

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202324, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: staff treatment
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that his personal officer had failed to engage with him appropriately. He was also unhappy with the prison governor's response to his complaint. We were unable to comment on whether the personal officer had encouraged or motivated Mr C in line with the relevant guidance or on whether he had had a positive relationship with her. However, there was no evidence that she had attended or completed the required reports for his integrated case management conferences or that she had sent anyone to attend in her place. In addition, most of the entries that the personal officer completed on the prisoner record system were made after Mr C referred his complaint to us.

There was little documentary evidence that the personal officer had engaged with Mr C before he complained, although we noted that she had been absent from work for part of this time. We found that Mr C had not received the service and support from the personal officer scheme to which he was entitled, and in view of this, upheld this aspect of his complaint. That said, our investigation found that the prison governor had responded promptly to Mr C's complaint, and that her comments about trying to resolve the matter were reasonable in the circumstances. We did not uphold his complaint about this, as we found that the governor had dealt with Mr C's complaint appropriately.

Recommendations

We recommended that the Scottish Prison Service:

- issue a written apology to Mr C for the failure to provide him with the service and support he was entitled to receive from the personal officer scheme;
- consider whether it would be appropriate to change Mr C's personal officer in light of our findings; and
- consider if a review of the personal officer scheme should be carried out.