

PRISON	HMP PERTH		YEAR (1 APRIL – 31 MARCH)	2022 - 2023	
Total number of visits	58	Total number of missed weeks	0	Total number of IPM hours	303
Total number of prisoner requests received	111	Number of IPMs in the team (as at 31 March)		8	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IPM Team performed well, ensuring that the statutory duty was met, and dealt with a large number of prisoner requests. A large remand population presented the prison with a complex population management situation. Despite these challenges IPMs felt that the prison managed the population well and ensured that most prisoners had access to a settled regime.

A number of the HMIPS standards were assessed positively. The key issues IPMs noted were around waiting times for healthcare, particularly mental health, illicit substance misuse and prisoner transport.

Despite the difficulties faced by staff in tackling the influx of drugs, and its effect on prisoners, IPMs were very impressed with the prison's Recovery Café, which was introduced to help prisoners struggling with addictions. Prisoners also spoke very highly of the facility

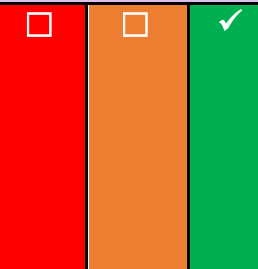
An estate-wide issue regarding the capacity of GEOAmev to fulfil its obligations in transporting prisoners had a significant impact on prisoners, including numerous occasions where important hospital appointments were cancelled. GEOAmev took action to better prioritise hospital appointments but this had a detriment effect on prison transfers. It should however be noted that prison staff did all they could to address the issue, including taking prisoners to appointments in pool cars.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Standard 1: Lawful and Transparent Custody

IPMs monitored the induction process and found it to be thorough, addressing a number of important aspects of prison life. Prisoners were seen by a nurse on arrival. The prison had a dedicated wing for new arrivals to ensure a smooth transition into prison. IPMs identified an issue with a lack of stock of essential items in the new admissions wing, such as bed sheets, cups, toothbrushes etc. This was raised with management and the matter was addressed.

Overall RAG rating



<p>Standard 2: Decency</p> <p>On numerous occasions the IPMs found the prison to be clean and tidy throughout. IPMs also checked the food and found it to be satisfactory, with little by way of complaints from prisoners.</p> <p>Prisoners reported to IPMs their concerns about rising canteen prices and the fact that prison wages were not rising. IPMs raised this issue across the prison estate and SPS agreed to freeze canteen prices to maintain their affordability.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 3: Personal Safety</p> <p>IPMs did not report any key issues relating to this standard.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 4: Effective, Courteous and Humane Use of Authority</p> <p>IPMs did not report any key issues relating to this standard.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 5: Respect, Autonomy and Protection Against Mistreatment</p> <p>IPMs observed many examples of good staff/prisoner relationships throughout the prison.</p> <p>IPMs looked at how complaints were handled. Timelines for responses were generally good. Prisoners seemed generally content with the speed of response but complained that often Hall/Unit Managers did not respond to these adequately and just read back a standard response to them with no further explanation. Prisoners noted a general lack of information being given to them about their complaint. for example why a certain rule had changed, and said they would appreciate more information and context even if their complaint was not going to be upheld.</p>	☐	✓	☐
<p>Standard 6: Purposeful Activity</p> <p>IPMs observed an abundance and wide range of purposeful activity e.g. work, education and exercise happening throughout the year, increasing in line with a reduction in COVID-19 restrictions. Evening activities were also reintroduced post-COVID-19, which IPMs were pleased to see. Clear efforts were made to provide remand prisoners with meaningful work opportunities. Initiatives such as creating sleeping bags from recycled crisp packets for the homeless provided the potential for prisoners to develop a sense of purpose while helping improve the environment and helping others in need.</p>	☐	☐	✓

<p>Standard 7: Transitions from Custody into the Community</p> <p>IPMs did not report any key issues relating to this standard.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 8: Organisational Effectiveness</p> <p>IPMs heard from a number of prisoners in A Hall level 2, where a number of different categories of prisoners were housed, that they were dissatisfied with the regime, particularly the amount of time they spent in-cell. IPMs observed the regime and spoke with staff and determined that staff were doing as much as they could under complex conditions to provide a meaningful regime. IPMs confirmed that these prisoners were offered a range of activities including, for example, time in the fresh air, access to the gym, and evening activities, which would afford them more time out of cell. Staff pointed out that the prisoners did not always choose to take part in these, and prisoners could be out of cell more if they did. Prisoners responded to say that some exercise sessions offered were “too early” in the morning, which is why they chose not to attend. IPMs noted there were also PIACs held with this group, affording them the opportunity to raise such concerns.</p> <p>The situation in A2 Hall was indicative of a wider complex logistical situation facing the prison with regards to population management. Prison management demonstrated clear efforts to keep different populations separate, though IPMs heard of a few cases where remands and convicted prisoners were required to share a cell.</p> <p>An estate-wide issue regarding the capacity of GEOAmev to fulfil its obligations in transporting prisoners had a significant impact on prisoners, including numerous occasions where important hospital appointments were cancelled. GEOAmev eventually started to better prioritise hospital appointments, to the detriment of prison transfers. It should however be noted that prison staff did all they could to address the issue, including taking prisoners to appointments in pool cars.</p>	☐	✓	☐
<p>Standard 9: Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>The waiting times for routine GP appointments and mental health services were very high through most of the year, and a significant number of prisoners contacted IPMs specifically to discuss concerns around this. NHS staff confirmed that prisoners were triaged and prioritised according to need, but the fact remained that waiting times were high. IPMs recognised that these issues were not the fault of NHS staff working at the prison, more so due to issues with staff absence and difficulties with recruitment. IPMs escalated the issue to HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, who formally wrote to the Chief Executive of NHS Tayside to raise these concerns, and their response provided assurance that efforts were being made to address the problems. The latter part of the year saw the waiting time for GPs fall slightly.</p> <p>The influx of illicit drugs into the prison was an issue. Many prisoners required support for addictions and the number of prisoners managed under the MORS policy was high. The volume of need was such that other elements of the regime were being adversely impacted, such as delays in getting prisoners to work while they waited on receiving medication. Staff demonstrated a significant effort to tackle the influx of drugs and the aforementioned impact on the regime, and to support prisoners who were affected.</p>	✓	☐	☐

RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status key:	Some serious concerns	Some slight concerns	No concerns / good practice
<i>RAG rating: where IPMs felt each standard would be rated given their experience - not a complete analysis but based on the judgement of the IPM team</i>			

KEY ISSUES	
1.	Waiting times for some NHS services. GP and mental health were high and caused concern.
2.	Poor GEOAmeY performance impacted upon prisoners' access to appropriate healthcare.
3.	The influx of illicit drugs was an issue.

ENCOURAGING OBSERVATIONS
Despite the difficulties faced by staff in tackling the influx of illicit drugs and its effect on prisoners, IPMs were very impressed with the prison's Recovery Café, which was introduced to help prisoners struggling with addictions. Prisoners also spoke very highly of the facility.

CONCLUSION
<p>The main issue for prisoners was access to healthcare, caused by considerable waiting times, as detailed above, and compounded by poor GEOAmeY performance in getting prisoners to hospital appointments. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland formally escalated concerns to NHS Tayside relating to waiting times. Assurances were given that the matter was being addressed and IPMs saw a distinct improvement in GP waiting times towards the end of the reporting period. Mental health waiting times remained high at the time of writing this report.</p> <p>IPMs did not report any major concerns with regards to the treatment of or the conditions for prisoners.</p>