

Scottish Government submission of 10 June 2022

PE1900/H – Access to prescribed medication for detainees in police custody

I refer to the Committee's letter of 13 May seeking further detail on the above.

On the actions we propose to address the current centrally-held evidence gap in respect of requests for prescribed medication as part of drug-related treatment we are engaging with stakeholders including the Scottish Health in Custody Network and Public Health Scotland on the benefits a central information service would provide as opposed to the current arrangements in place to record Health and Social Care Partnership data locally – what it would be used for and who would hold the information etc.

On the issue of availability of healthcare staff to administer methadone, and the other forms of OST, which also have to be available as options under MAT standard 2, the Drug Deaths Taskforce has indeed flagged up that there may be a risk, and particularly in larger rural localities. My Unit in the Drugs Policy Division is tasked with implementing the MAT standards and improving workforce development. So, this possible risk is being worked on through both the implementation of the standards and through the development of an alcohol and drugs workforce plan this year. At local level, the PHS-led MAT Implementation Support Team worked with local services across Scotland to develop local plans for implementing the standards, which include same day access to treatment. Those plans focus on increasing workforce capacity.

The Minister for Drugs Policy provides an update to Parliament every six months on progress toward implementation of the Medication Assisted Treatment Standards. The next update is scheduled for 23 June. She will give a statement on how the standards have been embedded as at April 2022 and PHS will publish a benchmark report on that day summarising the progress it has found in each Health and Social Care Partnership area towards implementation. Later in the summer, Public Health Scotland will then publish more detailed findings for each Health

and Social Care Partnership area, including recommended improvement plans where required.

The PHS-led Implementation Support Team is working with local services and encouraging them to learn from each other in terms of system change and culture change, and Healthcare Improvement Scotland is developing a Learning System for this as well.

On funding, the Minister for Drugs Policy has confirmed in a statement to Parliament that as part of the £250 million five-year National Mission funding, MAT standards implementation will be funded through a £10 million per year uplift. Most of this year's £10 million is being spent on increasing workforce levels and on workforce development. The Minister will include an update on this in her 23 June statement to Parliament as well.