

Expert Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Young People in Custody

Responding to the findings of the [Expert Review of the Provision of Mental Health Services, for young people entering and in custody at HMP YOI Polmont](#), Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf said:

“I am grateful to HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland and Dr Helen Smith for the breadth and depth of work on this detailed report. I would also like to thank staff and young people at HMP YOI Polmont for engaging openly and constructively with Dr Smith and the wider review team to inform their recommendations.

“We take the mental wellbeing of people in prison very seriously and while the numbers of suicides by young people in custody are small, no death should be regarded as inevitable. Any suicide in custody is a tragedy that has a profound effect on family and friends, as well as prison staff, and my thoughts are with all those who have lost loved ones to suicide.

“Both the mental health review and routine inspection report highlight the hard work, compassion and dedication of frontline prison and healthcare staff who provide opportunities and support to young people in custody every single day. That dedication is clearly evidenced in the Chief Inspector’s finding that Polmont is a “leading edge” prison where there are respectful relationships between staff and the people in its care and an impressive range of support offered to young people.

“The report contains 80 recommendations, and we are clear that improvements can and should be made. We will give the report and recommendations full and detailed consideration.

“The Scottish Prison Service and NHS partners have undertaken a range of actions in recent months to improve support and it remains a priority for me to work with other Government ministers and responsible agencies to agree detailed actions in response to this independent review.

“The review recommendations are comprehensive and wide-ranging. We will consider with the SPS, NHS and other partners further immediate actions in light of the review to improve the support and care for young people in custody as well as reflecting fully on the wider strategic recommendations in the report. We will provide an update to Parliament before recess.”

Action already underway in mental health provision and support, suicide prevention and in youth justice, includes the work of the National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group and the joint Scottish Government and COSLA Taskforce on Children and Young People's Mental Health. Links will also be made to the current independent Care Review, which is working to deliver lasting change to the care system.

The post [Expert Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Young People in Custody](#) appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).