



HMIPS

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
INSPECTING AND MONITORING

NEWS RELEASE
INSPECTION OF COURT CUSTODY PROVISION, KILMARNOCK SHERIFF
COURT ON 13 JULY 2020

This report is part of a programme of liaison visits to Court Custody Units (CCUs) carried out by HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS) during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. The visits are being conducted under HMIPS' new, albeit temporary, [Liaison Visits Framework - Prison and Court Custody Units](#), published in April 2020. These liaison visit reports provide assurance to Ministers and the wider public that scrutiny of the treatment and conditions in which prisoners are held has been continued during the pandemic.

When searching custodies, staff wore gloves and masks but no goggles or apron. Inspectors discussed with the Team Manager that consideration should be given to having dedicated searchers, and that all staff tasked with searching custodies wear full PPE. The Team Manager agreed to implement this process immediately.

It was the view of the staff in the CCU that the general cleaning of the Unit was inconsistent and not always of a good standard. The CCU was cleaned once as part of a daily schedule by SCTS contract cleaners, but no additional cleaning had been put in place post COVID-19 to specifically clean well used areas such as toilets, handles and surfaces. It was noted however, that cells were now cleaned between custodies and that cleaners arrived quickly when requested. The Team Manager should regularly meet with relevant SCTS staff to discuss their concerns about the standard of the cleaning within the CCU. Also, additional cleaning of the CCU by the SCTS contract cleaners should be carried out whenever possible.

Inspectors noted that there was a sanitary bin placed outside the shared toilets, rather than inside. CCU staff explained that if custodies had sanitary products they wished to dispose of, they asked a member of staff for a bag to place it in and the staff member put on gloves and disposed of it for them. Inspectors agreed with the Team Manager that this was not a particularly dignified process and that a bin would be placed inside the toilets to allow custodies to dispose of their own sanitary products.

Due to the layout of the CCU, solicitors were permitted to enter the corridors to gain access to the three interview rooms to speak with their clients. Inspectors noted that some solicitors did not wear masks or gloves and it appeared to be a personal choice that could be exposing others to unnecessary risk. Inspectors were advised that some solicitors could visit the CCU up to three times a day for each custody. This causes an unnecessary increase in movement throughout the CCU. SCTS may wish to liaise with the relevant body to encourage solicitors only to enter the CCU area when absolutely necessary and to always wear a mask and gloves.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, Wendy Sinclair-Gieben, was appointed in July 2018.
2. On publication the report can be found at www.prisonssinspectoratescotland.gov.uk
3. For further information please contact Kerry Love, Business Manager, at Kerry.Love@gov.scot or on 07939 980452.