

**Prisons &  
Probation**

**Ombudsman**  
Independent Investigations

# Independent investigation into the death of Mr Lance Stride, a prisoner at HMP Isle of Wight, on 9 March 2021

**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*



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## 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 Lance Stride, who was 47 years old, died in hospital from lymphoma (a type of cancer) on 9 March 2021, while a prisoner at HMP Isle of Wight. We offer our condolences to Mr Stride's family and friends.
4. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Stride received at Isle of Wight was equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. However, she said that better care planning and case reviews would have been appropriate given the complexity of his clinical needs.
5. We found no non-clinical issues of concern.
6. This version of my report, published on my website, has been amended to remove the names of staff and prisoners involved in my investigation.

## Recommendations

- The Head of Healthcare should ensure that complex cases have care plans started in a timely fashion, and that multidisciplinary case reviews are held to ensure holistic care.

## Investigation Process

7. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Stride's clinical care at HMP Isle of Wight.
8. The PPO investigator has investigated the non-clinical issues in Mr Stride's care, including his location, the security arrangements for his hospital escorts, liaison with his family and whether compassionate release was considered.
9. The PPO's family liaison officer wrote to Mr Stride's next of kin, his father, to explain the investigation. He did not respond.
10. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS found no factual inaccuracies.

## Previous deaths at Isle of Wight

11. Mr Stride was the 14th prisoner to die at Isle of Wight since March 2019. Eight of the previous deaths were from natural causes and five were self-inflicted. There are no significant similarities between those cases and Mr Stride's.

## Key Events

12. On 17 April 2019, Mr Lance Stride was sentenced to 21 years imprisonment for sexual offences. He was moved to HMP Isle of Wight on 15 May.
13. Prior to his imprisonment, Mr Stride had experienced significant health problems arising from his type 1 diabetes (the inability of the body to regulate sugar in the blood), which had left him blind in one eye and with severely reduced vision in the other. In 2007, he had a kidney and pancreas transplant which cured him of his diabetes but required him to be on lifelong immunosuppressants (drugs to prevent his body rejecting the transplanted organs) and to have regular hospital monitoring.
14. On 29 May 2019, a prison GP referred Mr Stride for an urgent scan because of a lump in his neck and abnormal blood test results. Tests showed that he had Hodgkin lymphoma (a cancer of the lymphatic system, which is part of the body's immune system).
15. Mr Stride was moved to HMP Pentonville on 12 August, because of the need for co-ordinated care from several specialist hospital departments under the same roof, which was not available on the Isle of Wight. Pentonville was close to the hospital where Mr Stride had received follow up treatment after his transplants, and so enabled continuity of treatment.
16. Following successful treatment of Mr Stride's lymphoma, he was sent back to the Isle of Wight on 1 October 2020.
17. Shortly after his return to the Isle of Wight, Mr Stride began to experience some digestive problems and pain in his abdomen. On 11 November, following some abnormal blood test results, a prison GP referred him to a hospital for further investigation and, on 27 November, in a follow-up referral, expressed concerns that Mr Stride's cancer may have returned.
18. On 9 December, following a telephone consultation, the hospital requested that Mr Stride be admitted immediately. He was sent to hospital but before the necessary tests could be carried out, Mr Stride discharged himself.
19. Although prison healthcare staff said Mr Stride had the mental capacity to make a decision that was against his best clinical interests, they continued to try and persuade Mr Stride over the next few days to return to hospital. He agreed on 14 December, and he remained in hospital until 21 December.
20. Following a scan which showed that Mr Stride had enlarged lymph nodes, the hospital carried out a biopsy (a procedure to obtain body tissue to examine for abnormalities in the cells) on 5 January 2021, and he had a further scan at the end of January. The hospital diagnosed Mr Stride with extensive non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and said he would require further chemotherapy.
21. Mr Stride was admitted to hospital on 7 February, so that he could start chemotherapy treatment. Over the following month, he remained in hospital. However, the chemotherapy was unsuccessful, and Mr Stride died on 9 March at 1.44am.

22. There was no post-mortem examination as the coroner accepted the cause of death provided by the hospital. The hospital recorded that Mr Stride had died from refractory diffuse large B cell lymphoma stage IV (a fast-growing cancer of the lymphatic system, which had spread to other parts of the body), which had been caused by his kidney and pancreas transplants. Type 1 diabetes and Hodgkin lymphoma were given as underlying issues which contributed to but did not cause the death.

**Louise Richards**  
**Assistant Ombudsman**

**December 2021**

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