



HMIPS

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
INSPECTING AND MONITORING

Independent Prison Monitoring Bulletin
HMP Perth
April to September 2018



Key Findings

- **Healthcare:** Independent Prison Monitors (IPMs) noted concern that reduced healthcare staffing levels were affecting service delivery and complaint response times. NHS staff have assured IPMs that prioritisation is given to prisoners most in need, and that low staffing numbers are being addressed.
- **Healthcare:** IPMs asked for clarity on the practice of withdrawing prisoners' medication following failure of a drug spot-check, or if prisoners were suspected of being under the influence of unknown substances. Staff assured IPMs that the practice of withdrawing medication was not used as a punishment, but as a safety measure to guard against the possibility of overdose or other adverse reactions.
- **Personal safety:** There is continued concern relating to the safety risk posed by prisoners' use of drugs to both prisoners and staff. However, IPMs reported a number of positive examples of how staff continued to demonstrate professionalism when dealing with such issues.
- **Risk Management:** IPMs observed the Risk Management Team process and were of the opinion that each prisoner was given a fair hearing. Each prisoner was discussed with courtesy. All staff involved appeared to have taken the time to get to know the details of each case, with every possible angle considered to find the right outcome for the welfare of the prisoner.

Updates and Actions

- **Healthcare:** IPMs heard that the previously reported issue of high levels of supervised medication dispensing affecting the route movement was improving. NHS are introducing alternative medication that will speed up the supervised medication process.
- **Smoke-free prisons:** IPMs have been assured that the prison is on track to implement the new smoke-free prisons policy, and that a range of support mechanisms will be made available to prisoners who smoke, including 'vaping' devices, and support to stop smoking.
- **Food quality:** Prisoners have told IPMs that the food "wasn't too bad at all". IPMs observed the process of serving food and found it to be efficient. IPMs were pleased to note the involvement of prisoners in the serving process as a worthwhile example of purposeful activity.

Focus in the Next Quarter

- IPMs will look further at how daily dispensation of supervised medication is affecting prisoners getting to work.
- IPMs will monitor the implementation of the SPS 'Smoke-free prisons' policy.