

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr Paul Johnson, a prisoner at HMP Whatton, on 14 March 2023

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

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OUR VISION

To deliver high quality and timely independent investigations and work closely with partners to achieve tangible benefits for the safety and confidence of those in custody and under community supervision.

WHAT WE DO



WHAT WE VALUE



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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. If my office is to best assist His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in ensuring the standard of care received by those within service remit is appropriate, our recommendations should be focused, evidenced and viable. This is especially the case if there is evidence of systemic failure.
3. Mr Paul Johnson died from bronchopneumonia, which was caused by lung cancer, in hospital on 14 March 2023, while a prisoner at HMP Whatton. He was 60 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Johnson's family and friends.
4. The PPO family liaison officer wrote to Mr Johnson's next of kin to explain the investigation and to ask if they had any matters they wanted us to consider. They had questions which have been addressed by the clinical reviewer and separate correspondence.
5. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Johnson's clinical care at Whatton. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Johnson received at Whatton was good and equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. The clinical reviewer made recommendations not related to Mr Johnson's death that the Head of Healthcare will wish to address.
6. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Johnson's care. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.
7. The initial report was shared with Mr Johnson's next of kin. She made some comments which have been addressed in separate correspondence.
8. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS found no factual inaccuracies in the PPO report.
9. At an inquest held on 21 February 2024, the Coroner concluded that Mr Johnson died from natural causes.

Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

February 2023

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