner was highlighted in the Board's previous annual report. While the governors and staff continued to use their best efforts to provide ongoing activities and access to outside exercise, and the appropriate HMPPS national authority for ongoing detention in the unit was sought and provided, the segregation unit remained a wholly unsuitable environment for a detention period of 645 days in Downview. (At the time of finalising our report, the IMB Board at HMP Eastwood Park have since written to the Minister to request urgent action relating to the individual's continuing detention in segregated conditions in that establishment, following her transfer from Downview in July 2020).

Considerable efforts have been made by members to ensure that the Board is notified suitably in advance of good order and/or discipline (GOOD) reviews – attendance at reviews has almost doubled from the previous reporting period.

5.3 Staff/prisoner relationships, key workers

Reversing its decline in the previous reporting period, there has been a lively forum (the 'Downview Forum') to consider prisoner requests and ideas. This consisted of wing representatives, heads of function and governors, and the interaction between them has been enthusiastic, effective and respectful.

A recurring theme arising here and elsewhere (in the operation of the incentives and earned privileges (IEP) scheme) has been the inconsistency demonstrated by wing staff. Lack of consistency can leave prisoners feeling that they have been dealt with unfairly. This has been attributed partly to staff turnover and the number of staff with less than two years' service, creating a large proportion of less experienced staff.

Measures have been taken to combat this inconsistency, but this will take more time to take effect.

Disappointingly, key working has not yet been implemented at Downview owing to an ongoing national dispute with the Prison Officers Association. This was finally resolved in January 2020, but key working is still to be implemented.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The reporting year started with no foreign national or equalities officers in post. An equalities officer was appointed, but subsequently left in February 2020, and as at the end of the reporting period had not been replaced.

A plan was established for bi-monthly meetings to be held, to cover the areas of equality and diversity, as these meetings had previously been irregular. In practice, there were only two such meetings held during the reporting year, during which there were no recorded mentions of the discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs) submitted. One issue raised was that, despite previous minutes referring to a generally low number of DIRFs being submitted, there had been concerns raised about the efficacy of their collection and processing, which may have accounted for the low number received. However, our analysis shows that 52 DIRFs were submitted during the reporting period, including three by members of staff. Of the DIRFs for which there is a recorded timeline, 17 received late responses and six no response at all.

During the reporting period, there were nine equality-related applications to the Board, out of a total of 151.

A new governor took over responsibility for the area at the end of 2019, and we started to observe a renewed commitment to it. We will continue to closely monitor this development.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team makes provision for many faiths and is fully staffed. Regular Christian and Muslim services are held, with other groups also supported (although less frequently). The chaplaincy team provides significant pastoral support to prisoners.

5.6 Incentives and earned privileges

The IEP scheme has generally worked well. A new incentive scheme was launched in January 2020, with the emphasis on positive reinforcement of good behaviour. It is also used as an opportunity to discuss the reasons for bad behaviour, and work on ways to avoid it in future. This was starting to operate well when interrupted by COVID-19 – at this time, the only four prisoners on basic regime status were moved to standard. During the six weeks of lockdown covered by the reporting period (and thereafter), no prisoners were placed on basic.

As communicated in the past two annual reports, prisoners continue to tell the Board that demotions in IEP status are sometimes not clearly communicated by staff.

5.7 Complaints

The complaints system is generally well administered, and a random 10% is reviewed each month by the senior management team. In this reporting year, the number of

complaints responded to outside the time limit is around 18% (only marginally improved on last year's figure of 18.6%). It is notable that complaints in the residential category increased from approximately 15% last year to 23% of the total complaints this year. It is suspected that infrastructure/maintenance issues account for some of this increase. Twelve per cent of complaints fell into the staff category (an increase by 8% from the previous period).

5.8 Property

The number of applications submitted in the reporting year concerning issues with property, both at Downview and within other establishments, has continued to decrease (by approximately 50% – to a total of 13, compared with a total of 24 in the previous year). Only two of these applications relate to issues within Downview. There are often protracted attempts to recover property from other establishments.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare: general

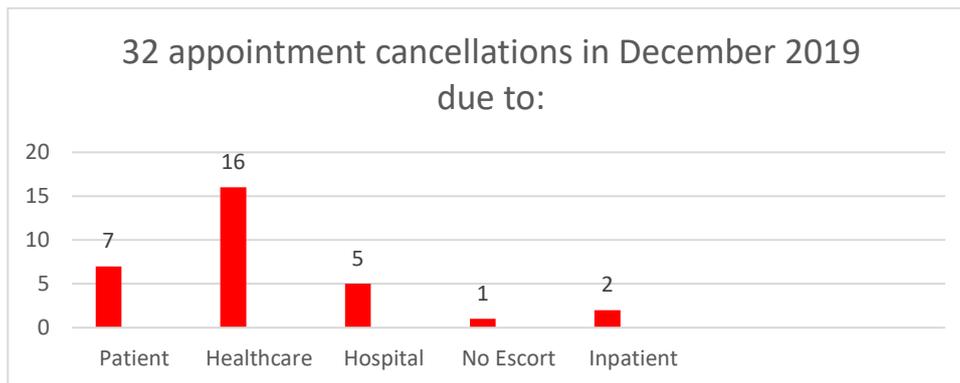
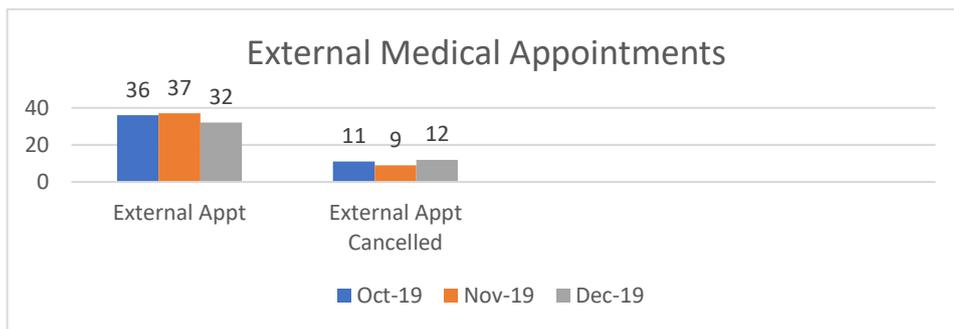
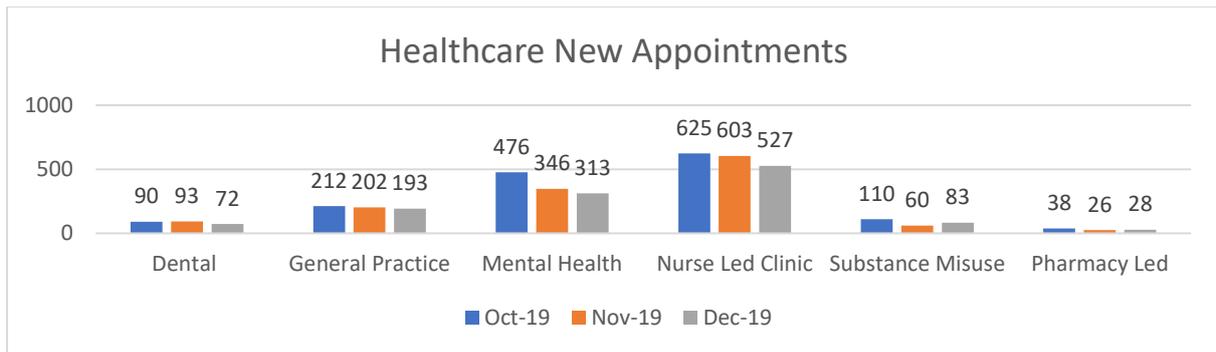
The health and wellbeing contract at Downview continues to be provided by CNWL. Statistics for the reporting year were requested, but some were not made available to the Board at the required time (or were incomplete), apart from the three-month period between October 2019 and December 2019.

During the final few weeks of the reporting period, following the COVID-19 lockdown and implementation of command mode, all non-essential healthcare services ended. Essential healthcare provision continued, however, including access to urgent medical and psychiatric care.

The healthcare services provided by CNWL to Downview comprise:

- **Primary care** – with daytime nursing care, a five-day-a-week GP service, an out-of-hours GP service (via 111), and visiting subcontracted services: dentist, optician, podiatrist, sexual health and physiotherapy. In addition, there are specialist clinics and screening services.
- **Mental healthcare** – which is well staffed with a service lead, specialist nurses, clinical psychologists, assistant psychologists, art psychotherapy input and access to a consultant psychiatrist. A specialist psychotherapist service, 'Options', caters for women with personality disorders with an identified sentence plan, with good take-up and outcomes.
- **Specialist services** – which were commissioned from the Tavistock Clinic to provide an in-reach service but were terminated later in the reporting year, owing to the applicable prisoners' refusal to change from their existing clinic arrangements.

The following graphs represent a snapshot of healthcare services usage at Downview for the third quarter of the reporting year in which complete data has been available:



The loss of key healthcare staff towards the middle of the reporting period had a definite impact. This included the sudden change in the management of healthcare services by the provider, CNWL, after the new head of healthcare was seconded to another post only months after taking over at Downview. This individual had introduced positive initiatives in the management of staff, reduced the use of agency staff, improved morale across the healthcare department, worked more collaboratively with prison staff and explored new services for the prisoners. Our observation (in the absence of information provided to demonstrate otherwise) is that these positive initiatives did not develop under the management of interim staff. This further highlighted the impact of CNWL moving senior staff at short notice and after a short period of tenure. There were also, thereafter, cancelled meetings (health improvement plan and quality meetings) – these meetings are a major and regular source of both general information and data used for monitoring healthcare service provision. It became more difficult to obtain information – a major change from the previous years of monitoring the CNWL contract.

Coincidentally, the User Voice contract also ended, without an available explanation. This had provided a regular means of discussing healthcare matters with the prisoners themselves.

All of the above changes resulted in reduced monitoring opportunities for the Board.

The delay in the fire and general alarm project created a further postponement for the anticipated relocation of certain health services into a newly created hub on the ground floor of E wing (on a separate floor from the residential wing). As at the end of the reporting period, this relocation had not taken place.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Physical healthcare services operate daily – on weekdays until 6.30pm, and at weekends there is a nurse-led service in operation until 5.30pm. Outside of normal operating hours, Downview has access to an out-of-hours GP service, provided by Care UK, and visits to local accident and emergency departments are able to take place where deemed necessary. On various occasions, it was reported to us by the staff that, when contacted, Care UK's advice was typically to call an ambulance, rather than provide substantive out-of-hours care.

Dental clinics were run twice per week (and, on occasion more, in an attempt to address backlog), and opticians, physiotherapists and podiatrists visit regularly on a monthly basis.

In August 2019, reports presented to the health improvement plan and quality board confirmed that there was a maintenance of the 'community standard' for healthcare services, which included annual learning disability assessments, a reducing diabetes initiative, an epilepsy pathway and a dual diagnosis pathway (mental health and drug misuse). There was a reported emphasis on developing wellbeing and resilience, induction assessments (within 24 hours of arrival) and staff training. Areas of emerging difficulty identified were the nurse-led triage system for accessing GPs, which proved unpopular with prisoners, along with some problems at medication points leading to healthcare staff requesting officer supervision.

Staff vacancies have been variable through a combination of sickness, maternity leave and resignations. In line with the rest of the NHS, there has been a strong push to reduce the reliance on agency staff. We continue to receive regular reports from prisoners of poor interactions with nursing staff.

From late summer 2019 particularly, there were reports of some difficult prison/healthcare staff working relationships.

6.3 Mental healthcare

There are three types of referrals into mental health: routine (seen within three days), urgent (seen within 24 hours) and emergency (seen within four hours). Self-referrals are possible and welcomed. There is a large amount of psychopathology within Downview prisoners, with between one-third and one-half of prisoners being on mental health caseloads of one form or another.

Mental health commands good staff retention. Mental health team members comprise access to a consultant psychiatrist, clinical psychologists, specialist nurses, a consultant psychotherapist, an art therapist and assistant psychologists, along with a mental health lead. In recognition of good practice, regular staff meetings, headed by the mental health lead, have taken place, and staff training is provided. Additionally, there is an Options psychotherapy service, which provides therapeutic input for prisoners diagnosed as having personality disorders.

ACCT and segregation reviews, in the main, have been well attended by healthcare staff, with any lack of attendance having primarily been as a result of lack of appropriately timed notification by the prison. Further work is required to secure a more joined-up prison/healthcare staff alliance in this area. For example, during the period October 2019 to December 2019, CNWL reported that the ACCT documentation did not always arrive with the prisoner when they attended their healthcare appointment. This was a matter being given attention by the safer custody lead, to ensure that the ACCT document followed the prisoner no matter where they went within the establishment. The Board is pleased to report that, immediately prior to the COVID-19 lockdown, it had started to receive reports that there was an improvement in this regard.

The initial part of the reporting year was influenced by the setting up, in challenging circumstances, of the high-risk transgender unit. This service brought with it many challenges for the whole of the healthcare department. Staff training was provided, and two transgender awareness sessions were facilitated by Professor James Barrett. Policies were developed, including CNWL's 'HMP Downview transgender pathway', and the HMPPS 'HMP Downview E wing policy'. CNWL went to great lengths to secure funding for bespoke healthcare services. A partnership was formed with the Tavistock Clinic to provide specialist psychotherapy services. However, this specialist service provision was met with resistance by the E wing residents, with the result that they were followed up within their regional gender identity clinics across the country, causing significant operational issues.

During the last few weeks of the reporting period, routine mental health services stopped and were replaced with mental health welfare checks, although urgent assessment and monitoring continued throughout. A significant amount of work went into developing a variety of mental health resources for prisoners to access during a period that was anticipated to be characterised by high levels of anxiety and stress.

6.4 Exercise, time out of cell, gym

A number of types of exercise classes are provided by the physical training team, and there have been initiatives across the reporting period, including football (the Twinning Project, which is a partnership between HMPPS and professional football clubs, with the objective of twinning every prison in England and Wales with a local professional club – in Downview's case, Arsenal), Parkrun and a rowing initiative, named 'Boats not Bars'.

Downview was the first women's prison to hold a Parkrun every Saturday morning – an initiative introduced by the Governor. It was well attended by prisoners, staff and members of the parkrun community, and extremely well received by the prisoners.

Prisoners were reported as saying that Saturday mornings felt more normal than others (in that they then felt part of the wider parkrun community outside of the prison).

6.5 Drug rehabilitation

The Forward Trust is responsible for the provision of all substance misuse services, including detoxification treatments and psychosocial interventions. This service comprises a service manager, clinical lead and several nurses.

7. Progression and resettlement

Downview aims to provide a rehabilitative environment where prisoners are supported by others to achieve their potential. Unfortunately, as with other establishments within the female estate, much of the efforts to engage women in meaningful rehabilitation is hampered by the shorter average length of their sentences – in the reporting period at Downview, the average stay was seven months.

7.1 Education, library

Weston College took over the contract for education provision in Downview in March 2019. There were transition adjustments with the contractual transfer of staff, and also access to information and materials during this time, which had a negative impact on the education provision.

Following the transfer to Weston College, there was a restructuring period, which meant that additional permanent staff could not be recruited until after the end of the consultation period. Consequently, there have been ongoing staff shortages over the reporting period (particularly with regard to English and catering roles), which have had an impact on the provision to prisoners. London weighting remains a real issue and had a negative effect on the recruitment and retention of staff, despite being highlighted in three previous annual reports. Despite being assured by Weston College in November 2019 that they were aware of the disparity in allocation, nothing has changed.

As of May 2019, there were 1,487 prisoners scheduled to attend education classes, and as of February 2020, there were 2,133. These figures equate to 68 versus 85 prisoners enrolled per day, as an average.

In our previous annual report, we highlighted the difficulties of accessing performance data from the education department, but hoped that the transfer to Weston College would remedy this. During this latest reporting period, however, we have had considerable difficulties in accessing data on attendance and attainment (despite the introduction by HMPPS of CURIOUS as a programme to combat the inaccessibility of Weston College's standalone system). The Board continues to have concerns about the visibility of success rates, engagement and attendance at education classes.

The education options available at Downview are varied: core English (including English for speakers of other languages), mathematics, business administration, information and communications technology (ICT), hair and beauty, furniture restoration, food safety, understanding enterprise, and multi-skills (painting, decorating, carpentry). The more well-attended courses over the reporting period have been beauty therapy and hairdressing, mathematics (entry level and levels 1/2) and

English (entry level and levels 1/2), business administration, ICT and multi-skills (painting, decorating, carpentry).

During the reporting period (at the start of the academic year), 15 prisoners were enrolled in remote learning via the Open University or similar.

The Board was pleased to see the return of the cookery classes run for prisoners with an imminent release date (albeit with some limitations on the supply of ingredients).

The library continues to be a hub of professionalism and creativity. It is extremely well managed by the library team, well attended by prisoners, and a constant source of new initiatives and programmes. The Pinned-Up Festival is in its second year and attracts a range of authors and inspirational speakers; it is a significant achievement for staff and others to co-ordinate and host the Festival.

7.2 Vocational training, work

All prisoners of working age, unless prevented by ill-health, and subject to availability of places, are required to participate in purposeful activity (education, vocational training or work) throughout each working week until lunchtime on Fridays.

The provision of vocational training has improved compared with the last reporting year, with approximately 35 courses provided by various third-party providers during the reporting period. The courses range in length from one day to 12 weeks in duration. Issues with scheduling clashes with education classes were widespread in the early part of the reporting period, but considerable efforts were made by resettlement staff to remedy this and ensure that core educational content took precedence, where necessary.

Examples of vocational training opportunities include:

- The London College of Fashion (LCF). The LCF has a good range of contracts and partners, and an average of 19 prisoners attend per available session.
- In spring 2019, the industrial cleaning workshop became accredited by the Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board (WAMITAB). An instructor was appointed in July 2019. By August 2019, there were six prisoners training for their level 1 practical cleaning accreditation. This was the maximum number available, as paper-based study was also required. Unfortunately, the instructor was then signed off on sick leave from November 2019 until early March 2020.
- The Clink kitchen, which opened in the last reporting year, offers valuable training and a practical pathway to employment, with external contracts including London's Guildhall and the Ministry of Justice. In September 2019, six prisoners were under training, which was fewer than hoped. However, as the progression route to The Clink is via work undertaken in the prison kitchen, it is felt that some prisoners were deterred from applying. In addition, a risk assessment had to be undertaken to establish the maximum numbers allowed under health and safety rules. By October 2019, however, numbers had risen to 10 prisoners, and in February 2020 it was established that a maximum of 15 (including staff and prisoners) would be allowed.
- The Max Spielmann photographic studio: nine prisoners were in training in this studio throughout the reporting year. The introduction of the restricted

movement regime within the prison in November 2019 (requiring all prisoners to be escorted by staff during movement, instead of with a movement slip) resulted in fewer prisoners being willing or able to visit the studio to place orders.

- A multiskills workshop and training in plumbing, electrics, ceramics and carpentry has been well attended throughout the year. It provides the prisoners with a practical and theory-based learning environment to help their ability to find paid employment upon their release.
- Downview has also been approached by BT during the reporting period, who were keen to come into the establishment and undertake interviews of suitable prisoners who were due for release.

Despite the range of opportunities available, the number of prisoners on work ROTL (both paid and voluntary) dropped over the reporting year, from a monthly average of 16 per week in May 2019 to an average of seven in March 2020. Reasons for the decline cited by prison staff included that the process for arranging work ROTL sometimes meant that it was offered too close to release (when, to be most effective, it should be offered one year before release). In addition, some prisoners were not fit for work, or willing to work (owing to complex backgrounds and specific needs). There was also a temporary freeze on escorted ROTLs in 2019, owing to staffing issues. The ROTL administrator was based on D wing (thus easily available to prisoners); however, she was due to move to another post in the prison and it is to be hoped that she will be replaced.

Owing to COVID-19 and the new national regime, all ROTL was suspended on 20 March 2020, and on 24 March 2020 all workshops and education classes were closed until further notice.

7.3 Offender management, progression

There have been regular reports from prisoners of delays in responses from staff in the offender management unit. We understand that there have been significant staffing shortages at various times during the year. The number of applications to the Board in this area has doubled in the reporting period.

In the twelve weeks prior to release, priority is given to finding accommodation (both first-night and longer-term), enabling prisoners to open bank accounts and sign up for benefits via Jobcentre Plus.

As highlighted in last year's report, there is little or no follow-up post-release, so success is hard to impossible to measure. Failure by the CRC to provide an effective and coordinated 'through-the-gate' programme is highly regrettable.

7.4 Family contact

'When a mother is in prison her primary source of stress and anxiety comes from worry about the wellbeing of her children. As the mother / primary carer she needs to know that her children are being given appropriate support in the community and have the ability to continue to parent from within prison' (Farmer Review, 2019).

The prison's family and significant others strategy has not been updated since October 2018. As in the rest of the prison estate, there is no recording at Downview of how many prisoners have dependent children for strategic or other planning purposes.

PACT maintains the contract with HMPPS for managing the visits centre and providing family engagement case work and programmes at Downview. There have been ongoing concerns expressed by members of the Board and prison staff about PACT staffing shortages (both employees and volunteers) and the impact of this on the provision of the contracted service throughout the reporting period. PACT employees are a shared resource with HMP High Down and there have been ongoing recruitment issues throughout the reporting period (which has meant that the contracted resource within Downview is often stretched very thinly).

There has often been a significant waiting list for PACT family casework support. In January 2020, for example, 18 prisoners were on the waiting list for a PACT referral. The outgoing head of resettlement worked with PACT to attempt to decrease this waiting period. In addition, the Board has often received feedback from prisoners about delays in responses from PACT staff (sometimes when there have been some distressing and complex family cases to support). The agreed regular reporting to the resettlement team by PACT caseworkers appears to have been sparse. Volunteer recruitment by PACT has been patchy and, for much of the reporting period, there has not been sufficient (or, at times, any) volunteer resource in the play area of the visits hall. There have been almost no parenting/family support-related courses or initiatives available (which form part of the PACT contract) during the reporting period. PACT ran a course ('Coming Home') which specifically deals with preparation for reintegration into family life for prisoners who are six to nine months away from release. This course was held for just one day during the reporting period, in summer 2019. There has been discussion of holding a 'Mothers Inside and Out' course (for which there has been significant interest reported by the prisoners), but this has not materialised. A new family worker from the Forward Trust was recruited in February 2020. It was hoped that this role would help to lessen the ongoing waiting list for family referrals going forward, and provide a range of family support interventions, in conjunction with PACT.

At the time of the lockdown due to COVID-19, PACT casework staff immediately stopped visiting the prison and all face-to-face appointments stopped. It took over a month for alternative PACT contact and support arrangements to be publicised to prisoners – at a time when family contact was particularly important, given the cessation of social visits.

There were seven family days held in the reporting period to January 2020 (which a total of approximately 160 prisoners attended). The days are well run by prison staff and prisoners, and well received by families and prisoners.

It is notable from our monitoring that visitors on social visits are processed with warmth and professionalism by prison staff.

Prisoners do not yet have access to in-cell telephony. A project was started to install this in early 2020, but this was put on hold owing to COVID-19. Efforts for women to record bedtime stories for children on CDs were stopped because the necessary recording equipment no longer worked and was not replaced.

Often, until prisoners are reassured about their children, they are unable to make progress in other areas. Given the focus in the Farmer Review on maintaining family ties as the 'golden thread' in rehabilitation, and the particular issues faced by women in maintaining such ties (as predominantly primary carers), the Board will very much

look forward to seeing an increased emphasis in this area in the future, and effective management of the contracted resource of PACT.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Basic custody screening tool (BCST) completions: The Board asked for the percentage of prisoners released with a BCST3 completed for a release planning assessment. This was not forthcoming from the London CRC, despite repeated requests.

Employment: Compliance is required with a new employment target of 7.92% six weeks post-release. In October 2019, 25% of Downview prisoners fell into that category (from D wing and ROTL placements). Across the entire reporting period, the figure was quoted as 6.8% (although there has been doubt expressed at the accuracy of that figure, on the basis that there is no contractual requirement for the CRC to record the data. In addition, a failure to update the data in the prescribed time by external probation staff automatically records a negative employment status as a default.

Accommodation: Over the reporting period, according to the figures provided by the CRC, 86% of prisoners were released to accommodation and 68% were released to settled accommodation. By contrast, as a Board, we carried out a thematic monitoring exercise in January/February 2020 (along with other IMBs in the women's estate), surveying in face-to-face interviews a sample pool of 19 prisoners in Downview who were shortly about to be released (13 of whom had been in prison for less than 12 months and 50% of whom had lost their homes when they came to prison). Of the 19 women interviewed, 12 said that they did not yet have settled accommodation confirmed for their release (in various cases, very close to their release) and 11 rated the housing support provided by the establishment as 'poor'. Significant anxiety is often reported by prisoners about to be released, owing to the uncertainty created by the frequently last-minute nature of housing allocation. There is a particular challenge with housing availability for those who are released into the London area. A snapshot review was undertaken by staff in the six months to January 2020, to ascertain where prisoners were being released to, based on CRC data. The information on location was cited as 'vague', and the decision was taken to carry out another snapshot later in the year, in order to get more specific information.

As a Board, we are concerned that extracting data from the CRC (for our monitoring purposes and for prison staff generally) appears to be extremely difficult, despite reportedly there being an established system in place. This lack of data available has hindered our monitoring.

8. The work of the IMB

Members of the Board conduct rota visits weekly. Applications from prisoners are received in writing, and prisoners are generally seen face to face. The Board attends segregation reviews and adjudications as far as is possible, and when notified suitably in advance. Board members each have special interest areas, and attend meetings and liaise with staff to support this role. The Board meets monthly, with the Governor or Deputy Governor attending to inform the Board of developments in the prison, and to respond to current observations arising from member rota visits and reports.

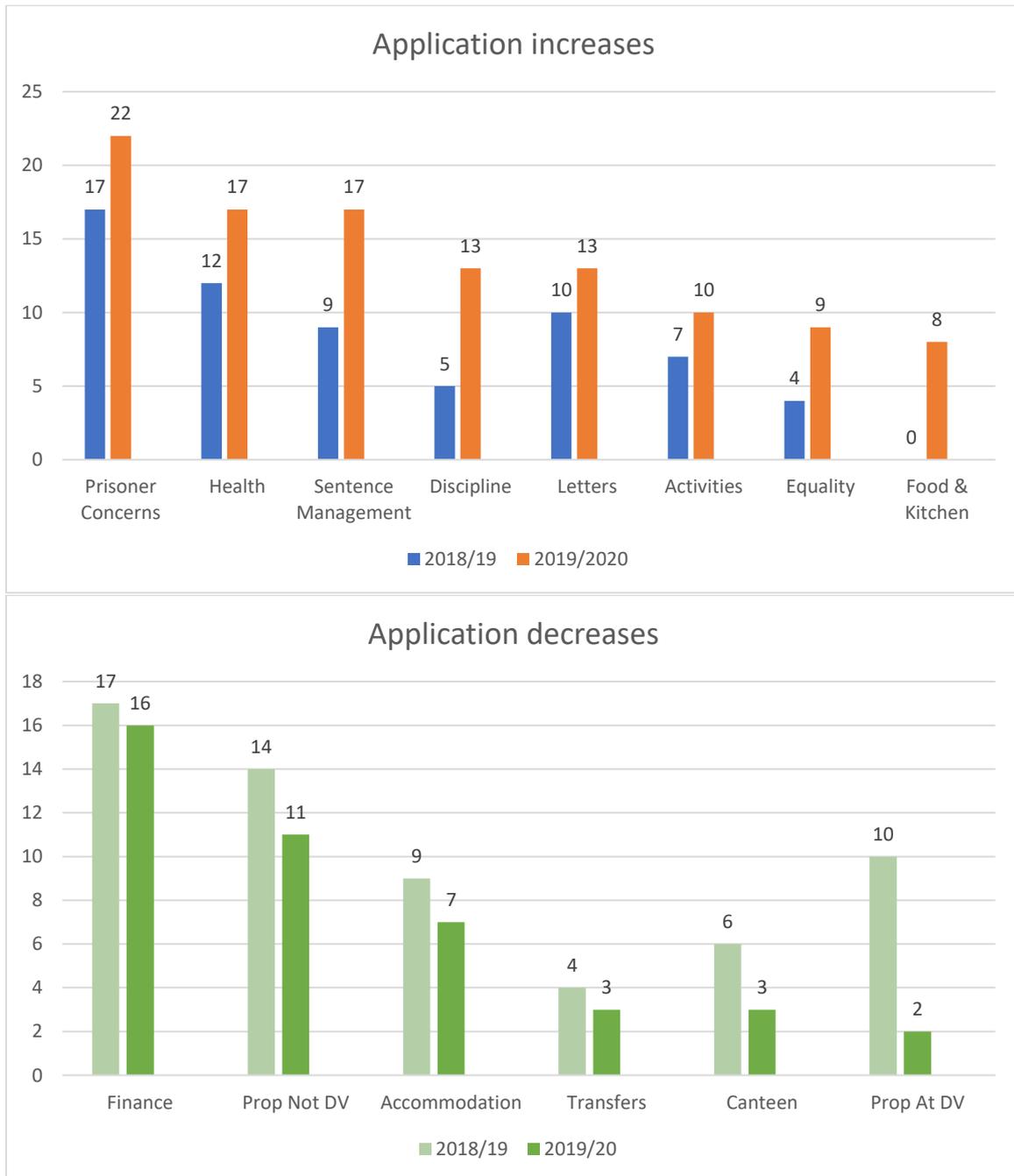
There is an annual training plan for the Board, utilising a mix of prison staff, internal prison training and external speakers. Members also attend national IMB training courses as required. Early in the reporting period, the Board carried out a recruitment campaign across a wide variety of media and in the wider community; we had an extremely positive response and recruited four additional members to the Board (three men and one woman).

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	242
Total number of segregation reviews attended	40

9. Applications to the IMB

Overall, the applications made to the Board during the reporting year increased by 20% against the last reporting year. Of the 14 classified categories, eight have increased in number when compared with the last reporting year and six have decreased, as shown below:



IMB application volumes, coding and descriptions:

Code	Subject	Previous Reporting Year	Current Reporting Year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	7
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	5	13
C	Equality	4	9
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	7	10
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	10	13
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	17	16
F	Food and kitchens	0	8
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	12	17
H1	Property within this establishment	10	2
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	14	11
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	6	3
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, ROTL, parole, release dates, recategorisation	9	17
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	17	22
K	Transfers	4	3
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	2	N/A
	Total number of applications	126	151



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at imb@justice.gov.uk.