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HM Senior Coroner, Mrs Louise Hunt  
Birmingham & Solihull Coroner's Court  
50 Newton Street  
Birmingham  
B4 6NE

Client Confidential

8 May 2024

Dear Madam

### Jacob Michael Nicholas Billington

We write in response to your Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths dated 13 March 2024 addressed to G4S, Birmingham & Solihull NHS Foundation Trust, His Majesty's Prisons & Probation Service (HMPPS), the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police and Swansea Bay University Health Board.

### Ongoing Concerns Identified

- 1. The management of release and lack of interagency working.** The management of the perpetrator's release was not coordinated and there was inadequate communication between relevant agencies. In effect, agencies worked in silos. Critical information is not being shared and agencies work in different IT systems meaning there is no one place where information is collated and hence a comprehensive account of matters known to each agency is not easily available to those professionals who may need to know a high-risk prisoner's whereabouts on release. This concern was reinforced by evidence heard during the inquest that changes made since Jacob's death did not include resettlement information being given to Mental Health In Reach teams in the prison. The failure to share information leads to a concern of future deaths as high risk seriously unwell prisoners may be released without key agencies knowing where they are meaning they are not traced and treated assertively in the community.
- 2. SystemOne.** Details of the perpetrator's GP and local CMHT were not recorded in an easily accessible format. The format in which key information is recorded has now been amended at HMP Swansea to ensure the prisoner's GP details and their CMHT's details (if a person is an existing patient under a CMHT) are highlighted on a front screen page. I was informed that this change in information management and presentation within SystemOne is unique to HMP Swansea and is not the practice in other prisons. I am concerned that there remains a risk that staff treating patients in prison may not have easy access to (and so overlook) this key information.
- 3. Cross agency guidance regarding release of high-risk prisoners with mental health difficulties at their sentence end date.** There are no provisions available nor any cross agency guidance in place for when a high-risk prisoner is released at sentence end date to ensure that there is adequate release planning and maximum support in the community.

- 4. West Midlands MAPPA** has a prison discharge coordinator role. It was clear from the evidence at the inquest that this role was not fully understood by other agencies and what information needed to be shared was not clear. The new policy drafted by BSMHT remained confused as to which cases were to fall within the responsibility of the prison discharge coordinator role. There remains a risk of further deaths as the role is not properly understood and information sharing is not effective.

## Response

G4S confines its response to the first concern identified relating to the management of release from prison and interagency working.

G4S has no power to take action regarding concerns 2, 3 and 4, and, therefore, is not in a position to assist HM Senior Coroner with regard to these concerns. Other interested persons to whom the Regulation 28 report has been addressed are better able to consider the concerns raised, take action and/or explain why no action is proposed.

In addition, G4S has no power to influence the management of release of prisoners from, and/or to ensure interagency working at, private prisons operated by other providers or HMPPS operated prisons.

Offender management in all prisons across England and Wales, including all privately operated prisons, is delivered pursuant to a HMPPS prescribed delivery model. Prisoners are case managed through their custodial sentence by a prison based Offender Management Unit (OMU) pursuant to the national Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model, which provides a framework to coordinate and set out the sequence for a prisoner's journey through custody to post-release. This model applies to all prisons in England and Wales.

Qualified probation officers and senior probation officers employed by the Probation Service/HMPPS are based at HMP & YOI Parc. All high-risk prisoners are managed by qualified Probation Service offender managers working at the prison.

HMPPS has responsibility for provision and operation of resettlement services. Such resettlement services at HMP & YOI Parc are commissioned by HMPPS from external providers who are based within the prison to facilitate resettlement services for prisoners approaching release from custody. G4S is not party to the procurement or placement of resettlement services within HMP & YOI Parc or the direct delivery of these services. G4S' focus is on ensuring alignment and integration with third party service providers to ensure effective interagency working.

Resettlement services have responsibility for providing resettlement support to prisoners, including coordinating referrals and signposting to services such as housing and DWP benefits.

Responsibility for case management of any prisoner under the OMiC model passes to the Probation Service Community Offender Manager when a prisoner reaches a point which is eight and a half months prior to their release date. This includes responsibility for managing the prisoner's release and coordinating liaison between relevant agencies involved and includes the sharing of information with all other relevant agencies and individuals working with the prisoner. The Community Offender Manager takes responsibility for coordinating the prisoner's resettlement support, addressing and escalating any concerns relating to risk, and undertaking any required pre-release risk assessments, including OASys, a risk assessment conducted by the Community Offender Manager at various stages of the prisoner's time in custody. Where a prisoner is recalled to custody their case management is the responsibility of the Probation Service Community Offender Manager with support from the prison based Prison Offender Manager.

Prior to release, the Community Offender Manager must review the OASys assessment and prepare a pre-release report/assessment of the prisoner using the OASys tool. This should place particular focus on resettlement needs and further actions required to safeguard against any concerns regarding potential risks of causing harm and/or of reoffending.

## **Further Action**

Prior to conclusion of the inquest touching the death of Mr Billington, G4S had the opportunity to participate in and consider the outcomes of the NICHE report commissioned by the NHS, and a MAPPA serious case review, two detailed investigations into the material incident. No recommendations were made relating to G4S in respect of the discharge from prison in either of the reports, however, G4S carefully noted the findings and carefully noted evidence provided at the inquest touching the death of Mr Billington.

Having considered the two investigation reports and having listened to the evidence, steps have been taken by G4S at HMP & YOI Parc to reinforce information sharing and communication surrounding the release of a prisoner from custody.

- Resettlement services drop-in sessions have been introduced and approved laptops have been received from HMPPS to roll out remote sessions under resettlement activities, to encourage engagement with resettlement services by prisoners approaching release and to provide opportunities to gather further information.
- Monthly strategy meetings at the prison show consistently high (c 90%) levels of prisoners released from custody are housed on the first night of their release, so that their whereabouts immediately post release is known to relevant community services.
- At HMP & YOI Parc, a member of the cashiers team issues a travel warrant for each prisoner shortly before they are released from custody. The cashier previously recorded on CMS, the prison's central electronic messaging system, the fact that a travel warrant had been issued. The cashier now records where the travel warrant has been issued to, and, in addition, sends an email to a new OMU email group, which includes healthcare admin and the Heads of Offender Management, to indicate that a travel warrant has been issued with details of where the travel warrant has been issued to. This email is automatically received by all offender managers within OMU. This information is then communicated to the Community Offender Manager and any other individuals/agencies involved with the prisoner.
- Whilst Community Offender Managers have responsibility for the coordination of release planning, notice was given by email to all offender managers within HMP & YOI Parc that they must notify the relevant Community Offender Manager when a prisoner is being released at sentence end date and will be of no fixed abode. When doing so, they must provide any information relating to a prisoner's intentions in terms of where they are going on the day of release. This will assist the Community Offender Manager to effectively manage the prisoner's release, and to coordinate and link in with other external agencies believed by the Community Offender Manager to be relevant to coordinate interagency working.

The HMPPS primary national electronic records system used in all prisons in England and Wales is DPS (formerly PNOMIS). Other agencies involved in OMU and resettlement utilise other records systems, including NDelius (the Probation Service), SystemOne/other electronic clinical records systems, and other records systems used by third party providers. G4S has no power to implement changes to streamline IT systems used by HMPPS, the NHS and/or other third party providers. Other interested persons may be better able to assist HM Senior Coroner in relation to this issue. G4S will, however, continue to streamline its own data recording, to ensure as much information as possible is shared through the primary national prisons IT system, DPS. G4S has very limited access to NDelius, but information on this system is regularly accessible to Probation Service

staff working at HMP & YOI Parc, and Probation Service staff within the community. Any issues around sharing information recorded on NDelius should be addressed to HMPPS.

We trust this information is of assistance and provides reassurance regarding management of release from custody and interagency working to the extent that G4S is able to take action.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clyde & Co". The script is cursive and fluid, with the ampersand being particularly stylized.

**Clyde & Co Claims LLP**