



HM Prison & Probation Service

Director General Prisons
HM Prison and Probation Service
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Mr David Reid
HM Senior Coroner
Worcestershire Coroner's Court
The Civic
Martins Way
Stourport-on-Severn
Worcestershire
DY13 8UN

14 February 2022

Dear Mr Reid,

Thank you for the two Regulation 28 reports of 21 December 2021 following the inquest into the death of Saul Thomas at HMP Hewell on 19 May 2019, addressed to the Governors of HMP Birmingham and HMP Hewell respectively. I am responding on behalf of HMPPS as the Director General of Prisons.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with the family of Mr Thomas and I would like to express my condolences for their loss. Every death in custody is a tragedy and the safety of those in our care is my absolute priority.

Following evidence heard at the inquest you have raised two matters of concern: staff training in the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process (the system by which prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm), and the need for effective handover procedures when prisoners transfer prisons.

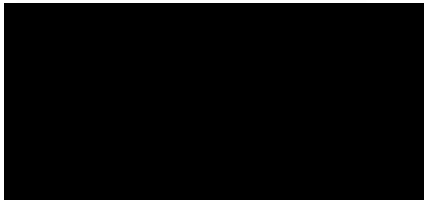
HMP Birmingham have increased the capacity of their ACCT version 6 training, and now have a plan in place to train 80% of their staff in suicide and self-harm (SASH) over the coming six months. The training plan prioritises staff working in areas of the prison that are considered high risk, including the Care and Separation Unit (CSU), Healthcare Unit, Reception and the Reverse Cohorting Unit (RCU). To achieve this the Governing Governor has asked the Prison Group Director for additional training to be made available to reduce the number of staff requiring training. In addition, HMP Birmingham will ensure all future new staff will receive SASH training as part of their induction.

HMP Hewell have advised that in December 2021 alone they delivered training to a further 205 staff in the latest version of the ACCT. Despite having been impacted by COVID-19 and its restrictions, they are continuing to work through the backlog of staff ACCT training and over the coming months expect to have trained a much larger percentage of staff. The prison has 209 staff fully trained in SASH, and a further 66 currently working through the required training modules. By the end of March 2022 HMP Hewell will have a further two members of staff trained as SASH trainers, and therefore will be able to provide more training opportunities at HMP Hewell in order to speed up the delivery.

With regard to transfer procedures, a new process is now in place at HMP Birmingham for when prisoners who are being supported by healthcare, including mental health services, are being transferred to another establishment. As soon as it is known a prisoner is transferring, the healthcare team are required to make contact with the receiving prison. If this is not possible then the matter is escalated to the healthcare manager and duty Governor who are then required to ensure a handover takes place before they leave their shift. In addition to this, on the day of the transfer reception staff are required to call the receiving reception manager to notify them of a new arrival transferring from a healthcare unit. These actions will be recorded on the prisoner's National Offender Management Information System (NOMIS) record and the new digital Prisoner Escort Record will also record any and all prisoner healthcare requirements.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address the matters that you have raised, and I would once again like to reiterate my sincere condolences to the family of Mr Thomas.

Yours sincerely



Director General of Prisons