



HM Prison & Probation Service

Director General Prisons
HM Prison and Probation Service
8th Floor Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

Mr Alan R Craze
HM Senior Coroner for East Sussex
East Sussex Coroner's Office
Unit 56, Innovation Centre
Highfield Drive
St Leonards-On-Sea
East Sussex TN38 9UH

24 October 2019

Dear Mr Craze

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report of 16 August 2019 following the inquest into the death of Martin Haines at HMP Lewes on 18 March 2018. I am responding on behalf of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

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

You have expressed several concerns, some of which relate to the responsibilities of healthcare partners, from whom you will receive a separate response. I will respond to matters (1), (4) and (5) which relate to the responsibilities of HMPPS.

Your first concern is that Mr Haines was able to brew his own alcohol. I share your concern, and would like to assure you that there has been a lot of work at national and local levels to tackle the availability and use of illegal substances in prison. In April 2019 the Prisons Drug Strategy was published. This guidance was developed in partnership between the Ministry of Justice and HMPPS with input from partner agencies in health, law enforcement and social care. The core aim of this strategy and our surrounding activity is to reduce the impact of drugs and alcohol in prisons by restricting supply, reducing demand and building recovery. Each prison has responsibility for reviewing their own local substance misuse strategy, which sets out how they identify residents with drug and alcohol issues and provide them with a range of services to help them to overcome their substance misuse problems and lead healthier, crime-free lives both in prison and in the community.

At HMP Lewes the local Substance Misuse Strategy was reviewed and updated in June 2019 to include a section on illicitly brewed alcohol. The strategy focuses on restricting availability, ensuring that there are appropriate consequences for those found in possession of alcohol, and offering appropriate support for dependent users. There has been an increase in security procedures to include thorough checks of known brewing locations, as

well as careful selection and searching of those working in kitchen areas who have access to ingredients commonly used in the production of alcohol.

Intelligence and information sharing is crucial to restricting availability, and the Governor of HMP Lewes can draw on the regional Dedicated Search Team when there is intelligence to suggest that prisoners are brewing their own alcohol. The consequences for those found in possession of fermenting liquid should be a deterrent, and can include additional days being added to sentences. Any prisoner suspected of alcohol use is referred to the Forward Trust for substance misuse support. The prison is also focusing on educating prisoners of the risks associated with the use of illicit alcohol, and continue to encourage and promote health and wellbeing.

Your fourth concern relates to the lack of a protocol between prison and healthcare staff as to how best to respond to an unresponsive body. In accordance with Prison Service Instruction 03/2013, all prisons are required to have in place a two-code medical emergency response system and, when used correctly, these codes should trigger the control room to call an ambulance and for healthcare staff to attend the scene with the appropriate emergency equipment. You may recall from evidence heard at the inquest that a notice is now displayed in the control room to serve as a visual reminder to staff of the need to call an ambulance immediately upon receiving an emergency code. The prison also issues notices to all staff regularly to remind them of the importance of using the emergency codes correctly.

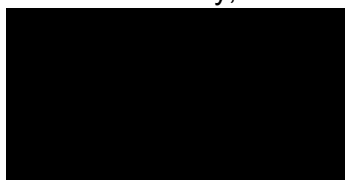
Your final concern is that responsibility for healthcare is split between different contractors, and that there was insufficient communication between these bodies and their separate IT databases. As you know, the commissioning of healthcare in English prisons is the responsibility of NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I). HMPPS is responsible for ensuring access to healthcare services within establishments and, where required, at external healthcare facilities. With regard to the sharing of information between the various organisations, you will appreciate that it is not appropriate for prison staff to have access to clinical records on SystmOne. At HMP Lewes, there is a daily meeting between prison and healthcare staff at which important information is shared. Each staff team then ensures that their respective databases are updated.

I understand that a new database is being created by NHSE/I which will supersede the current clinical system. The plan is for this to have some inter-operability with the NOMIS database used by prison staff, and this will enable better sharing of information between prison and healthcare staff.

Responsibility for the provision of healthcare at Lewes will be moving in April 2020 to a new provider which will have responsibility for all services, and I believe that this will lead to improved communication and continuity of care.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention, and I hope that this response provides assurance that action is being taken.

Yours sincerely,



Director General for Prisons