

PENROSE INQUIRY – C1 – DRUG USE AND PRISONS/PRISONERS

The Inquiry has received and reviewed the following:

- (A) SHHD Annual Reports - 'Prisons in Scotland' 1975-1984; and
- (B) SHHD Annual Reports - 'HM Chief Inspector of Prisons
for Scotland' 1981-1984.

Referring to these in turn, we have noted the following comments:

(A) 'Prisons in Scotland'**1. 1975 (Court Book Document Reference PEN.012.0535-0604)**

Paragraph 128 (PEN.012.0559) - 'Fortunately, drug dependence does not pose a serious problem within the Scottish Prison Service. 5 males were reported as dependent on hard drugs, and 4 males and 8 females were reported as dependent on other drugs such as amphetamine.'

Paragraph 132 (PEN.012.0559) - 'Mobile blood transfusion units make regular visits to institutions and invariably meet with a most satisfactory response from staff and inmates.'

2. 1976 (PEN.012.0605-0611)

Paragraph 101 (PEN.012.0607) - 'There was a marked increase in the recorded cases of infective jaundice, 14 (6). Of these, 10 had commenced the illness before imprisonment and four required to be treated in NHS Hospitals. This incidence of infective jaundice appeared to have no special significance, as the cases occurred in nine separate institutions at different times of the year.'

Paragraph 105 (PEN.012.0607) - 'The number of recorded cases of dependence on hard drugs showed an increase, 21 (5) males and 11 (0) females. All but one were adult inmates. The numbers recorded in previous years were: 1970 - 16 cases; 1971 - 16 cases; 1972 - 12 cases; 1973 - 6 cases; 1974 - 6 cases; 1975 - 5 cases.'

Paragraph 112 (PEN.012.0608) - 'Mobile Blood Transfusion Units make regular visits to most institutions and again, in 1976, met with a very gratifying response. Inmates contributed 4,644 pints of blood and staff contributed a further 259 pints.'

3. 1977(PEN.012.0612-0618)

Paragraph 110 (PEN.012.0615) - 'The number of recorded cases of dependence on hard drugs has, fortunately, not continued to show the marked increase recorded in the previous year. There were 7 (21) males and 8 (11) females.'

Paragraph 111 (PEN.012.0615) - 'Only 16 inmates, 7 male and 9 female, were diagnosed as having dependence on other drugs such as amphetamine.'

Paragraph 116 (PEN.012.0616) - 'Blood transfusion units visited most institutions during 1977. Inmates donated 4,119 pints of blood and staff a further 222 pints.'

4. 1978 (PEN.012.0619-0624)

Paragraph 105 (PEN.012.0621) - 'Dependence on hard drugs such as heroin was recorded in 19 cases, 11 males and 8 females. Dependence on other drugs was recorded in 23 cases, 22 male and 1 female.'

Paragraph 113 (PEN.012.0622) - 'It is recorded that inmates donated 3,903 pints of blood and staff 229 pints during the periodic visits by the Blood Transfusion Service Mobile Units.'

5. 1979 (PEN.012.0625-0630)

Paragraph 105 (PEN.012.0627) - 'Drug dependency diagnosed within Scottish penal establishments, fortunately, does not present a serious problem and there

has been little change in the numbers requiring treatment in recent years. Dependence on “hard” drugs was recorded in 14 (9) cases, 5 (1) males and 9 (8) females. Dependence on other drugs was recorded in 21 (23) cases, 15 males and 6 females.’

Paragraph 109 (PEN.012.0628) - ‘Blood Transfusion Service mobile units visit most establishments at intervals and this year 2,851 pints of blood were donated by inmates and 249 by staff.’

6. 1980 (PEN.012.0631-0644)

Paragraph 86 (PEN.012.0640) - ‘The diagnosis of dependence on hard drugs shows little variation over recent years, 18 (14), of which 6 (5) were males and 12 (9) females. However, 51 (21), 25 (15) males and 26 (6) females, were recorded as dependent on other drugs. There are many more admissions who, if not actually dependent, have a clear history of drug abuse.’

Paragraph 96 (PEN.012.0641) - ‘Blood Transfusion Service Units continue to visit establishments and this year 1,676 pints were donated by inmates and 125 pints by staff.’

7. 1981 (PEN.012.0669-0676)

Paragraph 95 (PEN.012.0672) - ‘27, 26 male and 1 female, inmates suffered from infective jaundice; 21 of these illnesses had commenced prior to admission and 2 required isolation and treatment within a NHS Hospital.’

Paragraph 96 (PEN.012.0672) - ‘The large reservoir of hepatitis infectivity in the world is now appreciated and medical, dental and nursing staff in penal institutions are aware of the special risk categories which come under their care’.

Paragraph 112 (PEN.012.0673) - ‘The increasing misuse of drugs throughout the country is well publicised and prison medical officers are reporting an

increase in the number of admissions who have been abusing drugs. There has, this year, been a marked increase in the number of inmates recorded as being dependent on hard drugs such as heroin, 86 (18) of which 51 (6) were male and 35 (12) female. There has, conversely, been a slight fall in the number of cases recorded as being dependent on other drugs, 35 (51), 7 (25) male and 28 (26) female.’

Paragraph 113 (PEN.012.0674) - ‘Fortunately, most of these patients are not seriously addicted and, after admission, are quickly weaned from all drugs. To this extent their custodial period is certainly beneficial, but many will return to drug abuse after release.’

There is no mention of blood donations in this Report.

8. 1982 (PEN.012.0693-0700)

Paragraph 69 (PEN.012.0695) - ‘28 inmates were treated for infective jaundice and in 20 cases this illness had commenced before admission. The medical, dental and nursing staff are aware of the large reservoir of hepatitis infectivity in the general public and of the special risk categories which come under their care and all necessary precautions are observed.’

This Report introduced a new sub-heading in the Health and Hygiene section - ‘Alcohol, Drug and Solvent Abuse’.

Paragraph 72 (PEN.012.0696) - ‘There is no doubt that over the past few years we have seen steadily increasing numbers of admissions to local prisons who have been abusing drugs. These drugs have, unfortunately, usually been hard drugs such as heroin and diconal. In many cases there are obvious signs of self injection and others willingly give a relevant history. This reflects the well publicised, regrettable and dangerous pandemic of drug abuse taking place at present.’

Paragraph 73 (PEN.012.0696) - 'All such admissions receive careful observation and, when necessary, the appropriate treatment, often requiring the use of hypnotics, tranquillisers and sometimes other controlled drugs to alleviate very unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. It is fortunate that most respond to this treatment and are quite quickly weaned from all drugs although there is no doubt that many will return to the drug scene on release, thereby increasing their dependency. They do certainly represent a further developing problem in penal medicine, requiring careful observation and assessment, particularly in the initial period of their custodial care.'

Paragraph 74 (PEN.012.0696) - 'The incidence of solvent abuse in the community is also well publicised and this, too, calls for increased awareness on the part of prison staff. Many of these young people may suffer bizarre withdrawal symptoms, the cause of which is not always immediately apparent, or they may exhibit the many problems associated with their emotional instability.'

Paragraph 76 (PEN.012.0696) - 'Comments have already been made on the increasing number of admissions, many young, suffering from the effects of disturbed personality, emotional disturbance, drug and alcohol abuse. Every effort is made to identify, treat and protect those thought to be at particular risk of self injury.'

There is no mention of blood donations in this Report.

9. 1983 (PEN.012.0715-1719)

Paragraph 49 (PEN.012.0716) - 'The general health of inmates has been satisfactory, but the number who seek medical attention is large and has shown a steady increase over the past few years, almost doubling over the past 10 years.'

Paragraph 50 (PEN.012.0716) - These rising numbers are not the result of any marked change in disease pattern, but they do perhaps reflect the increasing

number of inmates with personality disorders, with a history of alcoholism and, over the past 2 years, the rapidly increasing number who have been misusing drugs of addiction prior to admission. The psychological and physical morbidity associated with these conditions lead to considerable demands upon medical and nursing staff.'

Paragraph 59 (PEN.012.0718) - '*Drug Abuse*: 490 inmates were recorded as being dependent upon drugs at the time of reception or had recently misused drugs of addiction. The dramatic rise in misuse of narcotic drugs in the UK has been well publicised and this is mirrored in the admissions to our local establishments. Nearly all have been using heroin and most have been multiple drug abusers, involving combinations of heroin, morphine, methadone and sometimes cocaine. Misuse of cannabis, amphetamines and barbiturates is often reported, as is the misuse of dipipanone and LSD.'

Paragraph 60 (PEN.012.0718) - '*Infective Hepatitis*: 39 (28) cases of infective jaundice were diagnosed. In only 9 cases was the illness thought to have commenced after imprisonment. 13 required to be transferred to NHS hospitals, but all made a satisfactory recovery. The incidence of carriers and suspected carriers of Hepatitis B infection in the general community is well recognised and it is realised that penal establishments, with an increasing number of admissions who are drug abusers, will contain their share of possible carriers. Wherever possible such carrier states are identified by Prison Medical Staff and all sensible precautions are taken. Guidelines, similar to those issued to NHS staff, have been issued to assist in the protection of other inmates and any staff who may suffer any risk of accidental exposure to infection.'

Paragraph 65 (PEN.012.0719) - 'As the numbers admitted who suffer from disturbed personality, emotional instability, drug and alcohol abuse increase, so does the risk of unpredictable and rash behaviour. Self-inflicted injury resulting in death is one tragic consequence of such behaviour. Every effort is made by all staff to identify, treat and protect those thought to be at risk, but in many cases there is no apparent evidence of nervous upset.'

There is no mention of blood donations in this Report.

10. 1984 (PEN.012.0734 - 0770)

Paragraph 15 (PEN.012.0740) - 'The alarming increase in the use of narcotic drugs in the United Kingdom is mirrored in the number of persons admitted to penal establishments who are identified as having recently used dangerous drugs of addiction. In 1984 some 1,160 persons admitted to Scottish penal establishments had been involved in drug abuse compared with 490 in 1983. Almost all had been using heroin, although many had also been abusers of other drugs.'

Paragraph 61 (PEN.012.0749) - 'The alarming increase in the abuse of narcotic drugs in the UK is certainly mirrored in the number of admissions to penal establishments who are identified as having recently used these dangerous drugs of addiction. Of this number recorded, 935 were males and 228 females. Almost all had been using heroin, although many had also been multiple drug abusers. A further 91 males and 95 females were recorded as abusing other drugs such as amphetamine.'

Paragraph 62 (PEN.012.0750) - 'The associated morbidity, withdrawal problems and the need for careful supervision, especially during the early days of custody, have created a considerable increased workload for all staff. It is, therefore, distressing to realise that so many, successfully withdrawn from all drugs, quickly return to the drug scene on release.'

Paragraph 64 (PEN.012.0750) - '55 (39) cases of infective jaundice, 43 commencing before imprisonment, were diagnosed. 12 required to be transferred to NHS hospitals, the remainder being treated in prison hospitals. All apparently made satisfactory recovery.'

Paragraph 65 (PEN.012.0750) - 'The increase in the incidence of hepatitis over the past few years is, of course, associated with the increase in

intravenous drug abuse. Wherever possible potential carrier states are identified and all sensible precautions to protect staff and inmates are taken.'

Paragraph 66 (PEN.012.0750) - 'Representatives of the Civil Service Medical Advisory Service have been visiting penal establishments and in discussions with staff have helped to allay anxieties about the risk of infection.'

There is no mention of blood donations in this Report.

(B) 'HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland'

1. 1981 (PEN.012.0645-0668)

This was the first Annual Report of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland under the new arrangements for inspection of penal establishments announced in the House of Commons on 1 August 1980.

The report contains nothing about drug use.

2. 1982 (PEN.012.0677-0692)

The report contains no reference to drug use.

3. 1983 (PEN.012.0701-0714)

The report contains no reference to drug use.

4. 1984 (PEN.012.0720 – 0733)

Paragraph 2.10 (PEN.012.0728) - 'The problem of drugs in penal establishments has also received public attention. This is, of course, an extension of the problem which exists in the country as a whole. Whilst there are many ways in which drugs can be introduced, one route is inevitably through visits. Relaxed visiting arrangements provide opportunity for

exploitation by those unscrupulous, misguided or irresponsible enough to wish to do so. Staff at all levels wish to normalise visiting arrangements as far as possible and are aware that vigilance must be continuous and effective. It must be a matter of much concern that relatives and friends are prepared to attempt to smuggle drugs to those they are visiting thereby putting at risk, not only the health of those they visit, but the conditions under which visits take place. The only way in which the passage of drugs at visits would be eliminated would be by having visits conducted in closed cubicles to a greater extent than is now done, which would be a retrograde step.'