



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Probation
Service



Kent, Sussex & Surrey

By email only via Government Legal Department

30th January 2025

Nick ARMSTRONG KC

Assistant Coroner

HM Coroners Service

West Sussex, Brighton & Hove

Dear Sir,

Inquest Touching the Death of Lee Spencer Purkis

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report dated 1st August 2024, following the Inquest into the death of Lee Spencer Purkis. This response is issued on behalf of the Probation Service. I know that you will share a copy of this response with the family, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my condolences for their loss.

In your Report, you raised the following concern specifically in relation to the Probation Service -

That the evidence suggests that it is probation that should have the oversight and should be ensuring all involved in the administration of the Mental Health Treatment Requirement (MHTRs) are aware of it. I therefore consider that there is a risk associated with these circumstances, and that action should be taken, such as reminding or ensuring that probation officers keep an eye on MHTRs when they have them and ensure the other services do so too. There are not many of them; there probably should be more; but again, that means ensuring the ones that there are get used properly.

It is accepted that the Probation Practitioner has ultimate responsibility for oversight of a MHTR.

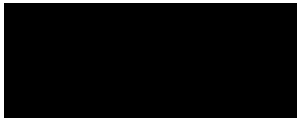
It has also been recognised by the Probation Service that secondary Care MHTRs are underused. NHS England and the Probation Service have created and are currently piloting Secondary Care MHTR "Proof of Concept Sites" in London (for women) and in

Gloucestershire and Staffordshire and are working with the national evaluators exploring pathways to increase the use of MHTRs. It is anticipated that this evaluation and the findings from the pilot sites will result in identifying a good practice model which can be used nationally to improve both assessment and practice.

More specifically in Kent we have begun collaborating with the Service Director of the Forensic and Specialist Directorate to explore current practice with Secondary Care MHTRs from pre-sentence stage through to delivery of the treatment requirement and the roles both Probation and Secondary Care play in the intervention. We aim to upskill Secondary Care Responsible Clinicians and Probation Court and Sentence Management staff to ensure we are identifying the right people at Court who may benefit from this Order and overseeing the case in a robust manner.

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

Yours faithfully,

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Head of Operations

Kent Surrey & Sussex Region