



Oifig An Chigire Príosún
Office of the Inspector of Prisons

Death in Custody Investigation Report

Mr. K
Cork Prison
While in
Cork University Hospital
7th October 2020

[Submission Date (to Minister)] 18 January 2023

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GLOSSARY

OIP	Office of the Inspector of Prisons
IPS	Irish Prison Service
DiC	Death in Custody
PO	Prison Officer
NoK	Next of Kin
Class Officer	Prison Officer
ACO	Assistant Chief Officer
PHMS	Prisoner Healthcare Management System
PIMS	Prisoner Information Management System
CNO	Chief Nurse Officer
NO	Nurse Officer
CO	Chief Officer

INTRODUCTION

1. Preface

- 1.1 The Office of the Inspector of Prisons (OIP) was established by the Department of Justice under the Prisons Act 2007 (the Act). Since 2012, the Minister has instructed the Inspector of Prisons to investigate deaths in prison custody. This includes the death of any person which occurs within one month of their temporary release from prison custody. The OIP also carry out regular inspections of prisons. The Office is independent of the Irish Prison Service (IPS) and the Inspector of Prisons and staff of the OIP are independent of the Department of Justice in the performance of statutory functions.
- 1.2 The OIP can make recommendations for improvement where appropriate; and our investigation reports are published by the Minister for Justice, subject to the provisions of the Act, in order that investigation findings and recommendations are disseminated in the interest of public transparency, to promote best practice in the care of prisoners.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives for investigations of deaths in custody are to:
 - Establish the circumstances and events surrounding the death, including the care provided by the Irish Prison Service (IPS);
 - Examine whether any changes in IPS operational methods, policy, practice or management arrangements could help prevent a similar death in the future;
 - Ensure that the prisoner's family have an opportunity to raise any concerns they may have, and take these into account in the investigation;
 - Assist the Coroner's investigation and help to fulfil the obligation of the State under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, by ensuring as far as possible that the full facts are brought to light and any relevant failing is exposed, any commendable practice is identified, and any lessons from the death are learned; and
 - Identify areas that may be pivotal in achieving or obstructing progress of the Department of Justice 2021 to 2023 Strategy Statement to create a 'Safe, Fair and Inclusive Ireland' (Goals 2 and 3).

3. Methodology

- 3.1 Our standard investigation methodology aims to thoroughly explore and analyse all aspects of each case. It comprises interviews with staff, prisoners, next of kin (NoK); analysis of prison records in relation to the deceased's life while in custody; and examination of evidence, such as CCTV footage and phone calls.
- 3.2 This report is structured to detail the events and actions of the Irish Prison Service from committal of Mr. K to Cork Prison until the time of his death in Cork University Hospital.

4. Administration of Investigation

- 4.1 On Tuesday 29 September 2020, the OIP was notified that Mr. K had been taken to Cork University Hospital having been found unconscious in his cell. On Wednesday 7 October 2020, the OIP was informed that Mr. K had died.
- 4.2 Cork Prison Management provided the OIP with all relevant information in accordance with the standardised checklist of required information.
- 4.3 The cause of death is a matter for the Coroner.

5. Family Liaison

- 5.1 Liaison with the deceased's family is a very important aspect of the Inspector of Prisons role when investigating a death in custody.
- 5.2 Inspectors communicated with Mr. K's family after his death and met with them on Tuesday, 28 September 2021. An in-person meeting was delayed due to COVID 19 restrictions. The role of the OIP in relation to the investigation of Mr. K's death in custody was explained to the family. Mr K's family asked a number of questions regarding Mr. K's care while in custody (see section 14).

INVESTIGATION

6. Cork Prison

- 6.1 Cork Prison is a closed, medium security prison for adult males with an operational capacity of 296 beds. It is the committal prison for counties Cork, Kerry and Waterford.
- 6.2 During Covid-19, A1 landing accommodated prisoners already in custody who were required to quarantine or isolate. B1 landing served as the committal landing for new arrivals into the prison. Committal prisoners were required to quarantine for 14 days on arrival into the custody of Cork Prison.
- 6.3 Mr. K was the second death of a prisoner in the custody of Cork Prison in 2020; and the eleventh death in IPS custody that year.

7. Family Concerns

- 7.1 Mr. K's family asked nine questions of the OIP. One question has been removed as it is not relevant to the investigation by the OIP and the remaining eight have been considered in this investigation and are responded to in section 14.

8. Background

- 8.1 Mr. K was the father of two children. His family informed the OIP that he was an active person, an avid sports fan and had previously held a senior position in an engineering company until his life changed considerably following a road traffic collision in which he sustained serious injuries, resulting in him being unable to continue working. Subsequently, he became addicted to medication, thereafter progressing to the use of controlled substances. Recognising his addiction, Mr. K voluntarily attended a rehabilitation centre on two separate occasions and while he successfully completed the rehabilitation therapy, at some point he relapsed.
- 8.2 On Tuesday 22 September 2020, Mr K's mother, brought him to a dental appointment in Cork and received a call on her mobile that the Gardaí were looking for her son. She took Mr K to meet with Gardaí at her mother's address. The Gardaí informed Mr K that they had a committal warrant to place him in the custody of Cork Prison. Mr K's mother advised the OIP that she informed the Gardaí that her son was in a 'bad place' and she was reassured they would look after him. When later asked, the Gardaí who arrested Mr K stated that they did not recall any concerns being mentioned for Mr K's wellbeing and did not have any reason to report anything to the IPS. They stated the only paperwork handed over by An Garda Síochána to the IPS was the warrant of detention.

9. Committal Process

- 9.1 On Tuesday 22 September 2020, Mr. K was brought to Cork Prison by members of An Garda Síochána. On arrival at 16:01hrs, the committal process began with the warrant being checked by a prison officer to verify it was correctly authorised. The OIP were informed that Mr. K was then provided with an information booklet explaining prison protocols, his rights and entitlements. At handover from An Garda Síochána to the IPS there was no documentary

exchange regarding any known information of health or security risks. As in para 8.2, the Gardaí involved stated they were not aware or informed of any risks to Mr. K.

- 9.2 As part of the committal process, Nurse A conducted a committal interview with Mr. K. Questions relating to his 'Mental Health History' formed part of the committal interview. In reply to the following question "Ever deliberately self-harm /attempted suicide? The word "Yes" was selected from the dropdown menu and, in reply to details on "Self-Harm Methods": "Attempted Hanging." States he 'tried to hang himself while in Garda custody last weekend'. States 'he was off his face on benzos'. The examination was recorded on the Prisoner Health Management System (PHMS). During this process, Mr. K also disclosed to Nurse A, a history of substance abuse and withdrawal seizures. However, it would appear that this information may in fact relate to Mr K's previous committal to prison in 2018, not his 2020 committal. See further, paragraph 13.3. Insofar as the Inspectorate has been able to ascertain, Mr. K was not in Garda custody on the weekend prior to his 2020 committal.¹
- 9.3 Following the Committal Interview, Nurse A made an entry in the Nurse Notes section of the PHMS recording a history of drug misuse, smokes heroin, "*last smoked earlier today*". Nurse A also recorded that Mr. K denied any psychiatric history and had "*No suicidal ideation or intent. Denies of any history of anxiety. Guarantees his own safety – states he will not harm himself when questioned.*"
- 9.4 Nurse Officer A recommended that Mr. K be accommodated in a '*Shared Cell Normal Landing*'. This recommendation was entered onto PHMS and was automatically populated on the Governors section on the Prisoner Information Management System (PIMS), complying with the requirement of Prison Rule 100 (1) (h).² However, the Nurses Notes section of PHMS entered at 16:27 on 22 September 2022, has an entry made by Nurse A which stated that Mr K was "*committal quarantine status.*"
- 9.5 The IPS developed algorithms in response to the Covid-19 pandemic having regard to the Public Health advices in place at the time. The algorithm in place in September 2020, which was provided to the Inspectorate, covering the 'Clinical Criteria For Prisoners(s) To Be Tested' stated that committals were to be isolated "*in a designated isolation cell.*"
- 9.6 In accordance with the IPS algorithm Mr. K was accommodated in Covid-19 quarantine on B1 landing, which the Irish Prison Service refer to as being placed on Rule 103³ of the Prison Rules

¹ The Inspectorate has gathered no evidence to indicate whether or not Mr K had actually been in Garda custody during the weekend prior to his 2018 committal, or if he had actually attempted to hang himself at that time. See also paragraphs 11.4, 11.7, 12.1, 12.3 and 12.5.

² 100. (1) A healthcare professional shall, in the performance of his or her functions -
(h) where he or she becomes aware of an aspect of the prison environment or regime that he or she considers to be particularly detrimental to the physical or mental health of any prisoner or other person, draw it to the attention of the Governor as soon as may be after his or her becoming so aware.

³ Where a prison doctor believes there is a serious risk to the health of a prisoner and makes a recommendation in writing on medical grounds in relation to that prisoner to the Governor, the Governor shall, subject to paragraph (2), implement the recommendation as soon as may be thereafter.

(2) Subject to any direction of the Director General under paragraph (4), the Governor may, for the purpose of maintaining good order and safe and secure custody or on other reasonable grounds, decide not to implement a recommendation under this Rule (other than a recommendation that a prisoner, who is suffering from, or suspected of suffering from, a contagious or infectious disease or condition that threatens the health or well-

2007 - 2020. Rule 103. (1) states: Where a prison doctor believes there is a serious risk to the health of a prisoner and makes a recommendation in writing on medical grounds in relation to that prisoner to the Governor, the Governor shall, subject to paragraph (2), implement the recommendation as soon as may be thereafter.

- 9.7 The Covid-19 infection control measures as determined by the IPS under Rule 103 include:⁴
- a) Quarantine of all new prisoners (testing of all new committals to the prisons was in place, which allowed for prisoners to exit quarantine and enter the general population “if asymptomatic (after 6 swab only)”).
 - b) Isolation of a suspected case or a prisoner with symptoms to prevent the risk of transmission of infection.
- 9.8 Mr. K was accommodated on his own in a cell furnished for double occupancy including a bunk bed with a tubular frame. He was permitted to retain his own clothing, including his footwear with laces.
- 9.9 On Wednesday 23 September 2020 at 12:00hrs Prison Doctor A recorded on PHMS Doctors Notes “*new committal on street drugs, no alcohol issue, urine positive for heroin, opiates and benzo. looking for methadone wil [sic] start on non-opiates detox.*” There is no written reference to any history of self-harm or any risk-related review. The next entry by a Doctor is on Saturday 26 September 2020 (shown post as Prison Doctor B).

10. Governors Committal Interview

- 10.1 The Governors’ committal interview with Mr. K took place around 15:00hrs on Wednesday 23 September 2020. Due to infection control measures, all face to face interviews were suspended and replaced by conversing through the observation hatch or, by using the in cell fixed phone. Inspectors were unable to confirm how Mr. K committal interview was conducted, as the manner of the interview was not recorded on PIMS and the Governor was unable to clarify how it took place.
- 10.2 Following the interview, the relevant sections of the PIMS relating to the Governor’s committal interview with Mr. K was completed. The Governor’s committal section included the entry by health care of a recommendation for ‘*Shared Cell Normal Landing.*’ There was no entry made by the Governor under the heading “Other Concerns” and nothing else was recorded on PIMS relating to any risks or concerns for Mr. K’s wellbeing or safety.

being of others, be segregated in order to prevent the spread of the disease or condition) after - (a) discussing the matter with the prison doctor, and (b) taking account of the likely impact of not implementing the recommendation on the prisoner.

⁴ [January-2022-Restriction.pdf \(irishprisons.ie\)](#) (page 2).

11. Events related to the period 23 September to 27 September 2020

- 11.1 At 10:57hrs on Wednesday 23 September 2020, Nurse Officer B visited cell 6 to assess Mr. K for Covid-19. Toxicology had been conducted during his committal process and the results yielded a positive result for multiple substances. Doctor A's entry on PHMS at 12:00 on 23 September 2022 recorded that Mr. K was "*looking for methadone*". Dr A recorded that Mr K "*wil [sic] start on non-opiates detox*" and prescribed four types of medication to be taken three times daily.
- 11.2 On the morning of Thursday 24 September 2020, Nurse Officer B made a record that Mr. K "*in addition to withdrawal aches and pains this man is now reporting loss of taste and smells*". It is recorded that Mr K stated that the "*onset of same occurred overnight but did not report to any staff member.*" Nurse Officer B reclassified Mr. K as Covid isolation and "*referred for swabbing*" which was obtained at 18:15hrs on 24 September 2020.
- 11.3 Over the following two days, Mr. K was monitored for Covid symptoms and PHMS records showed his sense of smell and taste were returning. Chief Nurse Officer A informed the investigation team that on Saturday 26 September 2020 Mr. K refused all his medication at 09:00hrs but did avail of his afternoon and evening medication. At 11:56hrs Prison Doctor B recorded that he reviewed the notes for Mr. K and that he met the criteria for methadone detox and to start a 21-day course. As a result, methadone was prescribed in place of the Seroquel that had originally been prescribed by Dr A.
- 11.4 At 06:45hrs on Sunday 27 September 2020, Nurse Officer C received a call from Prison Officer A who requested the nurse to assess the behavior of Mr. K. Nurse Officer C attended his cell and recorded that Mr. K appeared to be "*suffering delusions*". The Nurse also recorded that Mr K "*seems to be a some [sic] sort of brief reactive psychosis without stressors, no previous psychiatric history noted.*" Nurse Officer C also recorded that Mr. K stated he "*believes that he has been stabbed and that the culprits are outside the prison.*" *No evidence of either.*" Nurse Officer C recorded that Mr. K 'denied hearing voices', *reassured that his thoughts are not the case.*" Mr K advised Nurse C that he had no '*thoughts of self-harm or suicide*' and as per the nursing notes, guaranteed his own safety.
- 11.5 As per the Medications Chart on 27 September 2020 Mr. K accepted methadone. Mr. K refused both his morning and afternoon medication on 27 September 2020 but availed of evening medication.
- 11.6 On the morning of 27 September 2020. Nurse Officer A recorded on PHMS their engagement with Mr. K re Covid-19 check and it is recorded that Mr K informed the Nurse that "*that he got stabbed and slashed in Blackpool last night*". Nurse Officer A recorded that Mr. K asked to see a GP to review his wounds. Nurse A recorded that there were no visible injuries and he appeared to be '*hallucinating*' and confirmed would arrange for the GP to review Mr K.
- 11.7 At 21:15hrs, Nurse Officer C recorded checking on Mr. K. When Mr. K was asked about his recollection of their conversation earlier that morning (para 11.4) it is recorded that he seemed to become quite embarrassed, confirmed that he did recall the conversation, but denied having those thoughts anymore. Nurse Officer C also made a record that a risk assessment was considered regarding Special Observation but there was "*no identifiable risk to self or others,*

appeared to have had an altered mental state earlier but not at present, in a single cell. Await GP assessment."

12. 28 September 2020 – Day of Being Found Unconscious

- 12.1 On 28 September 2020, Mr. K was administered methadone but refused his other medication morning and afternoon. Nurse B made an entry on PHMS that she had a lengthy engagement with Mr. K during which he told the nurse that he had been *"left out of cell 4 to 5 days ago to go for a walk"* outside of the prison environment. He stated that he was stabbed during this period. Nurse Officer B recorded that Mr. K was *"orientated to place"* but did not know month or year – he knew his name and date of birth. It is recorded on PHMS he stated to Nurse Officer B *"You think I'm crazy, I'm not."* Nurse Officer B recorded that Mr. K was scheduled to meet Dr. Morgan, the Psychiatrist, the following day.
- 12.2 Prison Doctor A attended Mr. K's cell while Nurse B was present but Mr. K refused to be seen by the doctor.
- 12.3 At 12:03hrs Mr. K's mother, spoke to her son for six minutes on the phone. This call was recorded on the prison's telephone monitoring system. Mr K's mother informed the OIP inspectors that during the telephone conversation her son stated that his girlfriend attended Cork Prison *'last night'* and they had socialised. Inspectors were also informed that he stated that prison officers had brought him to Blackpool where he was attacked and had sustained injuries.
- 12.4 Mr. K's mother stated that she immediately became worried for her son's safety, she called the prison and spoke to Nurse Officer B to voice her concerns. Mr. K's mother told OIP inspectors that she was told by the Nurse that her son appeared to be hallucinating and was not making sense and staff were aware of the situation and they were keeping a close eye on him.
- 12.5 CCTV footage showed that from the time Nurse B received the call from Mr. K's mother there were 13 checks on his cell by prison staff including by the nurse officer at 15:23. At 16:07 Nurse Officer B recorded on PHMS that Mr. K stated that he alleged that there were 50 people outside his window threatening his life. Nurse Officer B recorded that she *"reassured as best possible that nobody can access his cell."*
- 12.6 At 16:28hrs, CCTV shows that a check was conducted on Mr K's cell by Prison Officer B.
- 12.7 At 16:53hrs, CCTV footage viewed showed Prison Officer A checking on Mr. K's cell and immediately calling a 'Code Red Alert'⁵. At 16:54hrs Prison Officer A and Assistant Chief Officer A entered the cell and reported cutting a ligature and placing Mr. K on the cell floor.
- 12.8 At 16:55hrs, Nurse Officers B and D arrived. They informed OIP inspectors that they immediately began to administer CPR. They were followed closely by Chief Nurse Officer A and Nurse Officer E who assisted with medical intervention.

⁵ Prison code for an urgent medical situation – requiring medical staff and equipment.

- 12.9 At 17:07hrs the National Ambulance Service arrived and paramedics took over medical care. At 17:20hrs the ambulance crew departed with Mr K for Cork University Hospital.
- 12:10 Mr. K's registered next-of-kin was his partner. She was contacted by a Chief Officer advising her to attend Cork University Hospital. In a statement, Mr. K's partner confirmed that contact was made with her at approximately 17:00hrs and that the Chief Officer apologised for having to relay over the phone that Mr K had been removed to hospital having attempted suicide.
- 12.11 Mr K's mother informed OIP inspectors that she was then contacted by Mr. K's partner and next-of-kin and asked to attend Cork University Hospital as Mr. K had been admitted. Mr. K's mother stated that she only became aware of the seriousness of her son's condition when a doctor from the resuscitation unit explained what had happened and stated that he was been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. Mr. K's mother stated that she had not been contacted directly by the prison and "*the lack of information from the prison*" had caused her "*stress and upset.*"
- 12.12 Following this incident, Mr. K never regained consciousness and was pronounced dead on Wednesday, 7 October 2020.

13. Cell Allocation and Known Risks

- 13.1 Mr. K was accommodated in cell 6 on B1 landing which was allocated to accommodate new committals that fall under Rule 103 (see para 9.5) for his entire period in Cork Prison.
- 13.2 Cell 6 was equipped with a toilet, shower facilities, sink, a bunk bed, a kettle, television and a telephone.⁶
- 13.3 The family of Mr. K provided the OIP with material they had obtained from the IPS following a Freedom of Information Request, including Risk and Alerts forms relating to previous committals. There were four Risk and Alerts forms completed by nursing staff in respect of Mr. K's committals. The nurse completing the respective forms provided the following with replies to set questions::
- Mr. K's committal on 11 April 2013, the Risk and Alerts form contained the following:
 - Risk Factor: 'high'
 - Reason for Concern: 'committal'
 - Level of Concern: 'high'
 - Place on Special Obs; 'No'
 - Risk Deactivation Date: 15/4/2013
 - Risk Deactivation Reason: 'Deactivated on prisoner's release'
 - On Tuesday 21 March 2018 a Risk and Alerts form was completed in respect of Mr K's committal on 20 March 2018.
 - Risk Factor: 'new committal'
 - Reason for Concern; 'new committal'
 - Level of Concern: 'high'

⁶ Prisoners are limited on the use of the phone and are required to register numbers with the prison. All calls are recorded (except with a solicitor).

- Background Factors: Hx of addiction issues
 - Action Taken: Referred to GP and special obs
 - Special Obs; 'no'
 - Special Obs Deactivation Reason: 'reviewed by G.P.'
 - Deactivation Date: 21 March 2018
- In respect of 11 April 2018 committal, Nurse Officer A replied to questions as follows:
 - Risk Factor: 'new committal'
 - Reason for Concern: 'new committal'
 - Level of Concern: 'attempted hanging while in Garda custody last weekend while intoxicated.'
 - Action taken: 'Guarantees own safety.'
 - Placed on special obs.' 'no'
 - Special Obs Deactivated Reason: 'seen by gp-no risk identified'
 - Special Obs Deactivation Date: 12 April 2018
 - On Sunday 21 February 2019, Nurse Officer F completed the Risk and Alerts Form as follows:
 - Risk Factor: 'committal'
 - Reason For Concern: 'attempted hanging in Garda station last year.'
 - Level of Concern: 'High'
 - 'Place on Special Ob's': 'No'
 - Special Obs Deactivated Reason: 'seen by Dr mane-moved to a2'
 - Special Obs Deactivation Date: '22/02/2019'

13.4 The Risk and Alerts section of PHMS is completed by the Nurse who conducts the committal interview and is only completed if the nurse has concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a committal and if, in the view of that nurse, there are any risks to which healthcare colleagues should be 'alerted'. No such entry was made in 2020.

14. Family Response

- 14.1 The following section contains a list of concerns raised by family members of Mr. K and the responses provided by the Office of the Inspector of Prisons. (The first question was omitted as mentioned above):
- a) While Mr K was in custody confirmation is sought by the family as to whether or not, he received medication or was forced to take medication while in custody at Cork Prison?
Response. Mr K received medication in line with clinical protocols. There was no evidence to suggest that Mr. K was forced to take medication. It would not be lawful for the IPS to administer medication against a person's wishes in a prison. As detailed in this report and recorded by prison staff, Mr K declined his medication on a number of occasions.
 - b) Confirmation as to whether checks were in line with the IPS policy and procedures.
Response. Mr K was checked in line with IPS Monitoring of prisoners in a cell: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP 11/23) and Monitoring of prisoners during night guard duty (SOP 11/22). The SOPs stipulate a prisoner to be checked every

two hours during the day and at intervals of no greater than every 3 hours at night time. The CCTV footage viewed showed that Mr K was, in fact, checked more frequently than is required by the SOPs. (Both SOPs were introduced in 2019).

- c) An explanation as to what the committal process entailed prior to 2020, and also in light of Covid-19 what the new measures were.

Response. Prison Rules require that new committal prisoners are medically examined by a Doctor and an interview is conducted with the Governor. Covid procedures introduced a requirement that all new committals provide a negative Covid test and complete 14 days quarantine period. Thereafter, the prisoner is then released into the general prison population. (See para 15.3 (e) post).

- d) How long did it take when Mr K was discovered from opening the cell door, to when the Ambulance Service arrived?

Response. From a review of CCTV, when Mr K was initially observed in need of assistance it took less than one minute to open the cell and first aid commenced immediately. Nursing staff were in his cell within two minutes and continued to provide medical assistance until the National Ambulance Service paramedics arrived 14 minutes later.

- e) Why was Mr. K screaming in his cell for six days, why was he in this distressed state?

Response. This report provides an overview of the state of mind of Mr. K during his time in custody and interaction with prison staff. There is no evidence that Mr K was screaming in his cell for six days.

- f) Was Mr. K properly assessed under the regulations particularly under the mental health act and was he assessed by the medical team regarding his state of mind?

Response. Mr K underwent a Nurses and Doctor's committal interview. As part of the Nurses Committal interview questions are asked of a new committal regarding their mental health. There is nothing in the records received to indicate that Mr K suffered from or was treated for a mental health illness. A review of PHMS indicates that Mr. K was examined daily as outlined in this report. A psychiatric appointment was made for Mr. K to be assessed on Tuesday 29 September 2020.

- g) At noon on Monday 28 September 2020, Mr. K's mother telephoned the prison to raise her concerns. How many observations were carried out following this telephone call?

Response. CCTV footage revealed a total of 13 checks were carried out on Mr. K following his mother's telephone call shortly after noon on Monday 28 September 2020.

- h) Why was there prison officers present in the Intensive Care unit at this very difficult time?

Response. The IPS Escorting of Prisoners, SOP (SOP No. 11/023/S01) requires that all hospital inpatient escorts have no fewer than two officers present with a prisoner at all times. In certain circumstances, the Prison Governor can request compassionate temporary release when a prisoner is seriously unwell in hospital and a doctor makes a recommendation that a patient is unlikely to survive. There is no suggestion this was considered in the case of Mr. K. Since February 2022,

the Irish Prison Service has introduced a policy providing guidance for prison governors on end of life care.

15. Recommendations

The OIP makes four recommendations to the Irish Prison Service in response to the death of Mr K:

- 1) The Irish Prison Service should introduce a Person Escort Record, which should be completed for every movement of a prisoner into or out of a prison either by Irish Prison Service staff or by members of An Garda Síochána. This should include details of all known risks of self-harm and vulnerability in addition to security⁷ considerations.⁸ (Example of HMPPS provided at footnote).
- 2) Identification of potential ligature points and items of potential self-harm to those at risk should form part of 'daily inspections' and policy in all prisons, as agreed in the National Strategy for Prevention of Suicide.
- 3) Anti-ligature detention furniture (such as in Annex) should be evaluated for use where necessary to mitigate against self-harm.⁹
- 4) Information about a prisoner's previous history of self-harm recorded in the Risks and Alerts system should also be recorded on the Prison Information Management System and all prison staff with a duty of care to that prisoner, including the Governor, should be made aware of the existence of such information.¹⁰

16. Support Organisations

Those who are affected by a death in custody can obtain assistance or advice from a number of charities and support groups. The Office of the Inspector of Prisons has an information pamphlet for relatives and friends of someone who dies in the custody of a prison. Further information can be found on the OIP website at www.oip.ie.

* * *

The Office of the Inspector of Prisons would like to thank the family of Mr K for their assistance and insight into his life, and again to offer our sincere condolences.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Person Escort Policy 2019 HMPPS - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988643/per-paper-detailed-guidance-hmpps.pdf

⁹ **Commitment 6.2.3:** The IPS will ensure that access to ligature points in cells is minimised and that this issue is given ongoing attention, particularly in the planning of all new prisons.

¹⁰ As footnote 2 above.

ANNEX:

Figure 1 below is an example of the sleeping requirements for a detainee that provides a durable, anti-ligature and is a self-harm free product used in other jurisdictions.

Figure 1: Anti-Ligature detention furniture¹¹



¹¹ <https://max-secure.com/products/resident-room-furniture/>
