



IPP External Stakeholder Challenge Group

Meeting Notes

Date of meeting: 11 September 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this group is to enable the collective organisations and independent bodies involved in pushing for positive change in ending the IPP sentence to hold HMPPS to account for its delivery of the IPP Action Plan and wider relevant operational practice. It provides a forum for open conversation on a range of issues, to exchange ideas and to challenge proposed changes in a constructive way.

1. Summary of Concerns by External Shareholders

- ☐ All external Stakeholders at the first meeting wanted to be clear, on record, that they all feel that the only way to end the IPP sentence fairly is for the Government to agree to carry out a re-sentencing exercise for all those serving the IPP sentence.
- ☐ The Terms of Reference (ToR) should specifically reference women serving an IPP sentence.
- ☐ All agreed that it is important for the group to have representatives for NHS England and NHS Wales as health is an important underpinning issue affecting the safety and progression of those serving the IPP sentence.

Note: The ToR at Annex A includes the two changes suggested above.

- ☐ Current communication between HMPPS/Government and those serving the IPP sentence is poor and must improve. Improved transparency on plans and progress should be actively shared.
- ☐ Those serving IPP sentences are often afraid to challenge when mistakes are made as they believe that it could look bad for them. Better communications could help improve this.

Action: *Options for bridging the identified gap in communication with those serving the sentence will be developed and then brought to the next group meeting to agree the best approach.*

- ☐ Concerns were raised about regular confusion by Probation Practitioners and prison staff on important processes affecting those serving an IPP sentence, particularly in relation to the difference between IPP licence termination and the suspension of supervision for those on an IPP licence. It indicates a disconnect between the central policies and messaging, and the front-line.

- ☐ Data on changes to the population of those serving an IPP sentence should be mapped against those who have died whilst serving the sentence, so as not to mislead on the extent of progress made in reducing the IPP population.
- ☐ There appears to be a lack of accountability for staff when things go wrong. Some instances of errors made that affect an individual's progress, but no acknowledgement of that with the individual.
- ☐ HMPPS must acknowledge, formally, that having an IPP sentence is a risk factor to safety. This would ensure that those serving the sentence become a priority for ongoing care and support (recommendation from the Prison & Probation Ombudsman Learning Lessons Bulletin – Self-inflicted deaths of IPP prisoners).
- ☐ Need flexibility in options to deliver the required work to help to reduce risk. If the person serving an IPP sentence is not suitable for a specific intervention, then finding a suitable alternative that helps to reduce risk is important.

2. Actions Summary

- ☐ HMPPS to share summary of progress on delivering the IPP Action Plan.
- ☐ HMPPS to discuss with Ministry of Justice Policy Group the possibility of a separate meeting with Stakeholders on the IPP issue.
- ☐ HMPPS to add reference to women serving the IPP sentence to the ToR.
- ☐ HMPPS to invite a representative to join the group from NHS England & NHS Wales
- ☐ HMPPS to discuss with analytical leads the prospect of:
 - o factoring in deaths in custody and the community to the IPP population data; and
 - o breaking down all available IPP data by IPP/DPP/Gender.
- ☐ HMPPS to share the intended agenda for future Progression Board meetings with the group ahead of each Board meeting.
- ☐ HMPPS and the Parole Board to identify those serving IPP sentences who have been impacted negatively by being caught in the middle of the two recent changes to the open conditions test, so that the Parole Board can prioritise their cases when they are next due.
- ☐ UNGRIPP to send a list of collated feedback on the IPP Action Plan to HMPPS.

3. AOB

- ☐ Clarity was sought on the parameters of IPP changes that this group and the wider plan will cover.

Note: The scope of change is all HMPPS activity spanning the prison and community periods of an IPP sentence up to the point of IPP licence termination.