

Action Plan in response to the PPO Report into the death of Mr Paul Smyth on 12 October 2024 at HMP Altcourse

Rec No	Recommendation	Accepted / Not accepted	Response Action Taken / Planned	Responsible Owner and Organisation	Target Date
1	The Head of Healthcare and the Merseycare Mental Health Lead should review the process for healthcare assistants to escalate concerns about prisoners with very low mood to a nurse.	Accepted	Discussion have taken place between HOHC and the Mental Health Lead regarding the need to reiterate the process that should be followed by all Health care staff if concerns regarding a patients mood arise. Email of the process sent to Primary care Clinical Lead and cascaded to all staff. The process included the use of tasks and the importance of considering an ACCT. Contact numbers provided for Mental Health Team for all escalations. The Mental Health Team now attend the HC daily team handover to allow for any issues or escalations to raised regarding a patients Mental Health	Merseycare Mental Health Lead	Completed
2	The Head of Healthcare should ensure that for prisoners withdrawing from drugs, staff: • follow a clinical detoxification care plan; • complete physical observations, including NEWS2, to ensure timely	Accepted	The Substance Misuse Clinical Lead has introduced Audits to ensure that all patients have a substance misuse specific care plans. All staff have completed NEWS2 training and this is a mandatory requirement to complete and Clinical Leads monitor compliance of the completions of such monthly via the training system reports. There is a GP available daily to prescribe appropriate symptomatic relief to	Substance Misuse Service Clinical Lead, Practice Plus Group	May 2025

	assessment and monitoring of patients at risk of deterioration; • provide documented symptomatic relief (e.g., for stomach cramps and diarrhoea), in line with NICE NG57 guidelines; and • audit detoxification cases regularly to ensure care plans are in place.		patients and this is also captured as part of the audits and clinical Screenings.		
3	The Head of Healthcare should review and update the Standard Operating Policy for managing benzodiazepine dependence within three months.	Accepted	The Head of Healthcare has escalated the need for the Benzodapines SOP to be updated within the expected timescale of 3 months to the National Substance Misuse Lead within Practice Plus Group via the regional Lead.	Substance Misuse Service National Lead, Practice Plus Group	June 2025
4	The Director should update the prison's Violence Strategy so that it provides clear guidance to staff on how to identify and support prisoners at risk of bullying, intimidation, or violence.	Accepted	HMP Altcourse Violence Strategy is currently under review and will be updated to include clear guidance for staff on how to identify and support prisoners at risk of bullying, intimidation or violence. HMP Altcourse has also implemented a victim support booklet, with aim of supporting those prisoners at risk of bullying intimidation or violence. This new process will also include weekly safer custody staff and mentor meetings to ensure that procedures are being followed.	Head of Safety HMP Altcourse Sodexo	June 2025