

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr Raymond Hodges a prisoner at HMP Usk, on 24 February 2024

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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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. On 27 July 2017, Mr Raymond Hodges was sentenced to 26 years in prison for sexual offences.
4. Mr Hodges died from a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm, on 24 February 2024, while a prisoner at HMP Usk. He was 78 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Hodges' family and friends.
5. The Ombudsman's office wrote to Mr Hodges' next of kin to explain the investigation and to ask if they had any matters they wanted us to consider. They had no questions but asked for a copy of our report.
6. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Hodges' clinical care at HMP Usk.
7. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Hodges received at Usk was equivalent to what he could have expected to receive in the community. He made one recommendation not directly linked to Mr Hodges' cause of death which the Head of Healthcare will wish to address.
8. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Hodges' care.
9. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.
10. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS did not find any factual inaccuracies.
11. At the inquest held on 22 October 2024, the coroner concluded that Mr Raymond Hodges died of natural causes.

Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

July 2024

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