

Prisons: Health Services

Written Answer

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the time taken to obtain security clearance for health and social care staff on the delivery of healthcare in prisons.

Jackie Doyle-Price The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care

The Department has not made a formal assessment of the effect of the time taken to obtain security clearance for health and social care staff on the delivery of healthcare in prisons.

All staff and non-directly employed personnel are subject to a series of pre-appointment security checks to determine their suitability to work in a prison. The unique nature of such work means that checks may need to be more comprehensive than other locations and can take time.

NHS England continues to work with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice to expedite clearance on a case by case basis where concerns are raised by providers.

The end-to-end recruitment procedure has been reviewed by the Ministry of Justice to identify the points at which delays have or can take place. Action has been taken to address these and the backlog of cases has been reduced significantly from last year. This in turn, should also result in reduced processing times in security vetting for all staff.

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