



Independent investigation into the death of Mr Harold Gibbons, a prisoner at HMP Littlehey, on 12 July 2024

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

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 31 January 2017, Mr Harold Gibbons was sentenced to 16 years in prison for sexual offences. He died in hospital of blood cancer on 12 July 2024, while a prisoner at HMP Littlehey. He was 87 years old. We offer our condolences to those who knew him.
4. Mr Gibbons had no identified next of kin so there was no family involvement in this investigation.
5. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Gibbons' clinical care at HMP Littlehey.
6. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Gibbons received at Littlehey was equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community.
7. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Gibbons' care.
8. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.
9. At the inquest held on 11 October 2024, the Coroner concluded that Mr Gibbons died from natural causes.
10. We shared our initial report with HMPPS and with the prison's healthcare provider, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. They found no factual inaccuracies.

**Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman**

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