



HM Prison & Probation Service

Mr John Adrian Gittins
HM Senior Coroner for North Wales
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21 January 2020

Dear / Annwyl Mr Gittins,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report of 3 December 2019 addressed to HMP Berwyn and Ministry of Justice, following the inquest into the death of Luke Jones at the prison on 31 March 2018. I am responding on behalf of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

I know that you will send a copy of this response to the family of Mr Jones and I would first 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.

You have expressed concern about the continuing availability and use of psychoactive substances at Berwyn. I share your concern, and would like to assure you that we continue to work at both national and local levels to tackle the availability and use of psychoactive substances within our prisons.

The national Prison Drug Strategy, published in April 2019, sets out the measures that we are taking. 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 is required to use this and an accompanying guidance document, to develop a local strategy that, applies the national approach to their particular circumstances, setting out how they will minimise the supply of drugs to the establishment, and work to 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 a local level, in recognition of the dangers posed by the use of psychoactive substances, the Governor of Berwyn and the Regional Substance Misuse lead for HMPPS Wales have revised the prison's Drug Strategy. This primarily focuses on restricting the availability of illicit items, ensuring that there are appropriate consequences for those found in possession, and offering appropriate support for dependent users.

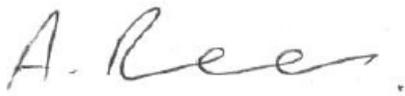
Sophisticated intelligence systems that are designed to reduce the supply of illicit substances into the prison involve collaboration with a range of HMPPS and Police colleagues. As you know, a Rapiscan machine is now in place which has vastly improved the detection of contraband items. The introduction of improved gate searching, changes in the supervision of domestic visits and support for

safe detoxification of men on reception are all part of the prison's efforts to limit the availability of drugs. The mandatory drug testing procedures have also been extended to cover two more psychoactive substance tests in line with national policy. The extended tests will help indicate if some of the emerging psychoactive substances presently not in the testing range of HMPPS are being used at Berwyn.

Intelligence and information sharing is crucial to restricting availability, and the Governor can draw on the Regional Dedicated Search Team when there is intelligence to suggest that prisoners are involved in the drug culture. The consequences for those found in possession of illicit items should be a deterrent, and can include additional days being added to sentences. Any person suspected of substance misuse use is referred to the substance misuse service for support and prescribed clinical management using an agreed care pathway. The prison is also focusing on educating prisoners of the risks associated with the use of psychoactive substances, as part of its broader work to promote health and wellbeing.

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 / Yn gywir

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Rees".

Amy Rees

Director General of Probation and Wales, HM Prison and Probation Service

Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol y Gwasanaeth Prawf a Chymru, Gwasanaeth Carchardai a Phrawf EM