



18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### Safety Programme Stakeholder Update – Impact of COVID-19

The purpose of this note is to provide you with a summary of the changes we have had to implement in response to the impact of COVID-19 across the prison estate. My intention is to ensure that we continue to support prisons to operate safely during these unprecedented times. We have, therefore, reviewed the work delivered through the Safety Programme, and identified what work it is necessary to pause or continue at the current time. I wanted to ensure that you were aware of the work being undertaken in such challenging circumstances.

#### Work that will be paused:

The majority of reforms planned for delivery under the Safety Programme for 2020/21 has been paused, initially for a period of three months. The timescales will then be reviewed depending on how COVID-19 continues to impact. The work paused includes:

- The roll-out of Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) version 6.
- Training staff in PAVA, SPEAR and Rigid Bar Handcuffs.
- The implementation of the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model in the women's and open estate.

#### Work that will continue:

As part of the need to support our colleagues on the frontline we have redeployed some members of the Safety Group. This leaves a small core of HMPPS staff, MoJ policy staff and project delivery staff to support the central COVID-19 team on the safety workstream and take forward work on the programme.

This core team will continue to develop or deliver some aspects of work, including:

- Development of the Safety Policy Framework.
- Monitoring and providing advice on policies and reforms that have already been implemented or partially implemented, and;
- Planning for and completing preliminary work for future reforms.

Exceptional arrangements have also been put in place in order to support the safety of staff and those in our care during COVID-19. Due to the unprecedented challenges we are facing at this time I have taken the operational decision to extend the provision of PAVA to all adult male closed prisons where it will be deployed only to staff that have been trained in its use alongside SPEAR training. This is to ensure a presence of PAVA at the majority of all adult male closed prisons during this unprecedented time. We will be scrutinising all uses at a national level, prisons are required to ensure that all uses of PAVA (whether drawn and the subsequently used or not used) are telephone reported to the National Incident Management Unit and a detailed report is returned to physical safety. Any concerns identified during this scrutiny will be addressed directly with the establishment.

Further work will be undertaken to establish plans for recovery in due course.

Yours sincerely

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