



HM Prison & Probation Service

Director General of Operations
HM Prison and Probation Service
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Email: [REDACTED]

Simon Connolly
Assistant Coroner
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20 September 2024

Dear Mr Connolly

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 22 July, addressed to [REDACTED], the Director General Chief Executive of HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). I am responding on behalf of HMPPS as Director General of Operations.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Irvine'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 raised a concern that there is no formal policy to identify whether a prisoner has collected their meal and suggested that a process or form should be put in place as a means of monitoring food intake.

As you know our policy (currently Prison Service Instruction 64/2011, shortly to be replaced with a new policy framework on prison safety in which this section remains unchanged) already notes the importance of identifying food and/or fluid refusals early, and explains that staff should monitor attendance at mealtimes and note when prisoners return meals uneaten. It mandates that information about food and/or fluid refusals be recorded, shared and remain accessible to all relevant staff and requires prison staff to work closely with healthcare staff to manage those refusing food and/or fluids, pointing to the detailed clinical guidance document issued by the Department of Health and Social Care. Food and/or fluid refusals are also reportable incidents in our incident management manual policy framework, and our national incident management unit frequently receives reports of such incidents from prisons across the estate.

I understand your concern to ensure that this policy is translated into practical action, but in view of the range of catering and food service arrangements across the prison estate I do not believe that the introduction of a single process or form would be operationally viable. I believe that a better way forward is to ask Governors to assure themselves that their local reporting processes

are operating effectively. I will ensure all Governors are written to so that this case is brought to their attention and to ask them to remind staff of their role in early identification of food and/or fluid refusals and to satisfy themselves that there are systems in place for recording information and sharing it with healthcare providers.

As always, we remain committed to prisoner safety as our key priority. Thank you again for bringing this matter of concern to our attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address it.

Yours sincerely,

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Director General of Operations