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Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Nottingham
Perry Road
Sherwood
NG5 3AG

MoJ Ref: ADR 081147

8 October 2020

Dear ██████████,

**HMP NOTTINGHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 MARCH 2019 – 29 FEBRUARY 2020**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 29 February 2020. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work in capturing these helpful observations and have noted that you continue to be short of Board members for the second consecutive reporting year.

It is unfortunate and regrettable that transferring prisoners with severe mental health issues to specialist care continues to be a concern. Local NHS England Commissioners also acknowledge the concerns of the Board. Further to last year's response, work is being scoped with colleagues in NHS England Specialised Commissioning to follow up closely those patients that are on the transfer list and the work is progressing with Terms of Reference being scoped. Meetings were planned for August 2020 to agree the facilitation of fortnightly calls with all case managers to review those individuals who are awaiting transfer. Ultimately the issue of transferring prisoners within the 14 day (soon to be 28 day) timeframe is a combination of Health and Justice having close liaison with specialised commissioning to ensure patients have a timely transfer, and working closely with Provider Collaboratives such as IMPACT. These measures are however subject to capacity of secure hospital placements/beds across the country.

NHS England conducted a nationally coordinated demand and capacity review of adult medium and low secure services looking at regional intentions in terms of configuration of beds by service with the ambition to ensure that secure in-patient services are situated in the correct geographical location and are delivering the right type of service in a timely manner. This was specifically in relation to mental illness and personality disorder services, aligning with other national work focussing on secure learning disability and autism services, which reflects the ambition in the long-term plan. National and regional teams in NHS England and NHS Improvement are working closely with NHS-led Provider Collaboratives as the vehicle for the delivery of these changes. The Provider Collaboratives for adult medium and low secure services give local ownership to providers for the whole pathway, including the interface with the criminal justice system, and resource for their own populations, enabling them to make commissioning decisions to improve and integrate services.

Additionally, NHS England's work to improve the system for transfers and remissions involves developing new performance metrics. It includes a strategic reporting tool to monitor patients being assessed under the Mental Health Act, tracking the assessment and waiting periods for transfer and will allow Commissioners to identify exceptional cases within prisons and act where necessary.

The Board will be pleased to know that the *2011 Prison Transfer and Remission Guidance* has now been refreshed and amended following a comprehensive consultation process during summer 2019 and is awaiting publication as the planned release was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Turning to the Board's concerns around prisoners released without accommodation and bail hostel availability, I would like to assure you that it is a priority for the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to ensure that offenders find somewhere safe and secure to live following their release from custody. We are working closely across Government to access the elements that are not directly within our control.

The Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018, launching a £100 million initiative to reduce and ultimately eliminate rough sleeping across England. As part of this strategy, MoJ and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, are investing approximately £6.4 million in a pilot scheme to help ex-offenders secure suitable accommodation from three prisons, namely HMPs Pentonville, Bristol and Leeds. The pilot is focusing on male prisoners who have been sentenced to 36 months or less and who have been identified as having a risk of homelessness. The pilot has been operating since August 2019. A little over 300 individuals were enrolled onto the pilot which concluded at the end of July. Subject to evaluation, we will use the lessons from the pilot to inform future provision of accommodation for offenders through the new Probation model.

I can also confirm that HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is well underway to developing an Accommodation Framework that sets out both the agency's and its partners responsibilities and a framework for how to build on success and work collaboratively to ensure offenders are able to access and maintain settled accommodation. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government has now decided that there is a need to provide accommodation for a larger cohort of prison leavers. The MoJ has secured appropriate funding for a time-limited period to support the provision of accommodation for all individuals released from prison during this period who are at risk of homelessness. Subject to funding, other cohorts can also be considered such as current residents in Approved Premises and Bail Accommodation Support Services that are at risk of homelessness. Whilst this initiative is an immediate response to support prison leavers at risk of homelessness during this period, the MoJ is keen to utilise the learning gathered from this scheme to help develop longer-term improvements. HMPPS and MoJ will draw on that learning as we develop and roll out our wider reforms to probation services.

Despite the concerns raised, it was encouraging to read the numerous positive comments throughout the report, including the improved HM Inspectorate of Prisons scores in almost all the healthy prison tests and the significant reduction in turnaround times of Discrimination Incident Report Forms. I was particularly pleased to read that HMP Nottingham was the first prison to fly the Rainbow flag to celebrate LGBTQ month.

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 Nottingham.

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

Annex

HMP NOTTINGHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 MARCH 2019 – 29 FEBRUARY 2020

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Transfers

Progressive transfers of prisoners are subject to space in the appropriate part of the prison estate becoming available. The speed of transfers reflects this constraint and HMPPS fully understands the Board's concerns around this matter. The Agency recognises that there is currently an imbalance of places within the estate as there are too many local places and too few training and resettlement places. To address this, HMPPS is reconfiguring the adult male estate and is simplifying the organisation of prisons into three key functions: reception, training and resettlement. New offender flows will be introduced to move men to the right prison at the right time, and for some men this will include spending a longer time in a resettlement prison closer to home.

Transitioning of the estate has already begun. In 2019, HMP Woodhill began its transition from a Core Local Prison to a Category B training prison with a Category A trial function and specialist units. At the beginning of February 2020, HMP Manchester started its transition from a Core Local Prison to a Category B training prison with a Category A remand function. When both prisons have fully transitioned this will add approximately 1300 Category B training places to the estate. Additionally, on 1 January 2020 HMP Haverigg in Cumbria changed from a Category C prison, capable of holding up to 268 Category C men, to a Category D open prison initially holding up to 458 Category D men with the potential to increase to 570. This change has provided extra capacity in the adult male open estate, including for men convicted of sexual offences. The newly built prisons at Wellingborough and Glen Parva will also deliver a further 3,360 Category C resettlement places.

Estate Utilisation

As mentioned above, reconfiguration of the estate will help with better utilisation of specialist wings across all prisons. However, it remains a challenge to maintain sufficient numbers of offence-related vulnerable prisoners in appropriate wings and, owing to population pressures, if capacity exists then prisons will have to use that space accordingly. Furthermore, HMPPS is unable to plan for or predict how many offence-related vulnerable prisoners will be transferred from the courts and therefore it is a balancing act of keeping the roll at capacity whilst having the right prisoners on specialist wings.