



London ICV Newsletter

October 2008

IPCC look at places of safety

The IPCC recently published a report on *Police custody as a 'place of safety': Examining the use of section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983*.

An abstract from the executive summary of the report states "A significant number of people with a mental disorder come into contact with the police each year. This can include offenders, victims of crime and

those who simply require help or medical care. A key way in which such people have contact with the police is when they are in a public place and are in need of 'immediate care or control'. In such circumstances a person can be taken into police custody under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. Under this power police custody is viewed as a 'place of safety', where a person can be

held without harm until they are assessed by an approved doctor and an approved social worker. However, for a number of reasons police custody is widely viewed as not being a suitable environment for people with mental disorder. Firstly, it has the effect of criminalising people for what is essentially a health need. Secondly, the environment may exacerbate their mental state and, in the

most tragic cases, can lead to deaths in custody."

The report makes for interesting reading and discusses what ICVs have known for some time about the use of police custody for those suffering from mental health issues.

To access the full report please go to www.ipcc.gov.uk/research and click on the link.

Heralding the introduction of custody nurses

Project Herald is the MPS operation aimed at delivering a more efficient and safer custody environment by streamlining the MPS's approach to staffing of custody suites and introducing a multi-disciplinary clinical team under a new custody-staffing model.

When this model is implemented and fully operational, it will incorporate Custody Nurse Practitioners as healthcare professionals within the main custody suite of each Borough Unit. They will provide

24-hour forensic medical care for all detainees, seven days a week.

This will not only reduce the reliance on Forensic Medical Examiners (FME) but also significantly decrease the delay encountered in waiting for a medical assessment to take place. Further benefits will be a reduction in FME call out costs, a more efficient service and, importantly, improved care and safety for all detainees. An FME will still be available for referrals by the custody nurse and will operate in an easily obtainable, mobile capacity

overseeing a number of custody suites simultaneously.

Project Herald aims to employ 200 Custody Nurse Practitioners, with deployment staggered over a three-year period between 2009/12. In years one and two, up to three nurse managers and 11 teams of six nurses will be deployed, followed by two nurse managers and 10 teams of six nurses in year three.

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The end of an era? Farewell to John Roberts



Outgoing Independent Member - John Roberts

At the end of September John Roberts said farewell to the MPA after four years as an independent member. John was lead member for Stop and Search; Independent Custody Visiting in London; special constables, volunteers and cadets in the MPS; training, diversity, custody matters, including immigration; the building of new custody suites and the retention of staff.

In his four years at the MPA John has been an energetic and active member, thoroughly relishing the challenges he's faced, so it wouldn't have been right for John to leave without one final word, and he says;

"Thank you to the London ICVs for their creativity, passion and commitment in reinvigorating the London ICV scheme, making it, in my opinion, the best in the country and respected worldwide. I never cease to be amazed when I hear from

custody sergeants that ICVs always went the extra mile especially when working with vulnerable detainees. Your support given to me and the ICV team has been much appreciated over the last 18 months and I recognise the difficulties that we have had to overcome, and I am so proud of the achievements we have made. Similarly I would also like to extend my thanks to the ICV coordinators who have helped cement the improvements implemented by the MPA.

"Last, but not least, I could not have fulfilled the role of lead member without the support and commitment of Kerry McClelland. She has undoubtedly been the driving force behind the scheme's recent successes and improvement. So to end, I say farewell and wish you all the very best for the future." JR

Initial and further training

Initial training: Saturday 22 November 2008, 10am-5pm, at the MPA.

South East Cluster refresher training: Tuesday 14 October 2008 at the MPA. This training is now full.

Chairs training: The first training session on chairing meetings will take place at the MPA on Monday 3 November 2008 from 6.30-9pm.

Diversity training: A brand new module of diversity training is to be rolled out for London ICVs. It will be a single session and initially it is to be offered to Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The first session is scheduled to take place on **Tuesday 18 November 2008** at the MPA from 6.30-9pm, and then another for the remaining Chairs and Vice-Chairs in early 2009.

Please contact your coordinator if you wish to attend one of these courses.

PACE Review 2008

The latest Home Office review of PACE is underway and details can be found on the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/

documents/cons-2008-pace-review
The closing date for responses to the review is 28 November 2008. If you wish to provide feedback

then you can do so directly to the Home Office via the contact details on the website. The key areas most directly relevant to ICVs

are chapters 10, 12, 13 and 15 - however you are of course free to comment on any/all sections.

Dates for your diary

*The next **Chairs meeting** will take place at the MPA on Monday 27 October at 6.30pm.

*This year's **Christmas ICV social event** will be held at Empress State Building, once again on Monday 1 December. Invites will be sent out shortly.

Update on meetings between MPA and MPS Custody Directorate

At the ICV Conference we promised to use the ICV newsletter to provide regular feedback on the issues raised in the meetings between the MPA and the MPS Custody Directorate. Relevant issues and queries regarding custody procedure, process and policy can be brought to the attention of ICV Scheme Manager, Kerry McClelland, through your coordinator.

Issues addressed recently include:
MPA: Update on a) hand gel b) towels c) drugs safes.

CD response: a & b) Still being sourced but expect these to be available by the end of December
 c) These are currently being installed and are already in place in some boroughs.

MPA: Concerns over nutritional value of meals for detainees – particularly those being held for longer periods.

CD response: As the products that Catering Services produce are from fresh ingredients, which in themselves vary during the season they are available, and subject to an individual cook's interpretation of a recipe, it is impossible to come up with a nutritional value

for such items. Catering Services aim to provide a varied diet to detained persons from menu items served within catering facilities during opening hours. Ambient meals are provided during the hours when canteens are closed and these are reviewed periodically, by Catering Services in conjunction with Custody Directorate, to ensure they meet the needs of detained persons. As the meals provided are mainly for detainees in custody for less than 24 hours, long term Home Office detainees meals are supplemented with fresh fruit, fruit juice, fresh milk and bakery products. These long term detainees are provided with four meals per day and Catering Managers will liaise with Custody Officers to determine what is required. Individual dietary requirements are accommodated such as diabetics, low fat, etc. Cereals can be provided instead of a cooked breakfast and salads can replace the more popular cooked lunch or dinner. It would be impossible to list the range of meals available as it is left to the discretion of individual Catering Managers or cooks as to what they

produce in the unit each day.

MPA: Update on ensuring that all custody staff are aware of ICV role.

CD response: Sergeants who will be performing the role of custody officer receive two weeks training in law, procedure, and the NSPIS custody computer package. DDOs also receive input on the ICV role. Currently PC gaoles do not receive training in this area, however this is under development. In the case custody officers, as part of the course, students are shown the ICVA produced video on the role of ICVs, and have a brief discussion on any issues that arise. Included in the session is the instruction that ICVs must be brought through to the custody suite without delay, unless it is unsafe for them to be brought through, in which case that must be clearly communicated. The role of ICVs and the statutory nature of the scheme are explained, as is section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002. Extracts from the Codes of Practice, which relate to police duties are clearly outlined.

ICVA National Conference 2008 - Stratford Upon Avon

As you are hopefully all now aware, the ICVA annual conference is taking place on Saturday 1 November 2008 at The Holiday Inn, Stratford Upon Avon from 10 am - 3.30 pm.

The theme of the conference this year will be raising the skills, attitudes and knowledge of independent custody visitors as they meet with the complexity and increased vulnerability of detainees held in police custody. Delegates will be given the first opportunity to view the new student workbooks that have

been amended to keep up with current issues and legislation changes regarding detention, prior to release later in the year.

The line up of guest speakers at the conference includes the Chair of the Association of Police Authorities, Councillor Bob Jones; the Chair of the Independent Monitoring Board of Visitors, Mrs Angela Clay, and a representative from the Joint Inspectorate.

Also in attendance will be representatives from the Home Office to discuss ICVs' views and the ways in which our respective

organisations can develop clearer working relationships.

Although there is not an evening reception this year, ICVs have been offered overnight accommodation on the 31 October to avoid an otherwise very early start from London.

There will be 20 ICVs and four MPA staff members attending from London, along with ICVs and police authority staff from all over the UK.

A full report will follow in the next edition.

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**Many,
many thanks!**

Over the last year the MPA has increased its ICV membership across London. However, this has not always been proportionate in some areas. In order to meet the visiting demands of the borough a number of ICVs have assisted other boroughs by visiting stations in these boroughs where requested, in addition to their own visits.

Panels who have benefited from the assistance of their colleagues include Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Waltham Forest, Brent, Camden, Bexley and Hackney. In one case nearly all panel members in one borough have been assisting a neighbouring borough, and in another case just one volunteer from virtually the opposite side of London has been assisting a panel. The MPA would like to thank all those who have helped out or offered to help out in boroughs other than their own, and we're sure those panels who have received such assistance have valued the contribution.

The assistance has been beneficial for a number of reasons; for instance, it has enabled new volunteers to be paired with more experienced visitors, and it has also helped boroughs achieve a higher level of visiting. ICVs who have offered their assistance have also fed back that they have found the experience of visiting other custody suites both interesting and rewarding. Many thanks to all of you, you've been a great help and it has been much appreciated.

**Local Policing
Summaries
launched**

All police authorities have an obligation to produce local policing information for the residents in their authority areas. This mandatory obligation is referred to as Local Policing Summaries (LPS).

In London these summaries have been produced at borough level and contain information on local police performance, getting involved, priorities and targets for the borough along with information about the MPA.

As of the 21 September 2008 adverts about policing will be appearing in local authority residents' newspapers. These adverts will direct people to the MPA website where a more detailed summary will be located.

Each borough has a slightly different distribution date, the first six boroughs that will run the MPA advert are Westminster, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Havering, Harrow and Kensington and Chelsea.

Please spread the word in your borough that these adverts will be appearing soon in your area or go directly to the MPA website for further information. www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships

**Post-Conference
pack on website**

The long awaited post-conference pack is now on the MPA website. Delays were down to a number of factors including obtaining the information used at the conference from some of our speakers. Go to www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/icv

