

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr Farokh Saheb, a prisoner at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, on 24 November 2023

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

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OUR VISION

To deliver high quality and timely independent investigations and work closely with partners to achieve tangible benefits for the safety and confidence of those in custody and under community supervision.

WHAT WE DO



WHAT WE VALUE



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Summary

1. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman aims to make a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and community supervision. One of the most important ways in which we work towards that aim is by carrying out independent investigations into deaths, due to any cause, of prisoners, young people in detention, residents of approved premises and detainees in immigration centres.
2. If my office is to best assist His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in ensuring the standard of care received by those within service remit is appropriate, our recommendations should be focused, evidenced and viable. This is especially the case if there is evidence of systemic failure.
3. Mr Farokh Saheb was remanded into custody on 21 September 2022, charged with child abduction. He died in hospital from relapsed acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (blood cancer) on 24 November 2023, while a prisoner at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. He was 43 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Saheb's family and friends.
4. The PPO family liaison officer wrote to Mr Saheb's next of kin to explain the investigation and to ask if they had any matters they wanted us to consider. They did not respond to our letter.
5. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Saheb's clinical care at HMP Wormwood Scrubs.
6. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Saheb received at HMP Wormwood Scrubs was equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. She found that the multi-agency working between the prison's healthcare team and the hospital was good, and Mr Saheb's care plans had been created with advice from the hospital. The clinical reviewer did not make any recommendations.
7. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Saheb's care. We found no non-clinical issues and make no recommendations.
8. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS did not find any factual inaccuracies.
9. At an inquest held on 15 July 2024, the Coroner concluded that Mr Saheb died of natural causes.

Governor to note

10. While we recognise that Mr Saheb was not restrained in hospital in the month before he died, HMP Wormwood Scrubs was unable to provide a complete set of escort risk assessments for Mr Saheb's hospital admissions between July and August 2023. We were therefore unable to establish whether the use of restraints was reasonable and appropriate during these hospital admissions.
11. We also note that the prison did not offer to visit Mr Saheb's next of kin after he died. While we recognise that they lived far from the prison, national instructions are clear that where it is not possible for the next of kin to be notified of a death in

custody in person, the prison should always arrange a follow-up visit as soon as possible.

Good practice

12. We found evidence of good practice when HMP Wormwood Scrubs enabled Mr Saheb to keep in contact with his family while in hospital by giving him two mobile phones to use, one for UK calls and one for international calls.

Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

April 2024

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