



HM Prison &
Probation Service



Mr Andrew Harris
Senior Coroner
London Inner South Jurisdiction

By email

██████████
Director General of Probation, Wales and Youth
HM Prison and Probation Service
3rd Floor Churchill House
Churchill Way
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15 February 2022

Dear / Annwyl Mr Harris

Inquest into the death of Mr Mark Castley

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report dated 22 December 2022 following the inquest into the death of Mr Castley which concluded on the 8 December 2021.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with the family and I would first like to express my sincere condolences for their loss.

Following the Inquest, you raised the following overall concern;

'The evidence suggests that his risks of recurrent impulsive self-harm in situations his ex-wife described as "when he is cornered" were not fully assessed as applying to the time after he was being sentenced and if they had been, a notification form might have been completed. Whether this was due to the policy requiring imminence of risk at the time of assessment or being erroneously interpreted so, or whether the projection of imminence arising in a future context was not fully considered, is not clear.'

Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention. Upon receipt of your report a number of actions have been undertaken to address the concerns raised.

- 1) Appendix 1 of the 'Working with Suicide & Self-Harm; A Guide for Probation Staff' has been reviewed and the question 'is there an immediate risk of suicide' has been changed to 'has a current concern relating to suicide risk been identified' (staff are reminded to consider historic information which could be relevant to, or triggered by current circumstances).
- 2) The text above in brackets has now also been added to the Probation EQUIP process map for court staff to trigger the completion of a Suicide Risk Form where a concern has been identified. The Probation Service use a process called EQUIP which holds all national policies, processes and guidance, including process maps.
- 3) All probation staff in London have been reminded of the requirement to adhere to the 'probation risk to self' EQUIP process maps, including the completion of the Suicide Risk Form, where a current concern is identified. This directive will also be disseminated across the Probation Service nationally.

- 4) A new thematic Suicide and Self-Harm Performance and Quality Newsletter was published by London Probation on 19 January 2022. This has been emailed directly to all London staff in order to increase awareness of suicide prevention practice and required actions.

I wish to assure you that HMPPS and the MOJ are committed to improving awareness in this area. As part of our Probation National Suicide Prevention Action Plan additional relevant actions include:

- A current project with the Zero Suicide Alliance to develop a specific online short awareness training for probation practitioners to increase knowledge and raise awareness and confidence when asking about suicide
- The introduction of an HMPPS Deaths Under Supervision Working Group to improve the way that we learn from deaths.

The learning from this inquest will inform future training and suicide prevention activities in HMPPS.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention. I trust this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address the matters you have raised. I conclude by once again offering my condolences to the family of Mr Castley.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir



Director General of Probation, Wales and Youth, HM Prison and Probation Service
Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol Prawf, Cymru ac Ieuenctid, Gwasanaeth Carchardai a Phrawf EM