



A REVIEW INTO THE OPERATION OF CARE AND SUPERVISION UNITS IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SERVICE

A FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF
RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTATION

SEPTEMBER 2023

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The Education and Training Inspectorate
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A FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATION
IMPLEMENTATION

September 2023

CONTENTS

List of abbreviations	2
Chief Inspector's Foreword	3
Follow-Up Review	
Chapter 1 Introduction	5
Chapter 2 Progress against recommendations	9
Chapter 3 Conclusion	27

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Belfast Met	Belfast Metropolitan College
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CSU(s)	Care and Supervision Unit(s)
GP	General Practitioner
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
IT	Information Technology
MHT	Mental Health Team
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
NWRC	North West Regional College
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PICUs	Psychiatric Intensive Care Units to the abbreviations list
PIPES	Psychologically Informed Planned Environments
QNPMHS	Quality Network Prison Mental Health Services
RQIA	The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
SEHSCT	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SPAR Evo	Supporting People at Risk Evolution
SPPG	Strategic Planning and Performance Group (formerly the Health and Social Care Board)

CHIEF INSPECTOR'S FOREWORD

This Follow-Up Review demonstrates what can be achieved when leaders commit to implementing recommendations and improving services to achieve better outcomes.

The findings of the Care and Supervision Review Report were particularly challenging for the Northern Ireland Prison Service, however, the action taken in partnership with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, the Belfast Metropolitan College and North West Regional College to implement the Review Report recommendations is impressive.

The development and publication of a Care and Supervision Unit Operational Framework was delivered at pace. It provides clear messages about why monitoring segregation, as well as transparency and consistent governance arrangements are vital in discharging Human Rights obligations.

The implementation of an innovative technology solution to monitor time out of cell, prisoner engagement and purposeful activity was also driven forward by a dedicated project manager, supported by operational managers and staff. Like many Information Technology solutions, it is not just about collecting data but how the Northern Ireland Prison Service uses it to provide information that develops and further improves service delivery, as well as providing effective oversight of the operation of Care and Supervision Units that will drive most value from the investment in it.

The introduction of body scanners in March 2023 significantly increased the Care and Supervision Unit population with more detections of illicit substances that might otherwise have made their way into the prison. This created pressures for Care and Supervision Unit staff and illustrates the complexities of providing services to prisoners who experience a wide variety of issues, including those who still attempt to carry in drugs and other items knowing they will be scanned and sent to a Care and Supervision Unit. I hope, in time, the body scanners provide the necessary deterrent so prison and health care staff can concentrate their resources on those who need them most.

Of course, there is still work to be done and sustaining the significant progress made needs continued drive and commitment by everyone involved. Work is ongoing that will, hopefully, provide further improvements, particularly around information sharing and personality disorder service provision. There are still some individuals with very complex needs that continue to be managed in a Care and Supervision Unit and I remain concerned not only for them but also for the staff who look after them.

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I am looking forward to seeing the impact of further service development and improvement in future prison inspections.

I am grateful to CJI Inspectors Maureen Erne and Dr Roisin Devlin, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority and Education and Training Inspectorate Inspectors for completing this Follow-Up Review.

I am also grateful to the Northern Ireland Prison Service, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast Metropolitan College and North West Regional College staff who supported this Follow-Up Review, for the work they have accomplished to implement recommendations and for the services they provide every day to care and support some of the most challenging and vulnerable people in our prisons.



Jacqui Durkin

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice
in Northern Ireland

September 2023

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Northern Ireland**
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

In February 2022 Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) published its report of a *Review into the Operation of Care and Supervision Units in the Northern Ireland Prison Service (the Review)*¹. The Review was requested by the then Minister of Justice in November 2020 following significant concerns being raised with her about the operation of Care and Supervision Units (CSUs).

The Review was conducted jointly by CJI, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Education and Training Inspectorate.

The Review Report made three strategic and 11 operational recommendations. The recommendations were addressed to the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT), which delivers prison health care services, and the Belfast Metropolitan College (Belfast Met) which, in partnership with the North West Regional College (NWRC), is the lead service provider of learning and skills delivery across the Northern Ireland prison estate. The NIPS provided an action plan setting out how it would address the recommendations which incorporated the Belfast Met response for learning and skills. The SEHSCT provided an action plan to the RQIA. All the Review Report's recommendations were accepted by the relevant service provider.

When the report was published, CJI's Chief Inspector indicated her intention to maintain a focus on the issues identified in the report. The purpose of this Follow-Up Review is to report on the progress the organisations have made in implementing the Review Report's recommendations.

CHANGES SINCE THE REVIEW WAS CONDUCTED

Prison inspection reports

Fieldwork for the Review was conducted early in 2021 and since then two full unannounced prison inspections were conducted in May/June 2021 at Magilligan Prison² and in September/October 2022 at Maghaberry Prison³.

- 1 CJI, *Review into the operation of Care and Supervision Units in the NIPS, 1 February 2022* available at <http://www.cjini.org/TheInspections/Inspection-Reports/2022/Jan-Mar/A-Review-of-into-the-operation-of-Care-and-Supervi>.
- 2 CJI, *Report of an Unannounced Inspection of Magilligan Prison, 21 May-10 June 2021, published 28 February 2022* available at <http://cjini.org/getattachment/4ae6bd06-979d-4b1e-a724-c2ab6ee5ac09/report.aspx>
- 3 CJI, *Report of an Unannounced Inspection of Maghaberry Prison, 20 September-6 October 2022, published 16 June 2023* available at [An unannounced inspection of Maghaberry Prison 20 September – 6 October 2022 \(cjini.org\)](http://www.cjini.org/An-unannounced-inspection-of-Maghaberry-Prison-20-September-6-October-2022)

Prison inspections included inspection of segregation against the 'Safety' healthy prison test.⁴

Improvements in the operation of CSUs were found during both unannounced inspections, however, these inspections did not formally assess progress against the Review Report recommendations.

RQIA Review of Services for Vulnerable Persons Detained in Northern Ireland Prisons

In October 2021, the RQIA published a report of a *Review of Services for Vulnerable Persons Detained in Northern Ireland Prisons*⁵ (*Vulnerable Persons Review*). This Review was commissioned by the then Ministers of Justice and Health following the deaths of five prisoners in the 12-month period preceding November 2016. A number of findings related to the operation of CSUs including:

- a lack of specialist support for people with personality disorder and for those with specific vulnerabilities such as learning disability and autism;
- some acutely mentally unwell people were being looked after within the CSUs rather than receiving appropriate inpatient treatment; and
- waiting times for transfer to mental health beds were unacceptably long.

The report made one recommendation directly related to the operation of CSUs:

Recommendation 14

Commissioners (currently the Health and Social Care Board) and Providers (the SEHSCT) should develop an algorithm to assess the suitability of individuals placed in the CSU as the result of an operational decision taken by the NIPS. The algorithm should be applied by a doctor or registered nurse within two hours of placement in the CSU. Where it is identified that a prisoner is mentally unwell, they should be assessed by the mental health team; appropriate arrangements should be made for the immediate transfer of those who are severely mentally unwell to an acute mental health bed within HSC [Health and Social Care]. For those who are mentally unwell but do not require an acute mental health bed, an appropriate care plan should be formulated and implemented by the SEHSCT.

Other recommendations related to the arrangements to expedite the transfer of prisoners who are acutely unwell and required admission to appropriate hospital services (Recommendation 15), and that work should be conducted to plan, commission and implement a therapeutic approach to personality disorder (Recommendation 11).

4 *Prison inspection reports carry a summary of the conditions and treatment of prisoners based on the four tests of a healthy prison that were first introduced in His (formerly Her) Majesty's Inspectorate of Prison's thematic review Suicide is Everyone's Concern, published in 1999. The tests are: safety, respect, purposeful activity and rehabilitation and release planning. Expectations set out the criteria for assessing the treatment and conditions in prisons are available at <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprison/our-expectations/prison-expectations>*

5 *RQIA, Review of Services for Vulnerable Persons Detained in Northern Ireland Prisons, October 2021 available at <https://www.rqia.org.uk/RQIA/files/95/955cfa4a-5199-4be7-9f1a-801e1369ce84.pdf>*

Following publication of the *Vulnerable Persons Review* Report, Task and Finish groups were established by the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), Department of Health. The RQIA received regular updates on progress made with the recommendations. An algorithm has been developed and was now operational; a new Transfer Direction Order process had been drafted and was pending consultation with the relevant stakeholders; and a paper had been completed recommending the development of a business case for in prison services for those with personality disorder.

Operational context

The original review of CSUs was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic (early 2021) at a time when the NIPS had adopted a number of restrictive practices in response to the pandemic. While those measures were no longer in place during this Follow-Up Review, work to progress the CJI Review Report recommendations had taken place against a challenging operational environment which included: an increased prisoner population, staffing shortages, court backlogs, pressures on funding and the resumption of normal prison regimes including access to purposeful activity, pre-release testing schemes and the return of face-to-face visits. Aspects of the impact of these factors was reflected in unannounced prison inspections of Maghaberry and Magilligan Prisons which found that the operation of Prisoner Development Units and delivery of purposeful activity in particular had been adversely impacted. The mental health needs of those in prison have been well documented with over 30% of individuals in custody reported as having mental health issues (March 2023)⁶. Research suggested a significant adverse impact on the mental health and well-being of those who lived and worked in prisons as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction of body scanners

On 1 March 2023 the NIPS announced the phased introduction of X-Ray body scanners. The scanners show internally concealed prohibited and unauthorised articles. The CJI 2019 *Safety of Prisoners* Inspection report⁷ recommended that the NIPS consider the introduction of body scanners in Northern Ireland. Scanners could help ensure that those who were not concealing a prohibited substance would not spend prolonged periods in segregation. The scanners went live at Maghaberry Prison during the fieldwork for this Review and were scheduled to be introduced to Magilligan Prison and Hydebank Wood Secure College (for males only).

Delivery of learning and skills

A revised Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Belfast Met and the NIPS had been in place from 1 April 2021 and was effective up to 31 March 2026. Through its implementation, Belfast Met was the lead partner for the provision of learning and skills across all of the prison sites with the NWRC providing delivery at Magilligan Prison, under agreed partnership arrangements with Belfast Met. Training programmes were accredited/

6 NIPS, *Prison Service Director General comments on Ombudsman Report, 14 March 2023* available at [Prison Service Director General comments on Ombudsman Report | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

7 CJI, *The Safety of Prisoners held by the Northern Ireland Prison Service, November 2019* available at <http://www.cjini.org/getattachment/3a70dd41-7bb3-430d-9901-3ed7a191cf94/report.aspx>

recognised and aligned to targets; the SLA was monitored through a range of governance mechanisms, including by the SLA Strategic Management Board.

The Follow-Up Review

A progress update against the recommendations was provided by the NIPS, the SEHSCT and Belfast Met to the joint inspection team along with supporting documentation and data. CJI met with key stakeholders including: the Chairs of the Independent Monitoring Boards, Alcohol and Drugs: Empowering People Through Therapy (AD:EPT who provided a treatment service for adults), Chaplains, Prison Fellowship, NIACRO, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The NIPS provided briefings with key workstream leads.

Inspectors conducted fieldwork at each prison over the course of one week at the end February/early March 2023. Inspectors visited each CSU and met with managers and staff involved in operating or providing services to the CSU, made observations and sampled records. Inspectors also met with people who were currently accommodated in the CSUs and others who had had recent experience of segregation. The information gathered during the Follow-Up Review was assessed and judgments were made of the progress made against each of the recommendations.

At the time the fieldwork for the Follow-Up Review was conducted, 16 individuals were being held on Rule 32⁸ in CSUs, which was less than one per cent of the prisoner population. Nine people were placed on Rule 32 in relation to disciplinary matters and five because they were suspected of concealing unauthorised articles. In the three-month period prior to fieldwork commencing, the average period individuals were held in CSUs was eight days. This excluded a very small number of people who had been accommodated in CSUs for very long periods.

⁸ *Prison Rule 32 provides for the restriction of a prisoner's association where it is necessary for the maintenance of good order or discipline, or to ensure the safety of officers, prisoners or any other person or in his own interests that the association permitted to a prisoner should be restricted, either generally or for particular purposes. A prisoner may also be segregated pending adjudication (Prison Rule 35(4)) or where they are subject to a Governor's award (Prison Rules 39 and 95).*

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION 1

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should develop a vision, strategy and action plan for the effective operation of Care and Supervision Units within nine months of publication of this report and incorporate the following:

- a framework for the operation of Care and Supervision Units which reflects minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners held in segregation including guidance on the interpretation of 'meaningful human contact';
- a plan for the development of Care and Supervision Unit accommodation and facilities to support effective delivery and improved outcomes for prisoners modelled on the design principles underpinning the Care and Supervision Unit at Hydebank and of Davis House;
- in collaboration with the Department of Justice, a review of Rule 32 policy, guidance and audit of practice, care and reintegration planning;
- effective arrangements for governance, audit and oversight of those held in Care and Supervision Units including the development of relevant data capture methods and management information to meet Northern Ireland Prison Service and Department of Justice assurance needs; and
- processes to select, train and support staff and managers working in Care and Supervision Units including clinical supervision.

Status: Partially achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Overall Partially achieved)

- *The CSU framework had been delivered (Achieved).*
- *Business cases, plans and funding for accommodation/yard works at Maghaberry/ Repurposing of space within Maghaberry CSU underway and delivery of new female CSU at Hydebank Wood completed (Partially achieved).*
- *A review of Rule 32 policy had been conducted and a revised policy had been developed and was to be approved in March 2023 (Achieved).*
- *A governance and assurance framework had been approved and implemented; two of four phases of an IT development plan had been implemented and realistic plans and funding were in place to implement the remaining two phases by June 2023 (Achieved).*
- *A staff development Learning Needs Analysis and matrix delivered, with significant investment in CSU staff development provided and will be ongoing (Partially achieved).*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for Strategic recommendation 1.*

Inspectors' assessment

Significant and impressive progress had been made across the different strands of work required to implement this Strategic Recommendation. The NIPS had worked at pace to take action arising from this recommendation and plans for delivery were largely on track. A framework for the operation of CSUs had been developed and published. There was better corporate and operational oversight of the use of segregation. Robust and funded plans were in place to develop and improve living conditions, access to facilities and develop innovative Information Technology (IT) systems to support the management of people in CSUs and improve governance. The Rule 32 policy had been reviewed. An analysis had been conducted of CSU staff learning and development needs and a number of training courses had commenced. It would take time before new systems could be embedded and performance measures as set out in the operational framework to be introduced.

CSU Operational Framework

The NIPS published an *Operational Framework*⁹ for CSUs in December 2022. It defined the role of CSUs, the pathways for entering and exiting CSU, set out the values and principles against which they operated and established a governance and oversight framework. Supporting operating procedures were to be developed.

Discussions with staff and leaders in the course of the on-site fieldwork indicated that the vision and values underpinning the operation of CSUs were better understood.

Importantly, the framework established NIPS performance measures for the operation of CSUs. It will take time before meaningful outcomes for prisoners can be assessed, however, when fieldwork for this Follow-Up Review was conducted Inspectors could see a reduction in the use of Rule 32, the average stays in CSUs had decreased and there was a sharp focus on the necessity of restricting association and the length of time periods of segregation should last.

While CJI and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission were invited to comment on the draft operational framework, some key stakeholder organisations, for example, the SEHSCT and Independent Monitoring Boards had not been involved in its development or did not know of its existence. The NIPS was planning to raise awareness of the framework with stakeholders.

Accommodation

Work to develop CSU accommodation was ongoing. A new, separate CSU for female prisoners had opened in September 2022 and major redevelopment plans for the CSU at Maghaberry Prison had been drawn up and were to be delivered in three phases. Work to develop multi-purpose spaces to promote engagement had commenced. Both reflected the design principles which had been used in the development of the male CSU at Hydebank Wood. Funding had been committed for subsequent phases of the development work at Maghaberry Prison.

⁹ NIPS, *CSU Operational Framework, November 2022* available at [CSU Operational Framework - Version 2.0 November 2022](#)
[| Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Pending the redevelopment of Maghaberry Prison's CSU, some interim improvements had been made to the environment including the addition of an interview room, video link visits facility, upgrade of gym equipment, the two dry cells¹⁰ had been converted to drug recovery cells¹¹ and the living accommodation had been painted.

All CSU environments were found to be clean and well-maintained. There was a significant improvement at Maghaberry Prison in comparison to the initial review.

Rule 32 policy review

A review of Prison Rule 32¹² policy and operational procedures had been conducted and the updated policy and procedures document was issued in June 2023. The NIPS was satisfied that any Governor within NIPS Headquarters could properly take decisions to extend the restriction of association beyond 72 hours. Monthly Rule 32 standardisation meetings at Headquarters had recently commenced and plans were being developed to dip sample cases to provide assurance to senior leaders. The revised policy included a focus on diversion, exit planning and oversight arrangements.

The policy had been developed in tandem with plans to develop IT functionality on the prison information management system to support the operation of Rule 32 which had gone live.

Rule 32 paperwork at each suite was sampled during fieldwork and varied in terms of quality.

Given the stage of this work at the time of the Follow-Up Review, it was not possible to assess the impact of the changes to the policy and operational procedures or of the standardisation meetings.

Governance and assurance framework

There had been notable improvements in corporate and operational oversight of the operation of CSUs. The *CSU Operational Framework* document set out the governance and assurance mechanisms which included standardisation meetings and validation checks.

The NIPS Director of Operations chaired a quarterly Strategic Custody Steering Group which included oversight of the work being taken forward in response to the Review report recommendations and operational delivery. Management information reports were being refined.

10 *The NIPS defined a dry cell as a bare unfurnished cell without normal furniture, fittings, bedding or clothing used to aid the retrieval of any unauthorised or prohibited articles concealed internally by a prisoner.*

11 *The NIPS defined a drug recovery cell as a cell equipped to aid the retrieval of any unauthorised or prohibited articles concealed internally by a prisoner.*

12 *Prison Rule 32 provides for the restriction of a prisoner's association where it is necessary for the maintenance of good order or discipline, or to ensure the safety of officers, prisoners or any other person or in his own interests that the association permitted to a prisoner should be restricted, either generally or for particular purposes. A prisoner may also be segregated pending adjudication (Prison Rule 35(4)) or where they are subject to a Governor's award (Prison Rules 39 and 95).*

Leaders at each prison actively oversaw that the use of segregation was necessary and proportionate. Review and oversight arrangements had been strengthened at each prison – most notably at Maghaberry Prison where the senior management team now chaired Rule 32 case conferences and a weekly review meeting chaired by the Functional Head took place. In discussions with CSU staff they described how Human Rights principles underpinning the operation of CSUs such as awareness of the need for meaningful human contact, the need for people to be held in CSU only for as long as necessary and to safeguard against people being held in solitary confinement were evident.

Most prisoners Inspectors spoke to reported that they understood the reasons for their association being restricted and that they were aware of review dates and what was expected from them in order to be able to progress back to normal accommodation.

The NIPS was in the process of developing end to end IT functionality to support processes associated with segregation including the use of Rule 32 and adjudications. Earlier phases had been introduced (see assessment of Operational recommendation 8). Benefits identified by the NIPS included improved efficiency of key business processes, maximised prisoner access to engagement and the CSU regime and improved governance. The NIPS was working to assess the benefits of the new system within 12 months of the launch of each phase. The early out-workings of the first two Phases were encouraging.

Staff selection, training and support

There had been no change to the selection process for CSU staff. Governors had ring-fenced staffing for CSUs to maintain a regular staffing group and this was now largely being achieved. Inspectors observed good staff and prisoner relationships and a person-centred approach underpinned engagement. Leadership of CSUs was generally strong; this was observed by Inspectors and supported by stakeholders.

A draft job description for Prison Officers working in CSUs was in place but had not yet been finalised. It did not reflect the values, principles and underpinning Human Rights ethos set out in the *CSU Operational Framework*.

A Learning Needs Analysis was completed in March 2022. This identified a range of training and development opportunities for staff working in CSUs including courses in Motivational Interviewing, Human Rights and Psychological First Aid. Delivery commenced early in 2023 and course evaluations, where available, and feedback from staff Inspectors spoke to was that the training was relevant. CSU staff identified aspects of the training which they could apply to their roles. For example, how best to react to certain behaviours, the use of body language cues to make people feel more comfortable and important information that should be recorded about interactions with or observations of prisoners. A positive aspect of the training was the opportunity to attend courses alongside staff from other CSUs. A matrix was being maintained of course completions. Staff were being released to attend training.

Staff at Maghaberry Prison had taken part in a group supervision session which they reported was particularly good. This had been organised in recognition of the impact of working with a small number of particularly complex people in their care over a sustained period. A second meeting was planned and more could be scheduled as a need was identified. This was a very good initiative to support staff wellbeing and should be sustained and extended across all CSUs. The Police Reform and Rehabilitation Trust had delivered Resilience training which staff had found particularly helpful in terms of staff care.

A training plan was in place and three training courses were in the process of being delivered. There was evidence the training delivered to date had a beneficial impact. The language and conversations we heard and reported by stakeholders were much more person-centred and focussed on the necessary and proportionate restriction of association. Although staff advised they now felt better supported and equipped to work in CSUs, they did identify additional training needs such as personality disorder awareness training. It was important that the outcomes from the training were monitored and that the programme continued to be reviewed to be responsive to the needs of staff and prisoners held in CSUs.

Overall, this strategic recommendation had been **partially achieved**.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION 2

The Northern Ireland Prison Service in partnership with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, the Health and Social Care Board and the Department of Health, should urgently review current arrangements to ensure that prisoners suffering from severe mental disorders (including personality disorders, dementia and intellectual disabilities) have equal access to care and treatment in a secure in-patient mental health or learning disability hospital.

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust should engage with the commissioners to ensure that future planning for Mental Health provision across Northern Ireland incorporates the needs of the prisoner population, to include agreed pathways for timely access to appropriate hospital beds for those clinically requiring this when experiencing a mental health crisis in a prison setting. The implementation of this recommendation including any actions arising should be overseen by relevant policy leads in the Departments of Health and Justice for consideration by Ministers.

Status: Partially achieved.

Organisational response

SEHSCT update

- *Issues with over-occupancy of acute psychiatric beds has been raised with the Department of Health/Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), and this is a well-established regional issue. There is a Regional Mental Health Workshop set for Friday 3 March, with the Director of Adult Services in attendance.*
- *Task and Finish group co-chaired by the SPPG and the SEHSCT following the RQIA Review of Services for Vulnerable Patients, are currently working together to look at the pathway for transfer directional order from Prison to acute inpatient setting. An updated draft process is currently being considered by the group.*

NIPS update – February 2023 (Not achieved)

- *The Minister for Justice did not endorse that this recommendation was for the NIPS. The NIPS has no remit to direct the Department of Health, SPPG or the Trust in delivery of their responsibility for the provision of health care to prisoners in Northern Ireland. The NIPS continues to be placed in the position of having to manage people with Personality Disorder and extreme behavioral issues in the CSU in the absence of any solution from Health colleagues. However, the NIPS has supported health colleagues in delivering their responsibilities by being an active partner in the six Task and Finish groups under the RQIA Review of Vulnerable People Detained in Northern Ireland Prisons, contributing to the draft of a range of papers, review and comment on documentation; and active participation in discussion.*

Inspectors' assessment

Inspectors explained at draft report and report publication stages that they were aware of the pressures on acute mental health beds. Acknowledging that the NIPS is not a health care provider, the first part of this recommendation was for a review in partnership to enable the NIPS to fully convey their service challenges, not that they become an alternative health care service provider. The second part regarding provision was clearly for the SEHSCT to lead.

At the time of this Follow-Up Review, regionally significant pressures on all Mental Health Services persisted with Mental Health hospitals frequently over occupied and patients waiting admission. This had resulted in Health and Social Care Trusts implementing contingency measures to increase ward capacity. The regional bed management protocol was used on a daily basis. Patients in prisons and those in the community waiting on admission to a Mental Health hospital were discussed at the weekly Regional Bed Management meeting with the SPPG, which the Healthcare in Prison Mental Health Lead/ Designated Nominee attended. Decision making to admit was based on risk to the patient.

Patients transferring from prisons to a Mental Health hospital required a secure environment. There were 12 male and four/five female admission beds in Northern Ireland's Regional Medium Secure hospital. Patients from prisons could also access Psychiatric Intensive Care Units (PICUs) in acute Mental Health hospitals.

The availability of PICUs as an option for prisoner admission had improved the length of time patients from prisons had to wait on a transfer to hospital. However, some prisoners continued to wait too long for this transfer to take place.

From January 2022-23, 20 patients had transferred to a Mental Health hospital with the majority of patient transfers from Maghaberry Prison. Sixteen patients transferred from Maghaberry Prison; three of them had transferred directly from the CSU. No patients were transferred from Magilligan Prison and of the four patients transferred from Hydebank Wood (three females and one male), none had transferred from a CSU.

A small number of prisoners were detained and admitted to hospital shortly after their release. Inspectors found that these patients had been in a CSU prior to their release from prison.

During fieldwork for this Follow-Up Review, 50% of people in CSUs had complex Mental Health needs. The NIPS and the SEHSCT staff were doing their best to manage and support these individuals in an environment which was not conducive to the promotion of their wellbeing and recovery. None of these patients were waiting on a transfer to a Mental Health hospital. They were being supported by the Mental Health Team (MHT), psychology, Engagement Lead, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, General Practitioner (GP) and NIPS staff. The CSU algorithm which is essentially a decision making tool, gave clear direction on the steps to follow in relation to patient care while in the CSU.

The number of people with personality disorder in prison is significant with some held in a CSU. These patients present with some of the most challenging and complex behaviours. It is projected that this number will increase in the coming years and therefore it remains imperative for this group of people to have access to appropriate care pathways and treatment plans.

Both Mental Health and psychology staff were providing therapeutic care, however this did not fully address the needs of prisoners with a diagnosed personality disorder. A specialist personality disorder service remained unavailable to prisoners. This was identified as a key concern in the most recent inspection report of Maghaberry Prison.¹³

Although segregation was not authorised on the basis of mental ill-health, CSU staff informed us that acutely psychotic men were sometimes accommodated in the CSU and that in recent months there had been several transfers into the Regional Medium Secure hospital directly from the CSU. CSU staff were very relational in their approach and demonstrated a person-centred and compassionate attitude to the prisoners they were looking after as well as a good understanding of the basic psychology underpinning their presentation. They acknowledged the limitations of working with mentally unwell men in the CSU environment but felt that because of the risks the men presented behaviourally, it was the only setting in which they could be safely managed within the prison.

¹³ *CJI, Report of an Unannounced Inspection of Maghaberry Prison, 20 September – 6 October 2022, June 2023*, available at [An unannounced inspection of Maghaberry Prison 20 September – 6 October 2022 \(cjini.org\)](https://www.cjini.org)

Relationships between operational and health care staff were observed to be good and there was a good level of support provided by the MHT to CSU staff. CSU staff highlighted their frustrations at times about information sharing in respect to prisoner's mental health needs. Inspectors were informed by the SEHSCT that clinical information could not be shared without consent due to patient confidentiality. It was important that appropriate information, with the patient's consent, was shared with prison staff to support them to manage the needs of people in their care. Inspectors would encourage the NIPS and the SEHSCT to develop and agree a communication strategy to enhance the care of patients in prisons. Inspectors will return to this issue to monitor progress at future prison inspections.

Some CSU staff indicated that, ideally, they would like a separate facility within which to manage the more vulnerable prisoners who came into their care, either a separate CSU or a 'halfway house' – an interim unit which supported men while they were awaiting transfer to hospital. In the case of both these options they envisioned a much more joined up way of working alongside health care colleagues. Other CSU staff did not see the need for a separate facility.

None of the NIPS staff working in the CSU had received any training to support them with the management of personality disorder, such as Knowledge and Understanding Framework. As noted under staff training, it was important that the programme continued to be reviewed for it to be responsive to the needs of staff and prisoners held in CSUs.

They recognised that this was a significant issue for them within the prison. All the NIPS staff spoken to in the CSU were extremely impressive in the way they were looking after the prisoners and in the direct interactions observed.

Prisoners, who were spoken to by Inspectors were, on the whole, positive about the service they were receiving from both primary and mental health care. Some issues regarding safeguarding concerns were raised by prisoners and these were addressed both during and immediately following the inspection. The response and approach to safeguarding concerns was identified as a priority concern during the 2022 Maghaberry Prison inspection.¹⁴

There are no models available in the NIPS similar to what is available in England under the Offender Personality Disorder Pathway programme such as Psychologically Informed Planned Environments (PIPES) although their development was being considered in response to Recommendation 11 of the Vulnerable Persons Review or initiatives such as an Enhanced Support Service. This model supports a small multi-disciplinary staff team and the patient to address the issue of violent and disruptive behaviour such as verbal and physical aggression, self-harm, suicidality or harm to environment.

¹⁴ *CJI, Report of an Unannounced Inspection of Maghaberry Prison, 20 September – 6 October 2022, June 2023* available at [An unannounced inspection of Maghaberry Prison 20 September – 6 October 2022 \(cjini.org\)](https://www.cjini.org)

There is evidence that indicates this service model has been successful and will be made available in more prisons in England. The service is jointly commissioned and managed by prison and health. This model would enhance the response to complex prisoners who are likely to meet the clinical threshold for a diagnosis of personality disorder.

The levels of acute illness and the number of men needing mental health support, lack of appropriate hospital capacity and challenges with accessing specialist psychiatric and psychology services means that operational and clinical staff are having to manage acutely disturbed men in an inappropriate physical environment without sufficient clinical support and oversight. This is inevitably having a detrimental impact on the men being managed within the system and the staff responsible for caring for them.

Inspectors noted the work being progressed from the various Task and Finish Groups but it is the Inspectors' view that work to commission additional resource to meet this need both within prison and acute psychiatric provision within community and specify the service needed to be accelerated. This needed to include meaningful input from clinical and operational staff working in the prison and from the prisoners themselves. Unless these issues are prioritised, severely mentally unwell men are going to continue to be looked after in the CSU environment which has a risk to the patient, staff managing their care and to the wider prison and the SEHSCT.

Overall, this strategic recommendation had been **partially achieved**.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION 3

The Northern Ireland Prison Service, in partnership with Belfast Metropolitan College, within six months of the publication of this report, should ensure that men and women who are held in Care and Supervision Units have equitable access to purposeful activity including learning and skills, library services and physical activity, and that engagement in these activities is proactively encouraged and facilitated.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Achieved)

- *Timetables providing full and equitable access to purposeful activity are operating, customised to the needs of each establishment.*
- *Recording mechanisms are also in place to monitor prisoner engagement.*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for this strategic recommendation.*

Inspectors' assessment

The NIPS, in partnership with Belfast Met as the lead provider and in partnership with NWRC, have ensured that men and women who are held in the CSU had access to purposeful activity including learning and skills, library services and physical activity.

Each of the prisons had put in place timetables for managing delivery of purposeful activity in the CSU. A member of the learning and skills staff on each site engaged proactively with those in the CSU once a week as a minimum to encourage participation in purposeful activity. This interaction had been impactful, with a small number of examples of individuals engaging in learning and skills for the first time who had not engaged previously.

For those who were already enrolled on learning and skills courses, most of the prisoners Inspectors met with reported they were provided with distraction packs and/or course-related materials while in the CSU, such as theory for workshop/vocational training. This allowed for continued engagement by those prisoners already enrolled on a course(s).

There were now prisoner guidance/information leaflets in each prison outlining the range of activities available to those in the CSUs; however this leaflet was not always provided directly to prisoners at Magilligan Prison.

Access to learning and skills, library services and physical activity while in a CSU was necessarily informed by risk assessments.

This strategic recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 1

The Northern Ireland Prison Service and South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust should ensure that mental health teams along with primary health care are involved in the assessment of all prisoners physical and mental health following their placement in a CSU. This should be implemented within six months of the publication of this report.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

SE[HSC]T update – February 2023 (Achieved)

- SE[HSC]T have in partnership with the NIPS, and via the RQIA Review of Services for Vulnerable Prisoner Task and Finish group, developed an algorithm making clear the process for Health care Assessment following placement of patient in the CSU. This includes Physical and Mental health assessment.
- The Health care in Prison CSU process, of which the algorithm is an appendix, has been updated to reflect the MHT responsibilities in respect of review and assessing patients in the CSU.

Inspectors' assessment

A Process for the Care of Persons held within the CSU was published in January 2023. The process included a CSU algorithm, which gave clear direction on the steps to follow on transfer of the prisoner to a CSU.

Prisoners reviewed by Inspectors had all received an assessment within two hours of transfer to the CSU by the primary health care team. If the prisoner was known to the MHT, they were informed of their transfer. Prisoners who were not known to the MHT, or who presented with concerns in relation to their mental health were referred to the MHT. A Supporting People At Risk Evolution (SPAR Evo)¹⁵ was initiated if a prisoner presented at risk of self-harm or suicide.

Prisoners in a CSU received a daily consultation assessment, this assessment was initiated in January 2023. The assessment provided staff with key indicators to assist with determining if a prisoners' mental health was deteriorating.

The MHT staff carried a case load of approximately 150 patients in total at the time of the Follow-Up Review, which accounted for 14% of the prison population. Patients known to the team presented with needs spanning the spectrum of the mental health stepped care pathway, and with heightened degrees of complexity. MHT staff were also observed attending prisoner review meetings with the NIPS staff, providing crisis intervention, and working alongside the NIPS in supporting a patient who was mentally unwell.

A Task and Finish group under the Vulnerable Persons Review Delivery Plan is currently working on a demand and capacity exercise based on current commissioning versus need. The SEHSCT also undertake assessment by the Royal College of Psychiatrists benchmarking service against the standards as set out in the Quality Network Standards for Prison Mental Health Services (QNPMHS), Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2021.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 2

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should publish its Care and Supervision Unit policy and guidance on its website. This should be completed within three months of the publication of this report.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023

- *The CSU Framework has been published internally and externally.*
- *Supporting CSU policy will be published once approved and where appropriate.*

Inspectors' assessment

The NIPS published the CSU Operational Framework on its website on 5 December 2022 and planned to publish future CSU policy.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

¹⁵ SPAR Evo is the joint NIPS and SEHSCT operating procedures to support those at risk of suicide and self-harm in custody.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 3

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should ensure that sluice rooms are clean, free of clutter and have sufficient storage capacity and facilities to manage all relevant equipment. All staff should be made aware of the clear function of the sluice and their responsibilities in managing the room effectively. Governance arrangements should be implemented to assure staff practices.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (No longer applicable)

- *Sluice rooms are no longer in use within any CSU.*

Inspectors' assessment

The sluice room at Maghaberry Prison was no longer in use and had been converted to normal cellular accommodation. Chemical toilets rather than chamber pots were being used in all drug recovery cells across the prison estate. Storage facilities were satisfactory.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 4

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should provide and use appropriate rooms for those in Care and Supervision Units to enable education and association. This should be completed within 12 months of the publication of this report.

Status: Partially achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Partially achieved)

- *A business case and realistic plan is in place to deliver against this recommendation, with funding in place to deliver it.*
- *Design plans have been agreed and work on site to repurpose existing space within the CSU at Maghaberry.*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for Strategic Recommendation 1.*

Inspectors' assessment

Based on an accommodation plan, there was planned and continued work on-site to repurpose existing space within CSUs; this work was underway at Maghaberry Prison. This had involved Task and Finish group members from each prison being asked to prepare a specification of minor works for their CSU, outlining how improvements would benefit those committed to a CSU.

In the interim, the NIPS had provided the use of appropriate rooms for those in a CSU to enable education and association. Association rooms and interview rooms were available at Hydebank Wood Secure College and Ash House Women's Prison. When appropriate, the interview rooms in the CSU at Magilligan and Maghaberry Prisons were used to facilitate engagement with learning and skills, such as to enable the completion of initial assessments.

As well as access to the libraries on CSUs, there were regular opportunities to visit the main libraries. Across the prisons, there was improved gym access.

The data provided indicated that there had been greater utilisation of the therapy garden which is part of the CSU at Magilligan Prison. Continued and increased access to this excellent resource would be beneficial to prisoners.

This operational recommendation had been **partially achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 5

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should conduct remedial work to improve the current exercise yards at Maghaberry Prison. This should be completed within six months of the publication of this report.

Status: Not achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Partially achieved)

- A business case and realistic plan in place to deliver against this recommendation, with funding in place to deliver it.
- Update linked to an associated action plan for Strategic Recommendation 1.

Inspectors' assessment

Phase 2 of the accommodation redevelopment plans at Maghaberry Prison included provision for improved outdoor spaces. The plans had been approved and funding was in place. Due to funding constraints, and with plans in place to upgrade the outdoor space, the NIPS had decided not to conduct remedial work to the existing exercise yards.

Phase 1 of the works had commenced and the upgrade of the exercise yards was to commence once this work was completed (estimated to be in July 2023). Access to the internal gym had improved and new equipment had been provided. There was now also the opportunity, subject to risk assessment, for men to use the prison's main gymnasium. Although remedial works had not been conducted, the NIPS had plans in place to upgrade outdoor spaces and access to internal and external gym facilities was being provided.

This operational recommendation had **not been achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 6

The Northern Ireland Prison Service in partnership with Belfast Metropolitan College and North West Regional College service providers, should immediately ensure that learning and skills providers are notified when men and women are transferred to the Care and Supervision Units.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Achieved)

- *Learning and Skills are now issued an automatic notification via the prison information management system on completion of a CSU management plan which is completed as part of the CSU arrival procedure.*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for this recommendation.*

Inspectors' assessment

When men and women were transferred into and out of a CSU, the NIPS in partnership with Belfast Met and the NWRC had introduced an automated notification on the prison information management system to ensure that learning and skills providers were notified.

Local arrangements were in place in each prison to act upon the notification.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 7

The Northern Ireland Prison Service in partnership with Belfast Metropolitan College and North West Regional College service providers should develop a common and effective recording system for all prisons to share information on Individual Learning Plans and Personal Development Plans to enable all prisoners, including those in the Care and Supervision Unit, to continue and progress their learning. This should be completed within six months of the publication of this report.

Status: Not achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Partially achieved)

- *A revised process had been agreed and documented.*
- *Full implementation has been delayed due to the need for improved recording of salient information on PRISM [prison information and records system] by Belfast Met and resource pressures in PDUs [Prisoner Development Units], however this is being addressed.*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for this recommendation.*

Inspectors' assessment

Across the prisons, work was progressed to address this crucial operational recommendation to enable all prisoners, including those in the CSU, to continue and progress their learning, though it was still at an early stage.

Within and across the prisons, a review was required of the consistency of approach to and the quality of what was captured in Individual Learning Plans¹⁶ (ILPs) by the Belfast Met and the NWRC staff for the various courses/qualifications. In the ILPs sampled by Inspectors, there was too great a variation in the baseline information recorded. For the benefit of the prisoners, there needed to be demonstrable evidence of the use of relevant information captured in inmate notes from committal and/or labour allocation.

Discussions with key staff clearly indicated that there was rich information being captured elsewhere that was not feeding into the documentation for the benefit of the prisoner; for example, where a learner's work history linked to a course preference. Additionally, consideration needed to be given to what was recorded in updates and summative comments.

Key learning and skills personnel from the Belfast Met, the NWRC and the NIPS, along with Prisoner Development Unit staff needed to establish a clear and shared understanding about the purpose and function of the ILP and the Personal Development Plan (PDP).¹⁷ Continued consideration was required of what best to capture and share effectively on the prison's information management system. The ILP and the PDP should be in a consistent format that can follow the prisoner through their time in custody if they move prisons.

This operational recommendation **had not been achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 8

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should immediately start to develop and implement an effective technical solution to record access to basic needs, time out of cell and purposeful activity targets throughout a prisoner's time in a Care and Supervision Unit to provide a complete and instant overview for staff and others, effective audit and external scrutiny.

Status: Achieved.

16 An ILP is an individual learning plan for the learner, created with the tutor/the training provider. It should have a clear baseline of the individual's prior achievements, to include previous qualifications, work experience, interests and goals. The ILP should include targets and a record of progress to encourage the learner to work hard towards achieving the goals set out in the plan.

17 A PDP is a document produced by prison staff which includes an assessment of needs, risk and strengths of the individual with the actions, services and interventions which are identified to address them. It will record and report on actions taken to support the individual address and reduce both the risk of harm and likelihood of further offending; and prepare that prisoner for their return to the community. The PDP will also identify which person or organisation is responsible for undertaking particular tasks. Importantly, it places a clear responsibility upon the prisoner that they are an active participant in the process and not a passive recipient of services.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Achieved)

- *The NIPS implemented a new and innovative IT solution which meets all of the elements of this recommendation.*
- *Update linked to an associated action plan for this recommendation.*

Inspectors' assessment

An impressive IT solution had been introduced to record time out of cell, engagement with prisoners in the CSU and purposeful activity. Although the system continued to be refined and reporting was evolving, Inspectors were assured that a robust mechanism was in place to evidence time out of cell and engagement in purposeful activity. This was a useful oversight tool which could prompt action to safeguard prisoners against them being held in conditions which amounted to solitary confinement.

An overview screen on the prison information management system provided accessible real time information on each occupant of the CSU. This flagged people who had not left their cell or had little engagement with others providing an opportunity for Prison Officers to proactively encourage engagement with the regime. A daily reporting tool had also been incorporated. Prison Officers found the system easy to use and reported wider benefits including more accurate recording of daily regimes, freeing up time for staff to engage directly with prisoners, more effective sharing of information at staff handovers or for staff returning after leave. Prison Officers had been involved in developing, testing, refining and supporting the roll-out of the new system which had supported its introduction.

Functionality had been developed to support an individual's management from arrival to exiting a CSU including assessment, the introduction of a CSU management plan, exit plan and, if necessary, a transitional plan which included details of any onward referrals. This supported reintegration to normal location with the system providing residential Senior Officers and Governors with access to this information. At Maghaberry Prison a resettlement programme was in the early stages of development to support men to remain living among the main prison population and break the cycle of frequent admissions to the CSU. This initiative was encouraging.

Reporting and analysis generated from the recorded data was still evolving. Data could be provided for time out of cell and at each establishment the average time out of cell had increased. Prisoners confirmed that they could access a daily regime and could engage in a broad range of activities. The system could also generate reasons why individuals had not left their cells and this was circulated to managers on a daily basis.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 9

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust should ensure that mental health care documentation records the assessed need of the patient and meets professional standards within three months of the publication of this report.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

SEHSCT update – February 2023

- An Egton Medical Information System (EMIS electronic record) template for initial and daily assessment in CSU has been devised which ensures that documentation meets professional standards.

Inspectors' assessment

Mental health care documentation had significantly improved since the last review and was very good. Assessments, risk assessments, care plans and progress notes were up-to-date and contemporaneous.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 10

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust should put in place workforce planning arrangements for accessing out-of-hours mental health crisis response services within three months of the publication of this report.

Status: Not achieved.

Organisational response

SEHSCT update – February 2023

- Healthcare in Prison operate a manager on-call to allow direction for staff out-of-hours to assist in management of Mental Health Crisis.
- This may include contact with SE[HSC]T Mental Health Service manager on-call, or additionally transfer to an ED [Emergency Department] for assessment and treatment as required.
- Health care in Prison Procedure for Mental Health Crisis Intervention guides this also.

Inspectors' assessment

A procedure for Mental Health Crisis Intervention was in place. This procedure had not been updated since April 2021 which preceded the date of the previous Review.

The procedure included clear criteria for crisis input and the process to follow during the MHT's working hours.

If a patient met the criteria out of hours, there was no access to in-house specialist mental health advice other than for transfer to a hospital Emergency Department to avail of Mental Health liaison services there. The procedure suggested that a SPAR Evo was initiated and, depending on risk, there were two options for transfer to Emergency Department, referral to either an out of hours GP or Healthcare in Prisons Senior Manager. This is not in keeping with the QNPMHS standards, Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2021.

This operational recommendation had **not been achieved**.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION 11

The Northern Ireland Prison Service should review the shared Care and Supervision Unit at Hydebank in line with Rule 11(a) of the Mandela Rules so that men and women are held separately and their individual needs met. This should be done within six months of the publication of this report.

Status: Achieved.

Organisational response

NIPS update – February 2023 (Achieved)

- On receipt of the draft Review report, the NIPS closed the women's landing in the shared CSU.
- A specific CSU designed for women was also planned and implemented.
- Update linked to an associated action plan for this recommendation.

Inspectors' assessment

Women were held separately from young men in an environment which could better support their needs.

The NIPS immediately removed women from the shared CSU at Hydebank Wood on receipt of the draft Review report. Initially women were segregated within Ash House and later in Beech House while plans for a bespoke female CSU were developed and implemented.

A new Unit opened in Beech House in September 2022. The design reflected careful consideration of entry and movement through the Unit, materials, furnishings, colour and therapeutic spaces. Stakeholders, staff and prisoners were positive about the new Unit and its facilities. The Unit was a bright, calm and spacious and women could eat their lunch and tea meals in a communal multi-purpose space.

This operational recommendation had been **achieved**.

CHAPTER 3: **CONCLUSION**

Overall, very good progress had been made to implement the recommendations of the Review report. One strategic recommendation and seven operational recommendations had been achieved. The remaining two strategic recommendations and one operational recommendation were assessed as partially achieved and three operational recommendations were assessed as not achieved although work was being progressed to achieve one of these. Overall, the pace of work undertaken by the NIPS in the time since the Review report was published was impressive.

Good progress had been made to improve governance and oversight which was being underpinned by the innovative use of technology.

Inspectors had greater assurance that CSUs were increasingly being used as a place of last resort, prisoners were not being held in the CSUs for longer than was necessary and they did have access to at least a basic regime. There was improved oversight of the Rule 32 process and plans were more person centred.

Women were held separately to men and improvements and plans to upgrade the physical environment were in the process of being implemented. The CSUs were well led and staff reported feeling better equipped and supported in their role.

As during the original Review, Inspectors met many prison and health care staff who demonstrated compassion for the prisoners in their care. Prison staff had embraced training opportunities and driving change particularly around regime monitoring and exit planning. Inspectors observed both the NIPS and the SEHSCT operational staff working well together to deliver good, person centred care to prisoners in the CSUs, often under very difficult circumstances.

Inspectors were assured that prisoners had access to a daily regime in the CSUs and to purposeful activity. There were some good examples of cases where individuals had been supported to continue with learning and skills when their association with others had been restricted.

The period that individuals spent in the CSUs prior to being transferred to in-patient facilities was reduced; work was ongoing to agree pathways for timely access to hospital beds for those experiencing a mental health crisis.

Prisoners mostly reported better experiences of being in a CSU.

Some of the work being taken forward would need time to be fully implemented and outcomes assessed. Sustainable improvement plans were in place.

Inspectors remain concerned about prisoners with complex mental health issues who were being managed in CSUs. There was evidence that some of these prisoners have been in a CSU for very lengthy periods. A specialised personality disorder service was not available. The CSU environment is not conducive to those prisoners with complex mental health needs and has the potential to negatively impact on the prisoner's recovery.

Some concerns identified during this Review, were also identified on the *Vulnerable Persons Review*, with recommendations made and work progressing through Task and Finish groups.

Further work was required to progress a number of the recommendations including that prisoners suffering from severe mental disorders have equitable access to a secure in-patient Mental Health or learning disability hospital (Strategic recommendation 2), access to an out-of-hours mental health crisis response service (Operational recommendation 10) and measures through which those in a CSU can continue to progress their learning (Operational recommendation 7).

Taking account of the progress made and the improvements plans that were in place, Inspectors were satisfied that a further Follow-Up Review was not required and future assessment of progress could be included in future prison inspections.



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