



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From Nadine Dorries MP  
Minister of State for Patient Safety,  
Suicide Prevention and Mental Health*

*39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU*

*020 7210 4850*

PO-1262116

Ms Juliet Lyon CBE  
Chair  
Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody

Mr John Bache JP  
National Chair  
Magistrates Association

By email to: [jon.collins@magistrates-association.org.uk](mailto:jon.collins@magistrates-association.org.uk)

24 March 21

Dear Ms Lyon and Mr Bache,

Thank you for your joint correspondence of 5 October to Matt Hancock about prisoners' mental health. I apologise for the delay in replying, which has been caused by an unprecedented volume of correspondence throughout the pandemic.

We know that it is important that steps are taken to identify, assess and meet the needs of vulnerable people at the point at which they first encounter the criminal justice system. Providing appropriate intervention and treatment, at the right time and in the right place, is vital to improving outcomes for people and provides a better alternative to short custodial sentences. I am grateful to the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody and the Magistrates' Association for their support for the Community Sentence Treatment Requirement (CSTR) Programme.

We continue to work with our justice partners to expand the use of CSTRs. You will have seen the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Sentencing White Paper: A Smarter Approach to Sentencing, published in September, which sets out a renewed focus on community sentencing. There is a section on CSTRs, and our ambition to expand their availability and use, to support rehabilitation and reduce reoffending through a range of treatments.

As you will know, the MoJ has committed to supporting the effective scale-up of the CSTR programme with extra funding for this financial year, in addition to the funding that NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has already committed through the *NHS Long Term Plan*. Department of Health and Social Care and MoJ officials continue to work in partnership with NHSE&I and Public Health England to look at the best ways to use the extra funding available to support rolling out the programme.

I hope you will understand that I am unable to comment on the outcome of the Spending Review at this stage, but I hope the information above demonstrates that we are

committed to supporting the right interventions for offenders through the increased use of CSTRs.

I hope this reply is helpful and I look forward to speaking to you about this after recess.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'NADINE DORRIES', written in a cursive style.

**NADINE DORRIES**