

# Government update on action taken to prevent deaths in custody

News story

The update shows 65 recommendations have been implemented in full following Dame Elish Angiolini's 2017 Review.



The government has today (Tuesday 20 July) published an update on the significant work undertaken to prevent deaths in police custody in response to a major review.

The update shows that 65 recommendations have been implemented in full following Dame Elish Angiolini's 2017 Review of Deaths and Serious Incidents in Police Custody. A further 20 recommendations have been completed in part.

To date the government has:

- substantially reduced the use of police custody as a place of safety for people undergoing a mental health crisis, with a 98% reduction since 2012/13
- introduced a major package of reforms to improve the effectiveness of the police complaints and discipline systems in order to increase accountability
- rolled out liaison and diversion services to ensure the needs of vulnerable people in police custody are identified and addressed
- introduced legislation to increase the oversight and management of the use of force in mental health units, so that force is only ever used as a last resort.

Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice, Kit Malthouse said:

Every death in police custody is a tragedy which has a devastating impact on loved ones.

We have a zero-tolerance attitude towards these rare, but devastating incidents and I am pleased to see the substantive

progress that had been made so far in tackling deaths in custody.

Dame Elish Angiolini's review has been a catalyst for change, and I am determined that we continue to hold organisations to account and improve support for families.

As part of the work to address Dame Elish's report, the Ministry of Justice has undertaken a range of work to make inquests more sympathetic to the needs of bereaved people, including updating materials to aid families throughout the coronial process.

The College of Policing has published guidelines for police on conflict management, including de-escalation and negotiations to promote safer resolutions to conflicts. The College has also updated their training to cover acute behavioural disturbance and introduced guidance on the role of a safety officer to monitor the use of restraint.

The government will continue to implement the Review's remaining recommendations, under the governance of the Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody (MBDC), and provide updates on progress to Parliament.

The full government update on our action to [prevent deaths in police custody](#)

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