



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Director General of Operations
HM Prison and Probation Service
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Mr Robert Simpson
HM Assistant Coroner for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton
Coroner's Office
Castle Hill
Winchester
SO23 8UL

22 August 2023

Dear Mr Simpson,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 7 June 2023 following the inquest into the death of Thomas Huntley at HMP Winchester which concluded on the 3 April 2023. This report was received on the 27 June 2023 and I am grateful to you for agreeing the 56 day for the response from the date of receipt.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Huntley'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 have expressed concerns around the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) procedures and training, information sharing and safer cells at HMP Winchester. I will respond to each concern in the order that they were raised.

It is essential that ACCT Version 6 (v6) procedures are understood and undertaken by all members of staff working within prisons, including healthcare colleagues, and that staff feel confident in recognising an increase in risk and are aware of the need to record all required information within the ACCT document, including any triggers. ACCT v6 and SASH training includes guidance on understanding and assessing the risks and triggers of self-harm, the ACCT process and supporting individuals who self-harm while they are subject to monitoring.

HMP Winchester is currently delivering monthly training and awareness sessions for all staff which incorporates both ACCT v6 and SASH training. The Group Safety Team attend HMP Winchester regularly to assist with this and to deliver further support for staff around ACCT procedures. Staff training requirements have been reviewed and a training plan is currently in place which allows the ongoing training levels to be monitored with the current target for all staff to have received the required training by the end of 2023.

All establishments are required to have an ACCT quality assurance process in place that ensures that quality assurance is carried out at a level and frequency that enables meaningful insight into how effectively support through ACCT is being implemented. At HMP Winchester, quality

assurance checks take place at three main stages. The first takes place within 48 hours from the opening of the ACCT, conducted by the Safety Team, assessing the effectiveness of the immediate steps taken and quality of the documentation. The second check is by the Custodial Manager who checks the ongoing record and the case reviews, ensuring that entries are detailed and meaningful, and whether previously identified actions or identified concerns continue to be taken into account and built on. Following ACCT closure, the Safety Team then review the full ACCT document including the seven day post closure monitoring procedure and the post closure reviews.

Following Mr Huntley's death, HMP Winchester undertook a review of the quality assurance checks in place to ensure these are being completed appropriately, and which resulted in the implementation of a system for accountability which has robust procedures to follow up any identified concerns and promote effective practice throughout the staff group. All findings of the quality assurance checks are now fed back to the relevant staff to recognise best practice and highlight the need for improvement. The Safety Custodial Manager monitors the feedback and any serious concerns are rectified immediately.

You have also raised concerns around the current procedures and policies for sharing information. Some prisoners supported through ACCT may have particularly challenging needs that mean an escalation path for additional support is required. The Safety Intervention Meeting (SIM) is a multi-disciplinary safety risk management meeting, chaired by the Senior Management Team (SMT), providing support and multi-disciplinary guidance to Case Coordinators and case review teams. This may include reviewing and recommending actions to reduce risk, discussing alternative interventions within a more senior multi-disciplinary forum, and arranging for more senior members of staff to participate in ACCT Case Reviews if necessary. The SIM forms part of the national policy requirement on all prisons, to ensure that any prisoners who present a significant level of risk or complexity can be referred for enhanced support.

While SystmOne, the electronic system used by healthcare staff to record medical information cannot be accessed by operational staff for reasons of medical confidentiality, the appropriate sharing of information is encouraged through a range of methods, for example the morning operational meeting is multi-disciplinary and allows all those working with individuals to provide updates and ensure necessary information is shared. The Daily Briefing sheet and wing observation books are also vital tools to ensure all staff are aware of concerns regarding a prisoner.

The final concern raised relates to ligature points in cells. HMPPS is currently undertaking a review of ligature-resistant cells, which have been designed to eliminate ligature points as far as possible. The review has included the cell build standards and how they are used to support prisoners in crisis. Our aim is to ensure that cells that are fitted with ligature-resistant features are available as an option for staff managing prisoners in crisis, and that they retain those features in full working order and do not deviate from the standard over time. At this point it is too early to say what new rules may be introduced, such as setting the frequency of maintenance, although we do recognise that cells are subject to constant wear and tear and need frequent attention to keep them up to standard.

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

Yours sincerely,



Director General of Operations