

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr Cyril Beattie, a prisoner at HMP Oakwood, on 29 October 2019

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

Our Vision

To carry out independent investigations to make custody and community supervision safer and fairer.

Our Values

We are:

Impartial: *we do not take sides*

Respectful: *we are considerate and courteous*

Inclusive: *we value diversity*

Dedicated: *we are determined and focused*

Fair: *we are honest and act with integrity*



© Crown copyright 2020

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

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. Our office carries out investigations to understand what happened and identify how the organisations whose actions we oversee can improve their work in the future.
3. Mr Cyril Beattie, who was 75 years old, died of lung cancer on 29 October 2019 at HMP Oakwood. We offer our condolences to Mr Beattie's family and friends.
4. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care that Mr Beattie received after his cancer diagnosis was of a standard equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. She commended healthcare staff for Mr Beattie's care and said that this was the result of exemplary and holistic care. She has not made any recommendations about clinical issues.
5. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern.

Investigation Process

6. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Beattie's clinical care at HMP Oakwood. The clinical review is attached to this report as Annex 1.
7. The PPO investigator has investigated the non-clinical issues in Mr Beattie's care, including his location, the security arrangements for his hospital escorts, liaison with his family and whether compassionate release was considered.
8. The PPO family liaison officer wrote to Mr Beattie's next of kin to explain the investigation. He did not respond to our letter.
9. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS did not find any factual inaccuracies.

Previous deaths at HMP Oakwood

10. Mr Beattie was the 13th prisoner to die from natural causes at Oakwood since October 2017. There are no similarities between our findings in the investigation of Mr Beattie's death and the other deaths.

Key Events

11. Mr Cyril Beattie was serving time in prison for sexual offences and had been at HMP Oakwood since 1 November 2016.
12. Mr Beattie was diagnosed with lung cancer in September 2018 and had chemotherapy until October 2019. When his condition deteriorated and it was evident he was nearing the end of his life, prison managers authorised his cell door to remain unlocked at all times, so that healthcare staff could complete regular checks on his condition.
13. Staff at Oakwood asked Mr Beattie if he wanted to be considered for early release on compassionate grounds. Mr Beattie said that he wanted to stay at Oakwood because he had no family support and did not have a suitable release address.
14. On 29 October, it was confirmed that Mr Beattie had died.
15. The Coroner gave Mr Beattie's cause of death as squamous cell lung cancer.

Sue McAllister, CB
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

June 2020