

10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) joint thematic titled "Inspection of the criminal justice journey for individuals with mental health needs and disorders" was published in November 2021. Whilst Cheshire Constabulary was not one of the forces visited during the inspection, it still gives a vital analysis of the experiences of individuals with mental health and learning disabilities in the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

The (CJS) needs to protect victims, however it is only right and proper that people who find themselves in the CJS are treated appropriately and with fairness.

The report makes numerous recommendations which are being addressed in Cheshire. I will monitor progress to ensure that these areas of national concern become best practice and we will continue to strive to deliver the best possible service, recognising the unique needs, of people in our care.

### **Recommendation**

Ensure that all dedicated investigative staff receive training on vulnerability which includes inputs on responding to the needs of vulnerable suspects (as well as victims). This should be incorporated within detective training courses.

*Vulnerability training is provided to all frontline officers including our detective training courses. Our trainee detective programme includes a module on mental health. Specialist investigators receive more in-depth training across a range of modules, also including mental health. Training is reviewed on an annual basis and is updated to take into account of, amongst other things, HMICFRS inspection report findings and recommendations.*

### **Recommendation**

Dip sample (outcome code) OC10 and OC12 cases to assess the standard and consistency of decision making and use this to determine any training or briefing requirements and the need for any ongoing oversight.

*The Constabulary operates a system of crime dip sampling, overseen and coordinated by our Service Improvement Team Chief Inspector. Inspectors and Det Inspectors across the force are required to dip sample a set amount of crimes per month using a methodology bases on the HMICFRS crime file review / victim service assessment approach. This includes an assessment of whether the appropriate outcome was used. The Force Crime Registrar also carries out bespoke audits for each outcome, including OC10 and OC12. The results of all audits are taken to the*

*Victim Board for Chief Officer oversight and to the Organisational Learning Board which ensures that any emerging themes are built into our training packages.*

### **Recommendation**

Review the availability, prevalence, and sophistication of mental health flagging, to enhance this where possible, and to consider what meaningful and usable data can be produced from this.

*The Constabulary has appointed a Sergeant as the mental health tactical lead to progress this issue. An action plan has been drawn up with links to our ongoing work to improve the flagging of vulnerability. A new vulnerability flagging protocol has been drafted and will be implemented following consultation across areas and departments.*

### **Recommendation**

Assure themselves that risks, and vulnerabilities are properly identified during risk assessment processes, particularly for voluntary attendees. They must ensure that risks are appropriately managed, including referrals to Healthcare Partners, Liaison and Diversion and the use of appropriate adults.

*As stated above, the Constabulary has drafted a new vulnerability flagging protocol which states very clearly roles and responsibilities across all areas and departments for the identification and flagging and referral of vulnerabilities including mental health. The Constabulary has also completed work to improve risk assessments for voluntary attendees, bringing them into line with those undertaken for detainees in custody. Access to healthcare professionals and liaison and diversion for voluntary attendees has improved significantly as a result.*



John Dwyer

Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire