



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Ms Maria E Voisin
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The Coroner's Court
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31 January 2020

Dear Ms Voisin,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report of 19 November 2019 following the inquest into the death of Shaun Dewey at HMP Bristol on 13 April 2018. I am grateful that you granted an extension to the statutory deadline for my response.

I would first like to express my condolences to the family and friends of Mr Dewey for their loss. The safety of those in our care is my absolute priority, and every death in custody is a tragedy.

You have drawn attention to the fact that prisoners on remand are at a higher risk of self-harm and suicide, and have asked that we give consideration to recognising remand status as a risk factor in national policy and guidance, and in the training provided to staff.

As you rightly point out, whilst Prison Service Instruction (PSI) 64/2011 Safer Custody contains lists of identified risks and triggers for suicide and self-harm that include factors that are relevant to many remand prisoners (such as early days in custody), it does not mention remand status itself. However, we frequently supplement the list in the PSI with additional information for staff, and this has included references to the increased risk posed by remand prisoners. For instance, the April 2014 Prison and Probation Ombudsman learning bulletin, from which you have quoted in your report, was disseminated widely within prisons, and more recent guidance issued by our prison safety team and made available to staff on the HMPPS intranet includes remand status as a risk factor for suicide. Training based on this more recent guidance has also been provided to staff in a number of prisons.

During 2020 we will be replacing PSI 64/2011 with a policy framework on prison safety, and as part of this process the lists of risks and triggers will be reviewed and updated. We will ensure that the evidence about the risks posed by remand status, which you have drawn to my attention, is used to inform that work. The new policy framework will include a new version of the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process designed to make the system easier to operate and improve the quality of care offered to prisoners. The new version of the form and associated guidance were piloted in ten establishments in 2019 and the initial feedback has been positive. We are currently considering the formal

evaluation report and expect to make some further changes before the national rollout. I will ensure that your point about the need to bring attention to the risks associated with remand status is considered as we do so. We will also be revising the Introduction to Suicide and Self Harm Prevention training (a course that is undertaken by all staff with prisoner contact) to reflect and support the new policy framework and changes to ACCT. Again, we will use this opportunity to ensure that the module on recognising risks and triggers is reviewed and updated.

Thank you for raising your concerns with me. I hope that my response provides assurance that we are taking steps to ensure that staff understand the issues that you have identified, and that the risks involving remand prisoners are properly managed.

Yours sincerely,



PHIL COPPLE

Director General for Prisons