

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

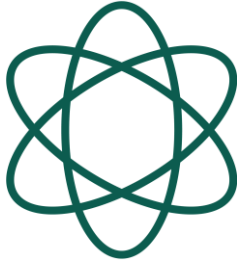
Independent investigation into the death of Mr Henry Rushton, a prisoner at HMP Doncaster, on 8 July 2022

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. We carry out investigations to understand what happened and identify how the organisations whose actions we oversee can improve their work in the future.
3. Mr Henry Rushton died of heart disease on 8 July 2022 at HMP Doncaster. He was 81 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Rushton's family and friends.
4. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Rushton received at Doncaster was of a good standard and was equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community.
5. We found no non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.

The Investigation Process

6. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer, to review Mr Rushton's clinical care at HMP Doncaster.
7. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Rushton's care, including Mr Rushton's location, the security arrangements for his hospital escorts, the emergency response and liaison with his family.
8. The Ombudsman's family liaison officer contacted Mr Rushton's wife to explain the investigation and to ask if she had any matters she wanted us to consider. She did not raise any issues but asked for a copy of our report.
9. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS did not find any factual inaccuracies.
10. We sent a copy of our initial report to Mr Rushton's wife.

Previous deaths at HMP Doncaster

11. Mr Rushton was the nineteenth prisoner to die at Doncaster since July 2020. Of the previous deaths, 11 were from natural causes, four were self-inflicted and three were drug related.

Key Events

12. In March 2019, Mr Henry Rushton was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for sexual offences. On 16 May 2019, he was moved to HMP Doncaster.
13. Mr Rushton had several health conditions including hypertension (high blood pressure) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD - the term for a group of serious lung diseases). He had also had a heart attack in 2017.
14. At 7.53am on 8 July 2022, Mr Rushton's cellmate called to two officers and a healthcare assistant who were walking past the cell. He said that he had not seen Mr Rushton breathe in a while.
15. The officers immediately opened Mr Rushton's cell and the healthcare assistant examined Mr Rushton. She was unable to find a pulse and called a code blue (a medical emergency code used when a prisoner is unconscious or having breathing difficulties). She immediately began CPR on Mr Rushton.
16. Two more members of healthcare staff arrived and moved Mr Rushton to outside his cell door to allow more space for CPR.
17. At 8.20am, the ambulance team arrived and assessed Mr Rushton. They advised healthcare staff to stop CPR. At 8.24am, they pronounced that Mr Rushton had died.

Post-mortem report

18. The post-mortem report concluded that Mr Rushton died of acute myocardial ischaemia (reduced blood flow to the heart) caused by ischaemic heart disease, caused in turn by severe coronary artery atheroma (build-up of fatty deposits on the walls of the arteries around the heart).

Louise Richards
Assistant Ombudsman

January 2023

Inquest

The inquest, held on 31 January 2023, concluded that Mr Rushton died from natural causes.

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