

## Good Practice: Data

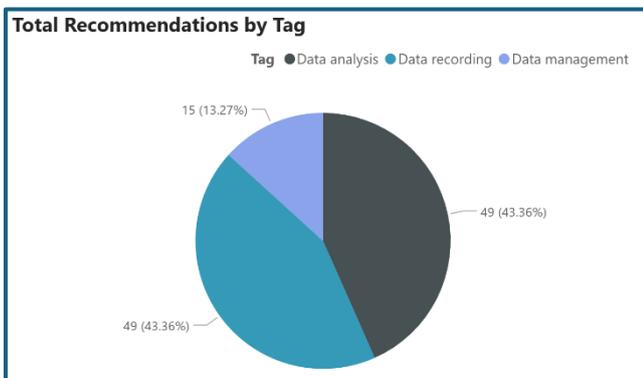
Data remains a persistent challenge across all settings of deprivation of liberty in the UK. AI may or may not produce a magic wand in future, but meanwhile the quest continues for good, consistent and usable quantitative information. NPM bodies report the issues: data is frequently incomplete, owing often to staffing shortages and competing operational demands. Then, there may be limited capacity or expertise to analyse data meaningfully, especially when leaders are relying on outdated or paper-based systems. Together, these issues undermine the ability of establishments to identify risks or measure outcomes.

Despite this, the Reporting Dashboard captures a number of positive examples observed throughout 2025 and early 2026. These examples illustrate how effective data processes can strengthen safeguards, support more equitable and responsive practice and provide increased access to information for all.

### Data Recording:

Effective data recording in deprivation of liberty settings is important; it creates a reliable and transparent record of decisions and events, helping safeguard detainee rights and ensuring accountability.

Across the secure children’s estate, a range of good practices demonstrate thoughtful and consistent approaches to capturing information. Staff at Adel Beck Secure Children’s Home clearly documented the use of restraint and single separation, ensuring that these interventions were only used when proportionate and necessary, and that they supported children’s safety and wellbeing. At Swanwick Lodge, leaders had collected detailed information about children’s starting points, interests and aspirations, enabling teachers to plan individualised curriculums and demonstrating how good data recording can directly improve educational outcomes. At Kyloe House it was reported that the health team had completed children’s records to an “exceptionally high” standard, and also used unambiguous language. Not only were the records very well kept, but they were kept in a way that ensured children could understand them and their progress.



Number of good practice examples relating to each thematic tag relating to data.

In secure mental health settings, well-organised records, with documented involvement from patients or relatives, provided an auditable trail that strengthened safeguarding and professional accountability. At the State Hospital in Scotland, clear evidence of consistent one-to-one sessions between patients and their named nurse was also recorded, demonstrating a robust record of clinical oversight, safeguarding and continuity of care.

Data recording also encompasses a range of practices that extend beyond administrative recording, and there are many good examples across the prison estate. At HMP The Mount, for example, meetings between detainees and the governor are recorded as “vlogs” and made available to all detainees on their laptops, promoting transparency and ensuring that information is accessible to everyone. At HMP Hollesley Bay, data, including detainee strengths, interests, challenges and support needs, was collected and put into a “prisoner profile” that was used from induction to release, and also sent to probation staff. This provided a way to start conversations with detainees and also to ensure staff had a clear understanding of individuals’ needs. Data from Prison Council meetings at HMP/YOI Hindley show systematically whether issues are resolved or require further action, ensuring clear tracking of actions and outcomes, and providing a useful historical record to inform responses to similar issues in the future.

### Data Analysis:

In prisons especially, data analysis has been used positively to protect detainees in a number of ways. At Moorland, Erlestoke and Warren Hill prisons, “excellent” data analysis processes were in place that identified areas of potential inequality, and ensured that those with protected characteristics were not discriminated against. At HMYOI Wetherby, it was encouraging to see that there was analysis of the ethnicities of young people who were restrained, separated or chose to self-isolate.

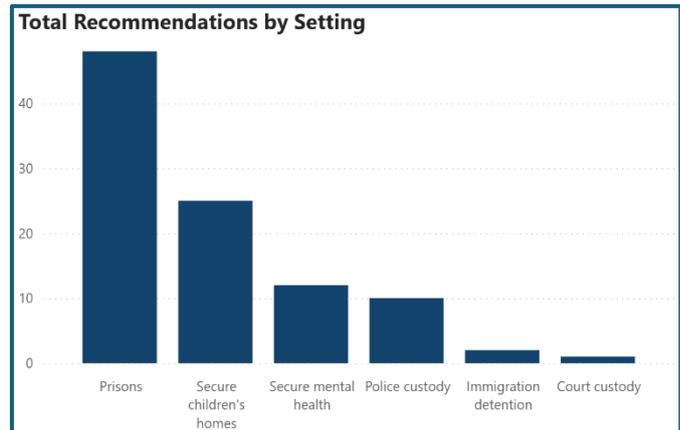
Also reported in many prisons across the UK is good practice regarding data analysis of use of force incidents. At HMP Littlehey there are “diligent” monthly reviews of use of force data, where patterns of incidents are analysed in terms of the days of the week, times of day, location, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation and neurodiversity factors. HMP Leicester reviewed recorded body-worn video camera footage of such incidents on a weekly basis. At both prisons, these reviews also analyse staff conduct and identify where learning and improvement is needed.

Also reported, was the use of data analysis through the Alert, Intervene and Monitor (AIM) application in many prisons. For example, at HMP & YOI Bronzefield, the AIM system highlighted potential concerns, such as when someone was no longer making phone calls, receiving visits or attending activities. This information was then used by staff to safeguard these people. Leaders also analysed data to improve impact of initiatives and reduce complaint response times.

Data analysis has also been positively documented in secure children’s homes. At the Atkinson Unit, the health team had used a range of data to understand how children’s experiences could affect their behaviours. For one child who was struggling with sleep, staff analysed the child’s food intake, staffing rotas, incidents and sleep patterns, which informed an action plan and positively improved the child’s experience. At Rossie Secure Accommodation Services, ongoing analysis and research helped to embed a reflective and innovative culture in the home.

**Data Management:**

Data management relates to the handling and storage of information, as well as its sharing and publication. At Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre, for example, minutes of resident consultation committee meetings and safer custody meetings were not only recorded, but also displayed in the Centre, allowing both staff and detainees access to the information, and promoting transparency and accountability.



*Number of good practice examples relating to data by setting.*

The use of electronic systems for data management continues to be a welcome introduction across many settings of deprivation of liberty. At the medium secure Rohallion Clinic, information on patients’ care and treatment was held electronically and was easily accessible on the patient record system EMIS. It was also noted that records had significantly improved, allowing the reader a clearer understanding of the patient’s needs and history.

In the prison estate, the Health and Safety Coordinator at HMP Barlinnie had developed a comprehensive SharePoint for all health and fire safety documentation, providing a clear and centralised repository that supported effective monitoring and compliance. Also, at HMP Wymott, a new computer system (introduced in 2024) had a positive impact for detainees, especially those arriving from other establishments. Electronically stored coursework at other establishments was automatically available on arrival to HMP Wymott. Previously, this saved data could not be transferred and the work was lost.

Across police stations in the Forth Valley, NHS Lothian’s Royal Edinburgh Hospital and Associated Services developed its own local processes to collate data where the national electronic system did not provide sufficient functionality. This ensured that information was organised and maintained within a reliable system that supported effective access and use.

**Concluding remarks:**

Good data practice underpins the protection of people’s rights in places of deprivation of liberty. Clear, consistent and accessible information ensures that decisions are fair, risks are identified and establishments and staff remain accountable. Investment in strong data systems also positively contributes to cultures that value dignity and transparency, strengthening the overall quality of care and oversight in these settings.