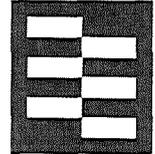




HM Prison &
Probation Service

Probation
Service



Ms Caroline Saunders
HM Senior Coroner for Gwent

By email

Director General of Probation, Wales and Youth
HM Prison and Probation Service
3rd Floor Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff CF10 2HH

28 February 2022

Dear / Annwyl Ms Saunders

Inquest into the death of Mr Ian Miller

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 5 January 2022, addressed to the Ministry of Justice and the Governor of HMP Usk, following the inquest into the death of Ian Miller on the 21 September 2019. I am responding as Director General of Probation, Wales and Youth.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Miller's family, 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 expressed concern, following evidence heard at the inquest, about the trading of prescribed medication and you have asked for confirmation of the steps that the prison is taking to address this, in order to reduce the risks.

In December 2021, the Deputy Governor and the Head of Healthcare undertook a review of the in-possession medication process. This included reviewing the compact which is agreed between the prisoner and the healthcare provider, the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, when any medication is distributed. As a result of the review, the prisoner induction process was updated in January 2022 to include key information on the process of in-possession medication, the dangers of misusing prescription drugs, and instructions to report any concerns with staff. Staff were also reminded during briefings to ensure that the compact is fully reviewed and signed by all prisoners during their inductions.

In order to ensure that staff are aware of this issue and the risk that prisoners trading prescribed medications presents, the Deputy Governor issued guidance to staff in January 2022 highlighting what they must look out for, and the importance of recording any instances of this immediately including informing the healthcare provider. This notice will be re-issued annually to continually raise staff awareness and ensure that new staff are also informed.

Any intelligence received about instances of prisoners trading medication will continue to be monitored and collated by the security department and considered during the weekly staff security briefings to ensure that all staff are aware of emerging trends and risks.

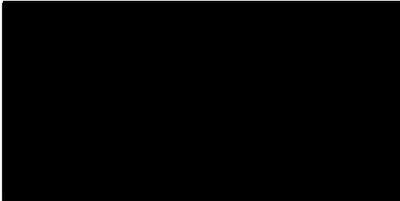
Increased measures have been introduced in areas of high risk across the prison, this includes the recycling department which now has more detailed security risk assessments for all prisoners that work there, due to them potentially coming into contact with discarded medications. Amnesty bins have also been added to the wings to ensure that medications may be disposed of correctly, when required.

Random medication checks have been increased to 10% of the prison population and are conducted monthly by both healthcare and prison staff. The checks are to ensure that a prisoner has the correct in-possession medication in the right quantities and any discrepancies are immediately addressed through medication reviews.

The mandatory drug testing (MDT) is also in place which provides initial screening for six types of drugs. If a prisoner that is prescribed medication receives a positive MDT result, the prison will then liaise with healthcare to seek confirmation with the laboratory whether this was caused by the prescribed medication.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address this matter.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir



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