

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

18th January 2019

Dear



HMICFRS - Policing and Mental Health “Picking up the Pieces”

Under Section 55(5) of the 1996 Police Act, as Police and Crime Commissioner I am pleased to provide my formal response to HMICFRS’s inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary entitled “Policing and Mental Health – Picking up the Pieces””. I have also taken the opportunity to seek the Chief Constable’s views on the report.

Firstly, I do wish to assure you that the Chief Constable and I are committed to working with our partners, to ensure the best possible service to those people in our county suffering mental health crisis.

The Chief Constable and I welcome the report by HMICFRS into Policing and Mental Health. Here, as well as elsewhere in the country, our Police Officers are often called to assist people in mental health crisis where appropriate support is not available. First and foremost, those in mental health crisis need the right healthcare support. Whilst Police Officers will always go the extra mile to protect people at risk, it is clear from HMICFRS’ findings that more needs to be done to ensure appropriate healthcare services are available. Every hour a police officer is supporting someone in mental health crisis means less time on the frontline. I agree with the HMICFRS report in that there does need to be a radicle rethink and a longer-term solution to what has become a national crisis. Police Officers cannot continue to be used as the service of default in responding to people with mental health problems.

I remain committed to funding mental health nurses in the Cambridgeshire constabulary Force Control Room who continue to provide Officers with clinical advice on the best way to support and keep people safe. I am pleased that the obvious benefits of this have been recognised by HMICFRS. This pioneering service was developed in 2016 with nurses from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust. However, this is only one part of a wider partnership response to improving the provision of support for people in suspected mental health crisis. This has also enabled a reduction in the time Police Officers and staff spend dealing with

incidents involving people with suspected mental health issues, while at the same time improving their confidence and skills. The service has also meant that less people have been taken to A&E reducing pressure on emergency staff.

Police Officers have also reported a better understanding of services available for people in mental health crisis across the county and are able to signpost people to these.

The service is reinforced by a Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat Declaration signed by ourselves and our partners, and we continue to work together to improve outcomes for people in mental health crisis at a local level.

The Constabulary's response to HMICFRS recommendations are attached in Appendix 1

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jason', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Jason Ablewhite
Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner
cc PCC@hmic.gsi.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response HMICFRS Area for Improvements:

1. **Recommendation** - *By January 2019, the NPCC lead for mental health and the College of Policing should draft and agree a new national definition of mental ill-health. This should be included within the new national strategy on policing and mental health that they are developing together. All forces should then adopt this definition as soon as reasonably practicable.*

Force response - The new definition is still awaited from NPCC and College of Policing.

2. **Recommendation** - *By December 2019, forces should develop a better understanding of their mental health data, and the nature and scale of their demand. All forces should carry out a 24-hour snapshot exercise, using the new national definition of mental ill-health in Recommendation 1. This would help them see where their mental health demand is concentrated and identify any gaps in their data. The NPCC mental health lead should set out how the data was collected during the Welsh forces' snapshot exercise. This exercise will help forces understand the strain on the service by assessing the combination of demand and workload. This will then help forces when establishing and reporting mental health demand in their force management statements (FMSs).*

Force response - Cambridgeshire Constabulary carried out a mental health related demand snapshot over a 24 hour period approximately 18 months ago. We will liaise with the mental health lead for Welsh Police forces and see how they have carried out their snapshot exercise to assess their mental health related demand. Using the new definition we will then complete this exercise again to look at each incident that occurs during a 24 hour period and collate data on how many are mental health related. We would look to undertake this piece of work during the first half of 2019.

3. **Recommendation** - *By August 2019, all forces should review their existing partnership mental health triage services to assess their effectiveness, and the environment they are operating in. This will help them make decisions about sustainable future services with partners to make sure mental health care needs are being met.*

If forces find any deficiencies in their triage services, they should take steps to address them as soon as reasonably practicable.

The College of Policing has agreed to devise some practice guidelines to help forces benchmark their triage activity. We will inspect on progress in this area as part of our integrated PEEL assessments inspection framework.

Force response - The Force Control Room based mental health triage service, the Integrated Mental Health Team (IMHT), was evaluated independently after its first year (in approximately April 2017) and we will look to undertake a further review now that it has been running for almost three years. We would look to undertake this piece of work in the first half of 2019.

4. **Recommendation** - *By August 2019, all forces should review their mental health training programmes, using the College of Policing learning standards, to establish whether they are giving their officers the right tools to understand and respond to people with mental health problems. If forces find*

any deficiencies in their training programmes, they should take steps to address them as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where forces invite outside organisations to train staff, they must make sure its content and quality are checked against College of Policing APP.

Force response - As a tri-force Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Learning Development team has recently reviewed mental health training for new police officer recruits. As of 2019 all new recruits will receive a two day training input on mental health at around week nine of their IPDLP course. Furthermore, all response officers are part of a programme to receive a three hour mental health training input in the first half of 2019.

5. **Recommendation** - *By 30 September 2019, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Home Office should review the overall state response to people with mental ill-health. The scope of this work should include as a minimum:*

- *An assessment of the implementation of the Crisis Care Concordat*
- *Crisis response and whether people with mental health problems can access appropriate services;*
- *The role and responsibilities of police officers when meeting people with mental health problems; and*
- *Whether there is sustainable and integrated support to prevent repeat contact.*

The Crisis Care Concordat steering group should consider whether any changes are necessary, or should be considered, to legislation; structures; initial and ongoing training; and guidance and guidelines (for example, the APP and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines). The Crisis Care Concordat steering group should report to the Ministers in DHSC and Home Office with relevant recommendations, to improve the whole system relating to mental health [list of stakeholders]

Force response - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Crisis Care Concordat are to hold a review and make proposals for change