



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Cardiff

**For reporting year
1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with Ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Cardiff is a men's category B local training prison situated in the heart of the city. The prison opened in 1832, and a large part of the accommodation continues to comprise three Georgian wings. A major programme of refurbishment in 1996 resulted in the opening of three new accommodation wings. There are now seven wings (A, B, C, D, E, F and HCC) with an additional three separate units forming part of those wings (A1, B1 and F1). The prison also includes a range of other facilities, including a gym, chaplaincy, a series of workshops and classrooms. A new build healthcare centre was opened in May 2008 and provides 20 beds¹.

The prison largely serves southeast Wales and the south Wales valleys, although an increasing number of prisoners are transferred from English prisons. It provides predominantly for prisoners serving short-term sentences, remand prisoners and prisoners awaiting sentence. The prison has a certified normal accommodation of 534 (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being crowded) and an operating capacity of circa 780 (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime). Prisoners are overwhelmingly accommodated two to a cell.

As across the whole of the prison estate in England and Wales, HMP Cardiff has faced significant and ongoing population pressures over the reporting period. From 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 there were 7,677 receptions, 1,938 releases and 1,195 transfers to other establishments. This pressure looks highly likely to continue unless significant measures are taken on a national basis. An early release scheme was introduced in October 2023 but that is out of the scope of this annual report.

The normal regime includes full-time education, employment in the prison workshops and training courses. The Education Department also offers prisoners a personal social development course and work-based courses.

¹ Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice.

3. Key points

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- Self-harm continued to be a concern throughout the year, however the Board acknowledges the priority given to the assessment, care in custody teamwork (ACCT) process in such cases.
- Toward the end of the year there was a significant increase in the use of illicit substances and related health and violence incidents.
- At the mid-year point there was a notable increase in out of area transfers due to population pressures across the prison estate. By the end of the reporting period the increasing pressure on the prison population during the reporting period was of serious concern.

Fair and humane treatment

- The Board welcomed a reduction in overall numbers accommodated in the care and separation unit (CSU) than in the previous year. A disproportionate number of black, Asian, minority ethnic prisoners were accommodated in CSU. However, the Board notes of these, 5 prisoners were segregated 4 times or more.
- Due to the age of the prison, accommodation issues (such as lack of hot water, wing temperatures being either too hot or cold depending on the weather, vermin) continue to be a notable problem during 2022-23.
- Lost property has been a frequently reported problem during the year, due both to internal moves within HMP Cardiff and between prisons.
- Despite the prison's commitment to the key worker scheme, adherence has fluctuated due to the wider demand on staffing i.e., shortages, sickness, and detached duty. Key work therefore remains an issue of concern for the Board.

Health and wellbeing

- Improvements were made in responding to the health and wellbeing requirements of prisoners, although medication provision continues to feature in applications to the IMB (written representations to the Board), it is either not provided in a timely manner or medication prescribed in the community is either changed or curtailed.
- Both the Neurodiversity and Additional Learning Needs Hub, as well as the incentivised substance-free living unit, opened in 2022-23 and appear to be making a solid contribution to the progress of prisoners supported by these units.
- The Board welcomes the valuable contribution of prisoner volunteers across the prison. They are visible and available to support their peers in several ways, including as Samaritan's listeners, as wing representatives who contribute to prisoner forums, as mentors on wings who assist their fellow prisoners with paperwork and other issues and as peers helping the smooth running of hospitality in the visits' hall.

Progression and resettlement

- Accommodation on release remains an issue, prisoners are not receiving support at an early enough stage and support can be perfunctory at times, resulting in some prisoners not having accommodation arranged on release. The IMB's survey of prisoners on this matter identified more than a third had no accommodation arranged post release. The Board notes, however, HMP Cardiff performed within the top third of all reception prisons in relation to accommodation on release, with over 80% positive outcomes recorded for accommodation on release during the reporting period.
- The offender management unit (OMU) continues to be understaffed; a problem since 2021 to 2022 at least. Similar issues apply to the resettlement team. The Board acknowledges these staff are employed by the Probation arm of HMPPS not directly by the Prison.
- Visits booking has been problematic for most of the year, mainly for bookings made by telephone. The IMB has specifically monitored this issue following applications received and discussions with visitors during the reporting period and fed back frequently to the Governor and the Birmingham centre where the booking line is administered.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- Given the issues associated with the Georgian infrastructure of the prison, what action will be taken to improve basic conditions such as the consistent provision of hot water and the ability to control temperature fluctuations?
- The delay in obtaining vetting clearance has had a major impact on the ability to recruit and appoint staff, particularly in healthcare, OMU and resettlement, as well as in supporting agencies working in the prison. What can the Government do to hasten this process to ensure the necessary staffing complement can be achieved and maintained whilst security is not compromised?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- Ongoing staff vacancies in OMU and resettlement and the resulting pressures on staff and prisoners continue to be a concern. What efforts is the prison service/probation making to recruit to these posts?
- Since the centralisation of visit bookings, the telephone service has been consistently poor, causing ongoing problems for prisoners' families. What action could be taken nationally to resolve these issues?
- Whilst appreciating the fabric of the HMP Cardiff site plays a large part in this, what can be done to address prisoners having no access to out of cell space to eat food, which currently means in shared cells both men must eat with a shared toilet in the space?
- What consideration could be given to improving officer awareness and practice of the needs of transgender prisoners as the transgender population in prisons across the estate grows?

TO THE HEALTH BOARD

- The last health needs analysis in HMP Cardiff took place in 2017. Will the Health Board now address this issue urgently?
- Given the frequent applications received by the Board regarding prescription medication, can consideration be given to how the impact of a change to, or ending of, prisoners' usual medication can be minimised, and prisoners better supported and informed through this?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- It is disappointing to see lost property both between and within prisons remains a continuing and significant problem. What further practical measures can be put in place to address this?

3.3 Response to the last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
Minister Increase in prisoners requiring transfer to mental health establishments – discussions with Welsh Government.	Advised on Welsh Government's "Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan" inc. audit of secure in-patient provision and strategy development.	19 prisoners transferred to psychiatric units, which is comparable to the previous year. Publication awaited of HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) thematic review of the cause and impact of delays to patients held in prison who require care under the Mental Health Act 1983.
The restricted level of contact foreign national offenders (FNOs) and detainees were able to have with the Home Office representative.	FNOs have access to Home Office Immigration Prison Teams; access should be within 24 hours. Reference to staffing capacity related to Covid-19 now resolved.	The issue has not been raised to any degree during this reporting period.
The Welsh Government Lack of cover for pharmacists.	<u>Included in MoJ response.</u> Noted full-time pharmacist recruited.	Pharmacy now fully staffed.
Need for increased GP hours.	GP hours increased by extra five sessions per week, plus additional Clinical Director session.	Remote GP provision introduced in 3/2023; out of hours general medical services' (GMS) provision

Lack of available and suitable accommodation on release.	Homelessness Prevention Taskforces set up during pandemic to remain; 3-year funding provided to HMPPS in Wales to set up Community Accommodation Services Tier 3 project.	commenced August 2023 utilising CAV 24/7 helpline ² ; new GP to be onboarded autumn 2023. The Board's findings in this report point to the continuing problem of limited available and timely accommodation being accessed by prisoners on release.
The Prison Service Long-term remedies for recurring infrastructure problems, i.e. heating, access to TV, rats. Access for wheelchair users/ those with mobility issues. Return to normal regime post Covid-19. Replacement of body worn cameras (BWCs).	<u>Included in MoJ response.</u> Reference made to refurbishment and infrastructure programmes and pest controller activity. Reference made to adaptations within the prison, including various shower upgrades and ramp to education area. Outline of post Covid-19 regime recovery at HMP Cardiff provided. Update provided on provision of BWCs by February 2023.	Issues about conditions continue to occur and raised by prisoners. Newly refurbished disability friendly cell and shower in F wing, with a ramp to access the wing. Issues reviewed bi-monthly in disability forum. Regime has returned to normal, disrupted only by staff shortages. BWCs replaced at HMP Cardiff in 2022-2023.
The Governor Staffing pressures experienced by the business hub. The disproportionate number of black,	This specifically related to quality of visits booking due to churn of administrative staff. Subsequently visits booking was outsourced to a dedicated team in Birmingham. The assessment for 'dangerousness' is an algorithm determined by offence, sentence	Service outsourced to Birmingham visits team. No further action. Monthly E&I meetings continue to review any

² CAV 24/7 is a service in Cardiff and Vale that provides patients in need of urgent, or out of hours care, access to clinicians who are able to assess symptoms appropriately and arrange for meaningful next steps to take place.

Asian and minority ethnic prisoners labelled as dangerous. Investigation into any apparent discrimination against black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners.	<p>and other data. There is not an ethnicity component to this.</p> <p>Any disproportionality is examined monthly in the Equality and Inclusion meeting. Any discovered disproportionality is investigated and sought to be addressed. MoJ response added: "The last twelve months, which have been audited, show no disproportionate numbers."</p>	issues identified by statistical monitoring.
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Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 The Board has consistently witnessed a high level of professionalism from reception staff during the reporting period. Staff provide clear information and advice to new entrants, following recognised processes, and have been witnessed giving additional support to first-time prisoners who are, understandably, demonstrating vulnerable behaviour on arrival.

4.1.2 Inductions observed by the Board have been well organised and prompt and the inclusion of peer mentors in the induction process is welcomed and recognised as good practice.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 There has been one death in custody in the reporting year, which was understood to be self-inflicted; an inquest is awaited. Support was offered to both staff and prisoners and appropriate communication with the family was made. The Board notes this improvement in achieving a safer environment, as there were 5 reported deaths in the previous reporting year.

4.2.2 The level of self-harm in the reporting year was 374 incidents, with several prisoners self-harming multiple times. This is the same level of self-harm as recorded in the previous year. Although any level of self-harm is regrettable, the Board recognises the work and support given to the prisoners and, when comparing the safety of HMP Cardiff against 7 other comparable prisons, Cardiff was the lowest on: assaults on staff, second lowest on prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and second lowest on self-harm in December 2022 and April 2023

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 There has been a 12.5% increase in the level of reported violent incidents, with 160 reported between 1 January and 31 December 2022 (an average of 13.3 incidences), rising to 180 (an average of 15 incidences) in this reporting period. A number of these incidents have been observed by the Board where support was given to both prisoners and staff to safely de-escalate or move the prisoner to an alternative location. Staff and prisoners have been injured in a number of these cases, some requiring hospital treatment. The Board has noted the professionalism of staff in carrying out these duties.

4.4 Use of force

4.4.1 Three times as many incidents of use of force (UoF) were due to non-compliance (i.e., not following staff instructions), compared to threatening/abusive behaviour which is the next highest reason for UoF. A weekly review of incidents is held and the appropriateness of the action discussed to identify lessons learnt, any training needs, further action taken where required and recognition of good practice. Board members have monitored weekly reviews and observed good

practice and balanced discussions about the cases. In August 2023, out of 42 UoF incidences; 22 were returned to their cell using guiding holds.

4.4.2 Staff are now generally drawing body worn cameras (BWCs), especially since this is now monitored by the prison. Although usage has increased, it is still low with an average usage of 55% in 2022 rising to 66.7% in August 2023. Full use of CCTV and UoF reports are utilised where there is no BWC video footage available as well as when it is available. However, on some occasions, this doesn't always fully cover the incident, dependent on location and can reduce the ability to hear any verbal interaction and de-escalation.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

4.5.1 There has been a continuing increase of prisoners found to be under the influence of substances, predominantly psychotic substances, as well as illicit items found through cell searches including drug paraphernalia, mobile phones etc.

4.5.2 The prison has now set up an illicit substances group to identify how they can prevent such items coming into the prison and how they can be found when in the prison. There has been increased levels of searches for both staff and visitors and an increase in the number of cell searches by a dedicated search team. Additionally, a full complement of dogs is on site, body scanners are in place and visits are monitored. The level of drugs being found and prisoners under the influence has also had an impact on the Dyfodol team and healthcare who have had their workload increased due to the amount of support they offer.

4.5.3 The Board observed a number of adjudications (disciplinary hearings which are held by a prison Governor if a prisoner is suspected to have broken prison rules) in which the appropriate process was followed, and which were found to be fair and supportive of the individual, as well as ensuring accurate action was taken. There was an upward trend of 23.4% in the number of adjudications held from 1,651 in 2022, to 2,038 in this reporting year. Of the completed adjudications this year, 40% were proven. Of the 57 cases referred to the Independent Adjudicator (who is a District Judge), 26 (53%) were proven, resulting in 200 additional days added to sentences.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1. The physical fabric of the prison continued to cause difficulties with frequent complaints that wings were too hot or too cold dependant on the time of year. Hot water was sometimes not available for showers, this occurred on most wings on various occasions, although at one time F wing was without hot water for over a week, whilst the shower for those people with disabilities, on F wing, was out of use for over a month in January 2023. The Board understands the age of the prison makes it difficult to maintain the systems and, sometimes, get replacement parts.

5.1.2 At the beginning of the reporting year there was a problem with rats. Traps were put down around the outside areas and drains were cleaned and by the end of May the problem seemed to have decreased. Unfortunately, by the end of the reporting year there was a problem with mice in the prison. Most wings, workshops and the visits hall had seen infestations. Again, the pest controller visits frequently to try and keep the problem under control.

5.1.3 The pest problem is not helped by the amount of litter sometimes thrown out of some of the cells. Despite this the prison staff, cleaners, and prisoners on recycling duties work hard to keep the wings and grounds clean and free from litter.

5.1.4 Most wings in the prison have been refurbished, unfortunately funding was stopped earlier in 2023 bringing the refurbishment programme to a halt. Despite this, wings, toilets, and showers are generally kept clean.

5.1.5 As was the case nationally there has been increased accommodation pressure on HMP Cardiff with operational capacity returning to pre-Covid levels, this has required a large proportion of prisoners to share cells. Prisoners in Cardiff have no access to out of cell space to eat food, subsequently in shared cells both men must eat with a shared toilet in the space. **Whilst appreciating the site makes such issues difficult to change, the Board do not feel this is acceptable.**

5.1.6 The Board received some complaints about food, in particular regarding portion size and dietary needs, but those meals tested by Board members were of reasonable quality. The kitchen had some problems with food ordering towards the end of 2022 with substitutes being sent. This caused some difficulties for those prisoners who received the substituted food, the Board were given to understand this was a national problem.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 Overall the Board has no significant concerns about segregation practice in HMP Cardiff. As noted, the UoF in removing prisoners to the CSU has been handled professionally and, in the majority of cases, without major incident. Daily visits by governors, chaplaincy and healthcare and frequent visits by Board members are undertaken appropriately.

5.2.2 The Board has, however, directly witnessed two cases of inappropriate behaviour by custody staff which were reported to the Governor. Both were acted upon; in the first case the individual received the necessary training and in the second case the need for professionalism was reinforced.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

5.3.1 Overall staff/prisoner relationships are good. Over recent years the prison service has lost a proportion of experienced officers and HMP Cardiff is no exception. Despite this, the prison is one of the highest performing prisons in the country for staff retention. As expected, new, inexperienced officers take some time to bed in and regrettably some of these new entrants have also left the service. The Board has been advised one reason for this could have been the return to the normal regime after the Covid restrictions which, although welcome, brought a change to the experience of lockdown for newer officers.

5.3.2 The number of daily 'key working' sessions has increased since August 2022 when staff shortages meant the numbers rarely exceeded the low teens. Despite this, there was little evidence that key working is functioning effectively to support men's resettlement. Staff and prisoners which the IMB have spoken to agreed that key working in HMP Cardiff currently remains disjointed. This is mainly due to lack of continuity in key working over the duration of custody. As a prisoner moves from wing to wing, his key worker changes to a different officer as the original key worker cannot visit different wings for key working. According to our survey, few have indicated their key workers as a major source of support about resettlement. **Key work therefore remains an issue of concern for the Board.**

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 A new Equalities Policy was published in July 2023. Towards the end of the reporting year, there was a change in some of the prison leads overseeing different areas of diversity. The transition went smoothly, with enthusiasm and passion demonstrated which is encouraging and can only be positive for those affected. There are equality peers on every wing to help and advise.

5.4.2 All prisoner forums have a diversity and inclusion agenda item where any issues can be swiftly escalated and resolved. Specific protected characteristic forums (PC forums) are run on regular basis for:

- Young adult prisoners (age 18-25)
- Disabled prisoners
- LGB prisoners
- Transgender prisoners (to include gender more broadly where relevant)
- Ethnic minority prisoners
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller prisoners
- Foreign national prisoners
- Care experienced prisoners
- Welsh speaking prisoners
- Prisoners experiencing issues relating to pregnancy and maternity or marriage and civil partnership

5.4.3 Several transgender prisoners have been located to HMP Cardiff over this year. Some of these prisoners are on general wings and some are on B1 which provides extra support for vulnerable prisoners. After arriving at the prison all transgender prisoners will be seen by the equality officer and, within 14 days, by a

governor grade. A useful transgender prison information sheet was introduced in January 2023 and is provided to prisoners on arrival.

5.4.4 There are monthly forum meetings where several issues have been raised by transgender prisoners relating to their experience within the prison. A Board member monitored an inclusion and diversity Wales forum for LGBTQ+ prisoners to feedback their experience of HMP Cardiff. 4 prisoners attended and the discussion was open and wide ranging with several suggestions made about improving prisoner experience, particularly around induction and information provided. The attendees felt the culture amongst prisoners was generally supportive and whilst they all had experienced very positive support from certain staff, this was not consistent and **the need for officer awareness and practice to be improved was identified**. The Board believes there have been positive moves to improve awareness and practice around LGBTQ+ issues and will continue to monitor this.

5.4.5 Specific issues raised by transgender prisoners included the issue of welcome packs which were not felt to be appropriate to needs. Transgender prisoners requested the same packs provided to women prisoners and, with the Board's intervention, these are now provided on arrival at HMP Cardiff. Whilst prisoners receive separate canteen sheets with a selection of suitable products and have access to catalogues for beauty and clothing items, the Board has been advised these sometimes take a while to arrive and some prisoners feel the available products are expensive and therefore unaffordable. The only supply issue appears to be difficulty in obtaining larger sized female shoes.

5.4.6 The establishment holds up to 779 prisoners, of which around 17% are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background. HMP Cardiff's has a zero-tolerance approach to racist behaviours between prisoners or directed at staff. Any racially motivated behaviour may be reported through the discrimination incident report form (DIRF) process; however, dependant on the severity, may also be transferred to other investigative measures, including adjudications or referral to the police. Information posters are on display on all wings offering support and giving information. Black History Month was well supported, with the prison encouraging people to enter art and poetry competitions throughout the month. Foreign national representatives are on all wings and are supported by a foreign national lead. HMP Cardiff works with the Zahid Mubarek Trust who provide independent scrutiny of DIRF forms and engage with ethnic minority prisoners within the establishment.

5.4.7 Disability issues are overseen by the Disability, Advocacy, Well-being Network (DAWN). There are forum meetings bi-monthly for staff and prisoners, though the Board notes at the end of the reporting period, the lead for DAWN was vacant. Personal emergency evacuation plans are in place and reasonable adjustments are recorded on C-NOMIS. There is a newly refurbished disability friendly cell and shower in F wing, with a ramp to access the wing, and prisoners with disabilities have been observed to be well supported by healthcare. The disability policy is in the process of being reviewed and updated. **Once again, the Board wishes to highlight an old, Georgian prison is not a suitable or practical environment for prisoners with disabilities or who are older and may have mobility issues.**

5.4.8 LGBTQI Pride in Prison and Probation (PIP) held regular forum meetings for staff and prisoners and were supported and encouraged by the Governor. Cardiff officers marched in the Cardiff Pride Parade and had a stand.

5.4.9 A veterans' forum is held the first Tuesday of every month and is well supported by the Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association (SAFFA) and Care after Combat.

5.4.10 The majority of the prison population consists of adult prisoners (83%) with 17% being young adults (18-25). The Board considers there is sufficient support in place for young adults via a good care system with support from lead officers, healthcare (including counselling), mental health, education, and charities. The Board welcomes the Prison's commitment in appointing and funding the young adult and care experienced lead at Governor level, supported by a prison offender manager, staff champions and two prisoner peers.

5.4.11 There is a bi-monthly forum meeting held to address any major issues experienced by Gypsy, Roma or Traveller prisoners. This frequency is due to the low number of prisoners from within this community in HMP Cardiff.

5.4.12 The prison chaplaincy comprises a full-time team with access to faith leaders representing Muslim, Protestant, Catholic, Sikh, Buddhist, Humanist and Pagan faiths, giving support, holding services, providing educational lessons and offering a listening ear.

5.4.13 HMP Cardiff uses the services of The Big Word for interpretation wherever there is an identified language need and language support is also provided by education. In terms of the Welsh language, many of the wing posters are bi-lingual and a list of bi-lingual officers/staff is available.

5.5 Complaints

The total number of internal complaints received by the prison for the reporting year (excluding healthcare and DIRFs) was 1,730, compared to 1,330 for September 2021 to August 2022, an increase of 30%. It is recognised this could be considered a positive increase which may demonstrate the prisoners' confidence in the complaints system. The majority of complaints focused on: staff issues (140); medication (94); property (63) and the incentives scheme (53) which aligns fairly well with the proportion of applications received by the IMB and provides an indication of areas the prison should be focusing on. 81% of complaints were answered within prescribed timescales.

5.6 Property

Complaints about the loss and subsequent handling of prisoner property continued to be received, with 60 applications to the Board during the reporting period, 35 referring to losses due to transfer between prisons and 25 due to cell moves within HMP Cardiff. **The Board observed no real urgency from the prison or the wider estate or Prison Service to resolve this issue, despite processes being in place to address the issue.**

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 Healthcare applications to the Board totalled 62, 28 were focused on medication/prescriptions, with further concerns about obtaining an appointment and optical/dental issues.

6.1.2 The Board is pleased to note the staffing position in healthcare has improved significantly. The mental health team and pharmacy are now fully staffed, though several new starters are still going through induction. However, nursing still has 9½ full-time equivalent vacancies. This is being addressed by utilising a whole team skill mix approach to patient focused care, and regular assurance meetings take place with the Governor and the Health Board's Director of Nursing. **The delay in being able to obtain vetting clearance continues to have an impact on both successful recruitment and timely appointments in healthcare.**

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 Waiting times have reduced to between 10-13 days which has been achieved by the introduction of Remote GP provision in March 2023, the move to Out of Hours GMS provision in August 2023 utilising the CAV 24/7 helpline and holding mixed healthcare clinics on 4 out of 5 mornings. A recent survey of patients seeing the GP has been conducted and positive results seen by IMB, several saying "one of the best Doctors I have ever seen". Non-attendances have reduced from 30% to 11%, particularly on wing clinics.

6.2.2 It is positive there is no waiting time for the optician who manages all appointments in a once per month visit. A simple, but effective, service on offer is provision of a range of reading glasses should any prisoners require them. The dentist holds 4 sessions a week over a 2-day period. The waiting list is around 3 weeks, but there are 2 appointments per session for emergencies. The dental service within the last year has moved over from the community dental service to a private contractor who is more able to meet the needs of the prisoners in HMP Cardiff.

6.2.3 The Board notes healthcare's view that certain medication is over-prescribed in the community which is then reduced or curtailed in prison. However, in view of the concerns expressed to us by prisoners on a very frequent basis, **the Board recommends further consideration is given as to how the impact of this prescribing issue can be minimised and prisoners better supported through either a change to, or ending of, their usual medication.**

6.2.4 Covid and flu vaccination programmes continue to be delivered within the prison and other support including weekly bereavement counselling and advice on palliative care and other health issues is provided on an ad hoc basis.

6.2.5 The Board understands a health needs analysis is long overdue, with the last having been carried out in 2017. **The Board understand healthcare have escalated this to senior management within Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and recommends this is now addressed with some urgency.**

6.2.6 The Board would like to acknowledge the efforts made by healthcare in securing a Charity Arts bid in 2023 to improve the patient waiting areas and staff room, which was supplemented by funding from the prison.



6.3 Mental healthcare

6.3.1 The mental health team received on average 160 referrals a month. Referrals accepted for an assessment are seen within 28 days and urgent referrals can be seen the same day by the mental health team's duty worker who operates between 9am and 4pm, 7 days a week. There were, on average, 24 referrals a month made to see a psychiatrist. The waiting time for an appointment is dependent on the individual's need. Assessment of Adult ADHD is the longest waiting list, currently at 23 weeks which is a concern in view of the vulnerability of prisoners dealing with the prison environment. The mental health team commented short sentences can mean prisoners do not receive an appropriate length of support.

6.3.2 As noted, the mental health team is nearly fully staffed after a lengthy period of vacancies. There remain two unfilled posts, one for a primary mental health practitioner and a one for a specialist counsellor. The addition of a primary care mental health practitioner, occupational therapist, a secondary care nurse and a high intensity specialist therapist have brought depth to the team which can only benefit the patients' clinical treatment. Counselling, anxiety management and other interventions are offered by the multi-disciplinary team.

6.3.3 During the reporting period, 19 prisoners were transferred to psychiatric units which was comparable to the number transferred in the previous year. Waiting times for transfers varied considerably, with the average being around 20 days and the least 7 days. In addition, 4 cases took between 2 months and 7½ months between referral and transfer whilst specialist or high secure placements were sought. The prison is awaiting the outcome of a HMIP thematic review, in which it participated, of the cause and impact of delays to patients held in prison who require care under the Mental Health Act 1983.

6.3.4 The mental health team suggested it would be helpful if officers received further mental health and diversity awareness training to inform a more appropriate response to prisoners with mental health or other conditions. It was also noted it was not possible for prisoners to access a transgender helpline via the telephone PIN process; the IMB raised this matter with the Prison.

6.4 Time out of cell, regime

6.4.1 Following the restrictions imposed in response to Covid-19, the regime and time out of cell arrangements returned, overall, to business as usual. Standard time out of cell for non-workers (standard incentive level³) is currently one hour in morning and one hour in the afternoon, with a daily exercise period of 30 minutes. For those who attend allocated activity placement, out of cell time is 3.5 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon on most weekdays. Workers, and those on enhanced incentive level, are then provided with 1.25 hours of association in the evening, except for Tuesdays and Fridays. On weekend days, those on the enhanced level are out of their cell both morning and afternoon. At weekends all men are out of their cells for an hour of association (along with morning exercise) both morning and afternoon, there are also 4 sessions Saturday and Sunday of 1.25hrs for 35 men to attend the gym, this includes shower time before returning to their units.

6.4.2 The Board recognises this regime is subject to workshops being open, and staffing levels being sufficient to facilitate association. Indeed, due to regime restrictions because of staff shortages in the summer, the Board received applications from several prisoners complaining about time out of cell. On investigation this appears to have been due to poor communication about timetable changes, rather than reduced time. The prison subsequently improved this communication and applications were no longer received.

6.4.3 The gym programme offers all prisoners the opportunity to attend a variety of sessions at least twice a week. This includes weights, football, weight loss club and healthy living. Competitions are run throughout the year along with support for celebration days. This year a welcome refurbishment of the shower and recess area has improved the facilities for all.

6.5 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.5.1 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation support is HMP Cardiff is provided by Dyfodol, in partnership with G4S, Adferiad and HMPPS. Dyfodol delivers brief interventions for low level or low risk substance misusers and signposts to appropriate services for their needs post-release. All prisoners are given basic substance misuse advice and guidance and issued with a harm reduction information sheet. All are also advised how to contact Dyfodol should they need support at a later point.

6.5.2 A full assessment and casework is provided for high-risk substance misusers or substance misusers whose use is linked with offending behaviour, particularly those assessed as a high risk of harm. This includes additional harm reduction and motivational work, liaison with healthcare to support the assessment of clinical needs, work to secure continuation of treatment on release or transfer. Dyfodol also provide Naloxone (which rapidly reverses opioid overdoses) training and issue identified clients a kit on release.

6.5.3 Support currently includes weekly group work and the support of 5 peers working across the prison, Alcohol Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, Smart

³ Within the prison an incentives scheme operates, with basic, standard and enhanced levels. Prisoners move up or down the levels based on behaviour, with enhanced level prisoners receiving more privileges.

Recovery, Acupuncture, a Brief Intervention group and 1-2-1s. The total number of prisoners on Dyfodol's caseload for the period August 2022 to September 2023 was 2,955.

6.5.4 Dyfodol provides advice and guidance to staff working with low level substance misusers, as well as responding to incidents of substance misuse and supporting prison staff dealing with associated difficulties. The success of this work is based on being integrated into key prison structures and networks to share information relating to the organisation's specialism. This aspect of Dyfodol's work has come into greater focus over the past six months with the increasing misuse of illicit drugs, such as Spice.

6.5.5 During 2023 the incentivised substance-free living (ISFL) unit was established at HMP Cardiff on A1 wing. The Board very much welcomes the establishment of this Unit which offers help to prisoners who wish to get off illicit drugs with regular drug testing, peer support, and incentives such as extra gym time. Dyfodol support the ISFL with weekly groups and drop-in sessions.

6.5.6 It has been positive to see testimonials from prisoners on the ISFL including, a drug support peer who stated: "You are away from the chaos with 22 other men who want to change. I wanted to change. The Unit helped me realise the opposite of conditioning is connection. The Unit has helped me see that, the Dyfydol workers and officers go above and beyond to help the boys on the Unit". Another prisoner who had not long been on the Unit said "I see a massive change in myself. I want to thank the Dyfydol workers, officers and boys on the Unit that have helped me".

6.6 Soft skills

6.6.1 The Samaritan's Listener scheme operates successfully in HMP Cardiff. A peer support scheme which aims to reduce suicide and self-harm, Listeners are specially selected and trained volunteer prisoners who provide confidential emotional support to their peers struggling to cope or feeling suicidal. During the year, the IMB heard directly from the Samaritan's about the success of the scheme in HMP Cardiff. 19 Listeners have received the intensive training and 178 sessions have been provided. The Board understands new staff receive training on the Listeners scheme which should help officers accommodate requests from prisoners to speak to a Listener more readily.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 The spaces available for purposeful activity has on average been 450 attending education, vocational training and providing essential services each day. Classroom and workshop space is a restriction for some training and many courses remained oversubscribed.

7.1.2 During the reporting period, educational assessments were conducted on arrival. The requirement for some courses, i.e. Railtrack, required individuals to be free from any form of addiction to alcohol and drugs.

7.1.3 The library has functioned throughout the reporting period, although staffing levels have affected its operation at times. As well as the main library, there are two satellite libraries on wings in the prison.

7.1.4 During the reporting year, HMPPS held an internal review of education and training provision based on Estyn expectations.

The Board welcomes the overall positive findings, identifying prisoners make good progress towards achieving appropriate qualifications and challenging learning goals, crucially “developing the skills they need in order to progress effectively to the next stage of their education, employment, or training within the prison, or outside of prison when they are released”. Of note was outcomes for ESOL (English for speakers of other Languages) where delivery was judged as very strong, and the teaching observed in this area exemplary. Behaviour during lessons was excellent, with teachers proactive in dealing with any disruption quickly, while showing care and support for their learners.

7.1.5 The Board concurs with the HMPPS findings that the Employment Hub should be available for use 5 days per week, with exploration of alternatives to core hours only. The Board also agrees plans to extend the range and volume of numeracy and literacy delivery should be delivered at pace and additional learning needs (ALN) prisoners should be better identified and their needs actively supported.

7.1.6 The Board therefore very much welcomed the establishment of a Neurodiversity and Additional Learning Needs Hub, which focuses on support for prisoners with a range of conditions. Referrals are received from initial screening, the young adults’ team, diversity staff, challenge support and intervention plans, probation offices, mental health and safer custody, as well as self-referrals. The Board was advised that this service is very much oversubscribed due to the assessed needs of a large proportion of the prison population, which is common across the prison estate. At any one time there were 6 Neurodiversity Hub learners, supported by 1 peer.

7.1.7 The Shannon Trust provides a help to read programme overseen by the neurodiversity support manager in Cardiff. There is a Shannon Trust peer on each wing to support and a green band co-coordinator⁴ who supports within education, skills, and work.

⁴ A prisoner who has a greater degree of trust and movement within their working position.

7.1.8 The Hub is focusing on learners with ALN for those with lower literacy and numeracy levels. The ALN support provided in the prison is of note, with a range of aids including reading aids, 20 audio reading pens, coloured overlays, large fonts, use of PC accessibility tools and noise cancellation headwear. In addition, ten Chromebooks are available to support with learning on wings, uploaded with education courses, wellbeing exercises and the Shannon Trust reading programme. The Do-It Profiler tools is used to screen for neurodivergence and provides individuals hints, tips, and resources. It is now inclusive to foreign nationals as it includes the change of language tool and the maturity screening tool support with the young adult's cohort.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 The prison essential services, i.e., kitchen, waste management, laundry and breakfast packing operated throughout the reporting period. Other areas providing work were the prison cleaners, safer community representation, decency champions, and wing peers. Some workshops also provided employment, such as the print and signs in workshop three and the canteen stores. Unfortunately, employment was not able to be provided for all prisoners who requested it which caused frustrations. Some prisoners also had security restrictions on areas they were unable to work. This did improve as security opened the area guidelines for working.

7.2.2 During the reporting period the employment hub offered the opportunity for prisoners, with 12 weeks or less of their sentence to serve, to attend a week-long employment course, allowing them to compile CVs, attend employability skills training and apply for external jobs before release.

7.2.3 The education and training department continued to plan for the opening of further workshops and training. The Board was advised that the Railtrack/Track Safe course is popular and receives many applications from prisoners prior to an assessment of suitability. The drywall lining and CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) courses are also fully subscribed. All three lead to recognised qualifications for obtaining employment. Plans for a driving simulator are in progress, which will provide driving theory tests for buses and forklift trucks.

7.2.4 Links with external employers continue to improve and include tracking prisoner's progress on release with major employers. It is noted training and provision leading to employment is currently market driven and financed accordingly, but that the Prison does map market demand and respond flexibly wherever possible.

7.2.5 Recognised qualifications remain an important part of the training skills offer. The hospitality workshop offers qualification in health and safety awareness in the workplace and an introduction to the hospitality industry. The multi-media workshop offers qualifications in poster design, working with the media, photography skills, Microsoft Word, and PowerPoint. If a higher level of qualification were offered, i.e. National Vocational Qualifications, the window of employment opportunity would increase. This should be a key goal for all UK prisons, although the Board understands this is difficult to provide in an establishment with a high number of remand and short sentence prisoners.

7.2.6 A 'New futures network employment broker' for Wales works with employers to secure interview and placement opportunities for prisoners. The employment hub at

HMP Cardiff then review the criteria to job match prisoners with potential employers. Between February and August 2023, on average 10 offers of employment were made each month to Cardiff prisoners. There is good evidence employers value the skills that men develop in the workshops. For example, men who completed the CSCS whilst in custody were offered employment in construction and 11 men who completed the Dry Lining NVQ course were offered positions through a dedicated employer. The roofing course also has good links with employers; and Starbucks has offered interviews to men who worked in the hospitality workshop. According to the data collected by Probation, on average 17% of men under their supervision were in employment 6 weeks after release in the reporting period.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 Currently HMP Cardiff does not run any offending behaviour programmes with input to reduce re-offending, concentrating instead on providing education and work placements within the establishment with the added support of the Neurodiversity Unit.

7.3.2 The Board have been told the prison population has a high proportion of prisoners on remand rather than those sentenced. Of those sentenced, most are on short sentences of up to 2 years or have been recalled to prison following a breach of their licence. Those serving over sixteen months are normally transferred to other establishments.

7.3.3 The offender management unit (OMU) has not been fully staffed and, at the beginning of the reporting period, the Board had some concerns about the re-deployment of OMU custodial staff to cover shortfalls on wings in emergency situations, although it is appreciated the re-deployment amounted to 3 or less shifts in a month. However, added to the general short staffing, we were concerned about the impact of this. Positively, it has been noted from May 2023 to the end of the reporting period this practice had stopped. It should be noted that applications about sentence management received this reporting year have increased from 26 to 46 on last year, although changes to Home Detention Curfew eligibility may have had an impact on this increase.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 Invisible Walls Family Services were awarded the contract for delivering support services in 2022-23. Family support staff provide advice and support to prisoners and their families including running the visits department to ensure family contact continues through regular scheduled visits. The visiting hall includes a large soft play area, highchairs and changing equipment, a variety of child friendly activities and Y Cwtch Cafe. Additional services include liaising with social services, supervised visits, family court applications, a free family legal clinic and a range of groups including the Pandas Baby group and Family Days.

7.4.2 Board observations are that Invisible Walls are providing a valuable service which is appreciated by prisoners and their families. After the initial period of taking on the contract and reviewing existing services, Invisible Walls has made several positive changes to improve the family and individual prisoner experience.

7.4.3 During the school holidays Invisible Walls hold themed family days for up to 25 families a session. Since October 2022, there have been seven family days, with

three more planned for November and December 2023. Two of the family days have involved animals, where an external company, Animals Interactive, have brought in their therapy trained animals for the families. This was a huge success, as families were able to hold and feed animals such as snakes, meercats and skunks and have their photos taken, which were printed for both the prisoners and their families.

7.4.4 Invisible Walls has run seven community wellbeing days, targeted at prisoners with protected characteristics such as those 18-25 years old, care experienced, those who reside on B1 unit and those who do not receive social visits. A holistic therapist has delivered tai chi and mindfulness techniques to four prisoners from B1. This session aimed at maintaining and improving health and wellbeing through Qigong techniques which the prisoners could use when they returned to the wing. The prisoner's feedback was positive, with two prisoners who are cellmates stating they were going to practice the meditation together in the evenings. South Wales Fire Service delivered a road safety awareness course to 11 young adult prisoners as part of the community wellbeing programme. This session focused on the importance of road safety using videos and group discussion to share experiences and discourage unsafe road and driving habits.

7.4.5 Of particular concern to the Board during the reporting period has been the **poor telephone service provided by the national Visits Helpline** which was centralised in 2023 in Birmingham. This centralisation has not only led to delays and failings to book required visits, but it has also been noted that local information about prison visiting times and requirements cannot be provided adequately through this England and Wales model. The Board notes the prison itself does not consider this to be a significant issue as it is not raised by prisoners via formal complaints or via general interactions or prisoner forums. However, the Board monitored this over the summer of 2023 following concerns raised via a number of applications and received overwhelmingly negative responses from prisoners and their families about the ease of use, excessive call waiting times and poor outcomes. Such concerns were not raised about the on-line booking service which the Board encouraged families to use as an alternative.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 Funded as part of the 'New futures network', an HMPPS initiative, 'Employment Hub' was opened in Feb 2022 and offered a three-day course 'Skills for work' on CV writing, interview skills, application writing, etc., to ten prisoners each week until Summer 2023. Unfortunately, the course then ended with a change in management, though discussions are ongoing about its future. A new course 'Exit skills workshop' was offered from September 2023 to prisoners with 12 weeks or less on their sentence. Employment Hub also support prisoners applying for bank accounts and IDs such as driver's licence and birth certificate.

7.5.2 The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) is now based in the same building as the Employment Hub and works closely with its manager. Referrals to DWP 'work coaches' come from resettlement as well as when prisoners themselves raise concerns with benefits. Additionally, work coaches proactively search the prison system to identify those nearing release, normally within two weeks. Work coaches then support prisoners applying for benefits and making Job Centre appointments, as well as advising on how best to utilise Job Centre resources. DWP

are also involved in supporting prisoners keep their housing costs paid as part of Universal Credit when their sentence is up to 6 months. On average, 10-25 prisoners are referred to them each month.

7.5.3 DWP has been involved in the aforementioned three-day course. As part of this, they educated prisoners on how best to use Job Centre for finding employment, e.g., being more proactive in highlighting their own interests, skills, and qualifications. They also supported prisoners on how to maintain tenancies. In the past, DWP has also invited Job Centre representatives for sessions in the prison. Discussions are ongoing to arrange Citizens Advice advisors to visit prisoners to support completing benefits applications. Prison peers on wings also help with completing forms.

7.5.4 Funding from DWP has been used to secure a contract with the Cube Centre for the 'On Road' project. This service provided 'through the gate outreach project' for prisoners leaving the prison to provide ongoing support on release such as accompanying them to important appointments. Between 90 to 100 prisoners used this service. This project has now ended but a similar project with the Salvation Army is expected to begin, again with DWP funding.

7.5.5 Every new prisoner receives an initial interview by the resettlement team and referrals are made to many agencies within the establishment and community alike and specifically to Community Rehabilitation Service contract holders, St Giles and the Forward Trust.

7.5.6 The number of monthly referrals is up from last year, with at least 250 referrals being received each month (e.g., 260 in August 2023). **Despite this, the resettlement team remains understaffed** with five staff short. Three new members of staff have been recruited but one of them had to leave for personal reasons. The resettlement manager reports that the two other new staff are an excellent addition to team, and a new administrative officer was also recruited. During the Covid-19 pandemic, peer advisers were recruited to help with initial interviews, but this has now ceased.

7.5.7 A new structure was introduced in June 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic whereby the resettlement team was moved from St. Giles to Probation. Initially due to the required TUPE negotiations, there were issues relating to clarity of roles and responsibilities. However, the resettlement manager reports these issues did not impact on the prisoners and the team are working together well. St Giles confirmed communication with the resettlement team and the prison has been positive.

7.5.8 St Giles receive referrals from resettlement caseworkers from the induction interview if prisoners' needs are well matched with their provision. In South Wales, the organisation offers up to three in-custody sessions to referred prisoners under the 'social inclusion' pathway, and up to ten sessions overall including sessions outside prison for prisoners with complex needs. During these sessions, a wide range of support is offered including practical preparations for leaving the prison such as identifying needs around housing, benefits, and health, and making appropriate referrals. Work with prisoners around their emotional needs such as dealing with anxiety and triggers, maintaining healthy relationships with others, etc is also undertaken.

7.5.9 Following the successful working model in HMP Swansea, St Giles staff are receiving key training in HMP Cardiff so they can meet prisoners on wings. Previously they were meeting men as legal visitors. Currently 12 staff are employed across South Wales & Gwent and there are two vacancies. Four staff will be eventually key trained to visit HMP Cardiff. **Long delays in the vetting process have been an issue in recruitment both for St. Giles and resettlement.**

7.5.10 Only one housing intervention worker for Forward Trust is based in the prison, carrying a caseload of about 60 prisoners at a time. Due to low capacity, Forward Trust is not currently taking remand prisoners on their caseload. About 10-15 referrals are received each month and around 90% of these are of 'no fixed abode'. "All Wales local authority - Help with housing for prison leavers" application forms are completed for all localities (except Rhondda Cynon Taff which have their own form). It is, however, difficult to learn the outcome of these applications i.e., whether appointments are made with prisoners or if they attend. Foreign national prisoners who do not have recourse to public funds cannot receive help from local authorities, so Forward Trust explore other ways of supporting them with housing. Most out of area prisoners are not currently supported by Forward Trust but are instead supported with housing through the Probation service.

7.5.11 Discussions are ongoing regarding recruiting another Forward Trust member of staff. There are also one or two Housing Intervention Workers per county in the community who can help prisoners attend appointments.

7.5.12 The IMB conducted a survey of 37 prisoners with less than a week left on their sentence from May to August 2023. 23 men reported they had somewhere to stay on the first night, whereas 14 responded negatively. Of the 23, 12 were staying with their friends or family, four had housing provided by a housing association or council, two were renting privately and five only had temporary accommodation. Of the 14 men with no accommodation, 11 responded they did not know where to go and three said they would try temporary accommodation by turning up at 'Housing Options' or a Salvation Army hostel. According to Forward Trust, the 'Community Accommodation Service' remains oversubscribed, with only a few beds available in all three tiers which accommodate prisoners with different levels of risk. Issues around the referral to release timeline has also been reported. **As some prisoners get referred to Forward Trust less than a week left before release, the Board notes it is extremely challenging to organise their housing. Housing on release therefore remains an issue of concern to the Board.**

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	345

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	23	25
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	24	31
C	Equality and Diversity (inc. religion)	9	2
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	52	29
E1	Letters, visits, mail, telephones, public protection, restrictions	49	38
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	26	24
F	Food and kitchens	11	7
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	56	62
H1	Property within the establishment	24	25
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	18	35
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	21	19
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	26	46
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	49	36
K	Transfers	14	11
L	Miscellaneous	47	50
L1	Complaints system	12	21
	Total number of applications	461	461

Annex A

List of service providers

A range of public and commercial providers are responsible for delivering services within the prison. Health services are provided by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, learning and skills are provided by His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service in Wales but funded by the Welsh Government, and site maintenance is carried out by Amey.

- Escort services: Serco
- Substance misuse: Dyfodol
- Bereavement counselling: City Hospice
- Visitors' centre: Invisible Walls
- Resettlement support: St Giles, Forward Trust
- Listeners scheme: Samaritans
- Literacy support: The Shannon Trust



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