

**A report by the Office of the
Inspector of Prisons into the circumstances
surrounding the death of Prisoner D
on 19 March 2017 in Beaumont Hospital
while in the Custody of Midlands Prison**

***Please note that names have been removed to anonymise this Report**

Office of the Inspector of Prisons
24 Cecil Walk
Kenyon Street
Nenagh
Co. Tipperary

Tel: + 353 67 42210
E-mail: info@inspectorofprisons.gov.ie
Web: www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie

Office Ref: 2017/D

**A report by the Office of the Inspector of Prisons into the
circumstances surrounding the death of Prisoner D
on 19 March 2017 in Beaumont Hospital while in the
Custody of Midlands Prison**

Presented to the Minister for Justice and Equality pursuant to
Part 5 of the Prisons Act 2007.

Helen Casey
Office of the Inspector of Prisons

20 December 2017

© Inspector of Prisons 2017

Preface

The deceased was a 75 year-old single man who came from the South Eastern Region.

I wish to offer my sincere condolences to the family of the deceased.

I would like to point out that names have been removed to anonymise this Report.

Helen Casey

Office of the Inspector of Prisons

20 December 2017

Investigation Report

General Information

1. The deceased was a 75 year old man who came from the South Eastern Region.
2. He is survived by his siblings and extended family.
3. I did not meet with the next of kin of the deceased. However, I did correspond with them by letter. They did not raise any concerns in relation to his care while in prison.
4. The deceased was committed to Cloverhill Prison on 7 November 2016 and transferred to the Midlands Prison on 8 November 2016.
5. He was accommodated in a single cell, cell 30 on G1 Landing.
6. The deceased did not have any visitors while in prison and did not make any telephone calls.
7. He was a quiet person who, it is reported, was courteous to staff and did not have any disciplinary breaches recorded against him.
8. The deceased was on the Standard level of the Incentivised Regime.
9. The Irish Prison Service arranged for two Care Assistants to assist the deceased with his daily personal needs.
10. When carrying out this investigation I had unrestricted access to staff, prisoners and relevant records, including CCTV footage.

Deceased's interaction with Prison Medical Services

11. On committal to prison, the deceased had poor mobility and was in poor health.
12. On 9 November 2016 Doctor A conducted a committal assessment of the deceased. The deceased explained that while he had some serious medical issues he had stopped taking medication for same. He confirmed that he had type 2 diabetes as well as heart problems for which he should be taking medication. The Doctor noted that he had mobility issues and walked with the aid of a cane as he had Osteoarthritis in his right knee.
13. The Doctor also noted that he had “*a severe hearing impairment and visual acuity impairment*”. He was also suffering from high blood pressure and he had asthma.
14. The nursing staff made contact with the deceased's doctor in his home area and ascertained details of the medications he should be taking.
15. Doctor A then issued a prescription for the necessary medications which the nursing staff administered daily thereafter.
16. The Doctor referred the deceased to an E.N.T Specialist¹ in relation to his hearing and to an Optician and Ophthalmologist regarding his “*visual acuity impairment*”.
17. Nurse Officer A recorded on 12 November 2016 that ACO A requested a medical review of the deceased and that the deceased be moved to G Wing where Care Assistants would be available.
18. On 24 November 2016, he was moved to G Wing where Care Assistants were assigned to assist him with his daily personal needs

¹ Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist

19. Records show that Nursing Staff saw the deceased daily, both morning and evening, when they dispensed his medication.
20. The deceased had no interaction with the Psychology Services in the prison.
21. The Doctor in the Midlands Prison further reviewed the deceased in January and February, 2017 and treated him for minor ailments not relevant to this investigation.

Sequence of Events on 13 March 2017

22. The sequence of events set out in paragraphs 23 to 33 are corroborated by CCTV footage viewed, medical notes and statements made by prison staff.
23. On 13 March 2017 at 08:18:39 the deceased's cell was unlocked for breakfast but the deceased did not leave his cell to collect breakfast.
24. Prisoner A who was accommodated in cell no 29 entered cell 30 at 08:18:52. He assisted the deceased by removing a bag of clothing from the cell and placed it outside the door for laundry collection.
25. At 08:19:20 Prisoner A re-enters cell 30 and remains there for a short period. Prisoner A stated that he asked the deceased if he wanted breakfast collected but according to Prisoner A the deceased "*waved me away*", declining breakfast.
26. At 08:30:29 Officers A and B, who were locking all cells following breakfast un-lock, went to cell 30. Officer A stated that he asked the deceased, who was still in bed, if he was getting up for breakfast. Officer A states that the deceased replied "*no*". Officer B then closed and locked cell 30.
27. The CCTV footage shows three checks carried out on cell 30 between 08:30:29 and 09:44:41 at which time cell 30 was unlocked. These checks consisted of an officer looking into the cell through viewer in the cell door.

28. At 10:00:44 two Care Assistants and Officer A entered cell 30. In their reports they state that they noticed the deceased “*was unwell*”. Officer A contacted the Medical Unit and requested medical assistance.
29. At 10:04:48 the CCTV footage shows Nurse Officer B arriving at cell 30 and entering the cell.
30. At 10:05:17 Chief Officer A arrives at cell 30.
31. At 10:05:53 Doctor A arrives and enters cell 30.
32. At 10:48:25 two paramedics from the ambulance service arrive and go to cell 30.
33. At 10:53:20 the two paramedics leave the G1 landing with the deceased on a trolley and they remove the deceased to Naas General Hospital for treatment.
34. The deceased was subsequently transferred to Beaumont Hospital where he underwent further medical intervention.
35. On 19 March 2017 at 18:55, Doctor B pronounced the deceased dead in Beaumont Hospital.

Findings

36. The deceased was accommodated in a single cell.
37. While the deceased was in poor health and had mobility issues, his physical care was managed in a humane manner.
38. The Irish Prison Service employed Care Assistants to help the deceased with his daily hygiene and personal needs.

39. The deceased was pronounced dead in Beaumont Hospital on the 19 March 2017 at 18:55.

40. The cause of death is a matter for the Coroner.