

21 March 2023

Mr Ian Dreelan  
Senior Coroner  
Birmingham & Solihull's District  
The Birmingham and Solihull Coroner's Court  
Steelhouse Lane  
Birmingham, B4 6BJ

Dear Mr Dreelan

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 5 January 2023, following the inquest into the death of Floyd Carruthers on 14 June 2021. I am responding as the Director General of Operations for His Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS).

I am aware that you will share a copy of this response with the family of Mr Carruthers, 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.

You have raised concerns about a lack of training on safeguarding policy, and in particular a lack of awareness amongst staff of the means of escalating an issue of self-neglect, as opposed to one of self-isolation.

On 9 March 2023, the Governor at HMP Birmingham issued a notice to staff on the subject of safeguarding, stating very clearly that when a prisoner is found to be neglecting their own welfare it is the responsibility of staff to ensure that appropriate action is taken to ensure that their needs are met using relevant processes and to provide ongoing support. Staff are reminded to report such instances to the prison safeguarding lead (the Head of Safer Custody) who will consider the suitability of making a referral for a social care assessment.

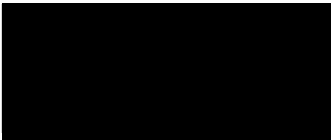
In addition to this, safeguarding is now a standing item at the weekly Governing Governor's briefing at HMP Birmingham. The establishment's suicide and self-harm prevention trainers have been instructed to place more emphasis on issues relating to self-neglect, and from December 2023 a HMPPS training programme focused specifically on safeguarding will become available.

The HMPPS National Social Care Board – a partnership group, involving the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services alongside HMPPS policy and operational leads – is developing a workplan based on seven agreed priorities, one of which is to improve safeguarding practice in prison and approved premises. The findings from your report will be used to inform the activities needed to deliver this commitment.

In the meantime, HMPPS will issue a learning bulletin that will remind staff of the existing requirements to identify and refer for assessment prisoners who appear to be self-neglecting, and describe the actions that staff can take to support prisoners in such circumstances.

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.

Yours Sincerely,

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Director General of Operations