



Ministry
of Justice

Lucy Frazer QC MP
Minister of State for Justice

██████████
Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Humber
4 Sands Lane
Everthorpe
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HU15 2JZ

MoJ ref: ADR79716

10 August 2020

Dear ██████,

HMP HUMBER: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2019

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 31 December 2019. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations, especially as you continued to be short of Board members during the reporting year.

I understand the Board's request to review the availability of specialist prison facilities and staff to support prisoners with mental health issues. I also recognise the Board's concerns about the delays in transferring prisoners with mental health issues to secure units. Whilst decisions about who is remanded or sentenced into prison are a matter for the courts, it is recognised that for many reasons some individuals, who may be better placed in the health system, are instead sent to prison. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) works closely with the NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) who are responsible for commissioning mental health services to try to meet the needs of those in prison. HMPPS also seeks to allocate prisoners to the most appropriate prison based on the risk that they present and has undertaken work to improve prison officer training in mental health awareness and support, which will continue when looking to refresh overall safety training later this year. However, these cannot make up for the specialist health interventions that mental health workers and secure mental health facilities can provide.

The Secretary of State for Justice is, therefore, committed to working with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (and health partners) to articulate a coherent picture of how healthcare is delivered throughout the criminal justice pathway. Although Government resources and priorities are currently being directed to the response to Covid-19, we are committed to continuing bilateral discussions on this topic when it is appropriate to do so. Further guidance has been issued to ensure mental health transfer arrangements are not further impacted by Covid-19 and to improve the support offered to vulnerable offenders already in custody. In addition, revised guidance on the transfer and remission to hospital from prison is to be published later this year. The new guidance will promote timely access to appropriate treatment under the Mental Health Act and reduce unnecessary delays to treatment. This Government is also committed to legislate to reform the Mental Health Act and as such is working to produce a White Paper in the coming months.

It is recognised nationally that there are challenges in sourcing appropriate and secure hospital facilities for those in custody who require an in-patient stay. NHSE&I are using the Health and Justice Indicators of Performance (HJIP) to monitor patients being assessed under the Mental Health Act (MHA). These enable tracking of the assessment and waiting periods for transfer, allowing Commissioners to identify prisons that are under pressure and to act where necessary. NHSE&I Health and Justice and the

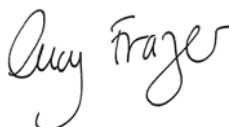
Specialised Commissioning teams ensure that additional support is offered throughout the transfer process, proactively following up referrals to secure hospitals to ensure joined-up awareness of a patient's presentation and risk. The Mental Health team within HMP Humber work closely with the Specialised Commissioning Case Managers to ensure the transfer process is as swift as possible and escalation processes are in place where any cases are awaiting transfer to a secure mental health bed. In addition, NHSE&I Health and Justice (Yorkshire & The Humber) are considering development of Intermediate Support Units within prisons in the region to provide additional support for those prisoners who may require it due to their Mental Health issues. Joint work is also ongoing between the Specialised Commissioning team and the Health & Justice team to review and develop Mental Health Pathways.

It was reassuring to receive your comments that prisoners receive fair treatment in a humane way and to hear that there have been improvements in their welfare and safety. It is encouraging to note that levels of self-harm, violence, protesting behaviour and prisoners under the influence of drugs or alcohol are all on a downward trend. It is also encouraging that the Ten Prisons Project has provided the resources needed to tackle and reduce the drug supply into the prison, such as the 171 illicit parcels intercepted during the reporting year, which has positively impacted the reductions in violence and self-harm incidents. I was pleased to read about the good work opportunities for prisoners and the further increase in activity places and attendance rates. I was also reassured to note that equality monitoring data is being rigorously analysed and appropriate action taken.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of as work continues. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Justice Secretary and I appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are very grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Humber.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LUCY FRAZER QC MP

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Prisoners' Property

It is unfortunate and regrettable that prisoners' property continues to be an issue. The development of the new Prisoners' Property Policy Framework is being informed by a project which was undertaken in summer 2019, involving stakeholders across HMPPS and the escort services. The project involved visiting 14 prisons, consultation with staff and prisoners, and engagement with external stakeholders such as the Independent Monitoring Board Secretariat and Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. Its purpose was to support the policy review and identify areas where immediate and more long-term changes may be required to improve operational practice. Following the conclusion of the project, HMPPS has worked closely with stakeholders to consult on proposed changes to the policy. Discussions ahead of consultation with IMB members began with the IMB Secretariat in late February 2020, who proposed meetings take place with Board members in April. In light of the pressures placed on Boards by Covid-19, HMPPS agreed with the IMB Secretariat to pause this consultation. This work is now moving forward again and the IMB Secretariat have proposed that the meetings now take place between August and September. The feedback received from IMB members at these meetings will then be considered alongside the comments received earlier this year from other stakeholders, with the intention that the revised draft policy framework will be circulated for wider consultation at the end of 2020.

The Prisoner Escort and Custody Service (PECS) take steps to transport all property which falls within the agreed volumetric limits with prisoners when they transfer between establishments. A new fleet of vehicles are being provided through the PECS 4 Generation contract which starts in August 2020. These new vehicles will be able to transfer an additional half box of consumable items for each prisoner e.g. products purchased in the prison shop. In addition to this, HMPPS is considering what more can be done to encourage prisoners to send out or dispose of excess items to reduce the amount of their property that cannot transfer with them. Steps are also being taken to ensure a consistent approach when prisons forward on any excess items to prisoners at their new establishments after transfers have taken place.

Locally, it is recognised that the reception department at HMP Humber was originally designed to cater for 340 and having merged two sites together now manages property for up to 1062, which makes storage space limited. However, the prison continues to manage exceptionally well without the use of central HMPPS storage at Branston and instead uses compactable shelving which can be opened up to provide additional storage when required to achieve the space necessary to manage a busy category C prison. This system enables the prison to provide prisoners up to two clothing parcels per year subject to in cell volumetric control measures. Reception staff are also proactive in ensuring any additional property a prisoner may have on transfer, other than that the PECS provider may transport, is forwarded on to the prisoner, either by weekly courier where the receiving prison is outside the region or taken by the prisons own transport within the region.

Healthcare

Although it is a matter for the local healthcare provider to update waiting room materials and respond to Patient Advice and Liaison Service, NHS England & NHS Improvement include the number and type of complaints and compliments within the National Quality Schedule and this is monitored on a quarterly basis as part of the ongoing contract management process with the provider. The Board's concern about updating information materials will also be raised with the provider via the Governor locally.