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**HM Chief Inspector of Prisons
PETER CLARKE CVO OBE QPM**

Date: 22 June 2020

Jo Farrar
Chief Executive
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
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Dear Jo

Notable positive practice found on short scrutiny visits

As we discussed recently, a key part of HMI Prisons' Short Scrutiny Visits has been to identify notable positive practice, which we have deliberately put in a prominent position in each and every one of these reports. All of these reports can of course be found on our website.

The examples of notable positive practice are intended to recognise that prison staff have been working under exceptional pressures during the COVID-19 pandemic and that, while adjusting to the new circumstances, some prisons have undertaken some good work to manage and mitigate the worst impact of the restrictions. We have identified these examples as practices that are potentially replicable in other prisons.

However, we also recognise that governors and others may not see all of our reports, and so for ease of reference we have collected and published them all on our website at <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/about-hmi-prisons/covid-19/short-scrutiny-visits/>. This will of course be updated as we see new examples. A table containing all examples of notable positive practice found to date is attached to this letter, for distribution as you see fit.

We are grateful to the establishments we have visited for their assistance and hope that our findings will prove to be a constructive and helpful source of information, particularly for those governors who are working so hard to innovate and mitigate the harmful effects of the current restrictions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

PETER CLARKE

Date published	Functional Type	Prison Name	Notable positive practice
SAFETY			
07/05/2020	CYP	Parc - Cookham Wood - Wetherby	All three establishments had introduced enhanced safeguards to monitor well-being and mental health.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley - Wandsworth - Altcourse	At all the prisons, there had been a good leadership and management response to a fast-changing situation.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley - Wandsworth - Altcourse	At all prisons, communication with prisoners and staff was good. They spoke positively about the amount of information that they were receiving, for example through daily bulletins, prison radio and television broadcasts and COVID-19 prisoner representatives.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley	At Elmley, specific actions had been taken to ensure that prisoners who did not speak fluent English were kept informed about the unfolding situation. They were held on a dedicated wing and were helped by staff who spoke a range of languages.
03/06/2020	IRC	Harmondsworth	At Harmondsworth, health advice about COVID-19 was available on all detainee and staff computers.
07/06/2020	IRC	Brook House	At Brook House, specific staff had been assigned to encourage social distancing, with positive results.
05/06/2020	Female	Bronzefield	Peer support work for newly arrived prisoners continued at Bronzefield. Managers ensured this was delivered safely by issuing peer workers with PPE (personal protective equipment, see Glossary of terms).
05/06/2020	Female	Bronzefield - Eastwood Park	At Bronzefield and Eastwood Park, the Listener service continued to be offered.
05/06/2020	Female	Eastwood Park	A safer custody phone line, staffed by peer support workers, provided support for more vulnerable prisoners at Eastwood

			Park.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Belmarsh	Support for vulnerable prisoners was particularly good at Belmarsh. The COVID-19 working group had a list of 162 prisoners with various types of vulnerability and they risk-assessed each one for daily, three-day or five-day personal checks. Each prisoner was seen or phoned on these days, with a spreadsheet keeping track of all the contact.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Manchester	Trained counsellors had been allocated to the safer custody team at Manchester as ACCT case managers, which promoted good quality and multidisciplinary care planning for those in crisis or at risk of self-harm, in addition to direct work to address personal issues.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Woodhill	At Woodhill each week, every prisoner was offered a well-being check in person by mental health staff. This meant that those experiencing negative impacts of prolonged lockdown had an opportunity to receive support.
RESPECT / CARE			
18/05/2020	Male Local	Wandsworth	At Wandsworth, swift testing and provision of results was now ensuring that prisoners free of COVID-19 were quickly allowed to participate in the restricted regime.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley - Wandsworth - Altcourse	At all three prisons, governance and oversight of health services had been enhanced with daily commissioner-led telephone conferences with prison health providers.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Altcourse	At Altcourse, the mental health team had created a well-being room for health and prison staff to take some time out before, during or after stressful situations and/or shifts.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Altcourse	At Altcourse, health care managers had developed bespoke patient logs which improved oversight of COVID-19 monitoring

			and were shared with relevant agencies to enhance release arrangements.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Portland - Ranby	At Portland and Ranby prisoners left their cells to collect their lunchtime and evening meals from serveries. Prisoners told us they appreciated this additional time out of their cell. At both sites we saw this being done in a planned way with most prisoners maintaining a two-metre distance from each other.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Portland - Ranby - Coldingley	Pre-release support from health care had been enhanced by providing 28 days of medication to take home.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Portland - Ranby - Coldingley	The use of telephony to facilitate initial triage and undertake some clinics demonstrated a positive use of available resources.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Portland	The use of tablet devices at Portland, to download live prescribing information to better support medicines administration in areas without immediate access to a computer terminal, was innovative and helped reduce risk.
02/06/2020	IRC	Harmondsworth - Yarls Wood - Brook House - Morton Hall	The low numbers in all centres meant that all detainees could be accommodated in single rooms, usually with toilets and showers.
02/06/2020	IRC	Harmondsworth - Yarls Wood - Brook House - Morton Hall	There was generally good use of translated material at all sites, including NHS material on COVID-19 in multiple languages.
04/06/2020	IRC	Yarls Wood	At Yarls Wood, staff had produced visual materials with clear drawings to help those with limited English identify key words and concepts in conversations with staff.
05/06/2020	Female	Bronzefield - Eastwood Park - Foston Hall	Across all sites, the antenatal care for women was maintained to the same level as in the community and the pregnant women we spoke to were complimentary about their care.
05/06/2020	Female	Eastwood Park	The level of support offered to a premature baby at Eastwood Park, by specialist services including a consultant paediatrician and a paediatric nurse specialist, was impressive.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Manchester	At Manchester, GPs were piloting video link technology for routine appointments to minimise the risk of cross infection.

PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY / ACTIVITIES			
07/05/2020	CYP	Parc	Parc was delivering two hours of face-to-face education activity every weekday, which included carpentry, cookery, PE and three classroom-based pathways. Children were able to keep two metres apart and this was well implemented in activity areas.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley - Wandsworth - Altcourse	At all prisons, considerable thought had been put into providing good quality in-cell activity packs.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Portland	Gym staff at Portland provided exercise classes to prisoners. These sessions increased the amount of time prisoners spent out of their cell and provided regular, meaningful exercise to a substantial proportion of the population. Prisoners were generally able to access about two sessions a week. Social distancing was properly enforced in these sessions and gym staff provided cleaning equipment and ensured there was time at the end of each session to clean each exercise area.
05/06/2020	IRC	Harmondsworth - Yarl's Wood	Education classes were still taking place, properly supervised and with reduced numbers of detainees, at Harmondsworth and Yarl's Wood. Detainees appreciated the opportunity to participate in these classes and described the benefits to their mental health.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Woodhill	Prisoners at Woodhill could access a large DVD library, and many commented on how much they appreciated this provision. Many films were donated by staff.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Belmarsh	The gym department at Belmarsh ran popular outdoor circuit training sessions for prisoners several times a day.

RRP / RESETTLEMENT / PREPARATION FOR REMOVAL AND RELEASE			
07/05/2020	CYP	Parc - Cookham Wood - Wetherby	Each of the establishments had provided additional phone credit to help children keep in touch with family and friends.
07/05/2020	CYP	Wetherby	Staff at Wetherby checked children's phone usage, and spoke to those who hadn't made any calls to help mitigate their social isolation.
07/05/2020	CYP	Cookham Wood	Cookham Wood had mitigated the difficulties in children being able to see health services in the community by providing 28 days of medication on release.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley - Wandsworth - Altcourse	All prisons had tried to enhance communication with families, for example through the appointment of additional family liaison officers and writing to families.
18/05/2020	Male Local	Altcourse	At Altcourse, an email system had been established for family and friends to submit song requests to be dedicated to named prisoners on the prison radio. The request line was promoted among prisoners and advertised externally via Twitter.
22/05/2020	Male Cat C Trainer	Coldingley	Managers and staff at Coldingley had enabled the continuation of parole hearings by telephone conference.
06/06/2020	IRC	Morton Hall	At Morton Hall, detainees on the reverse cohorting unit (RCU – see Glossary of terms) were allowed to use personal mobile phones from their stored property to access their emails and the internet.
05/06/2020	Female	Eastwood Park	A new scheme at Eastwood Park enabled prisoners to read a bedtime story to their children.
05/06/2020	Female	Eastwood Park	Eastwood Park provided transport home for those with no family members to pick them up on release.
15/6/2020	Long-term high security	Belmarsh	At Belmarsh, prisoners could have 60-second video messages sent to their families by phone with appropriate security precautions. At Woodhill prisoners could send photographs of themselves to their family.

GENERAL			
18/05/2020	Male Local	Elmley	At Elmley, there was a dedicated COVID-19 team, with key managers seconded in, and frequent operational meetings concerned