



**The Professional Trades Union for Prison,
Correctional & Secure Psychiatric Workers**

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Dear Colleagues

NATIONAL CHAIR ADDRESS – NO 2

I wish to relay to you my assurances that your safety and well-being at work is my top priority and I will not waiver in my support for you all at this difficult time.

I had been made aware of plans in the Youth Custody Estate to open education classrooms so small numbers of prisoners could access this service. HMPPS have recently confirmed, after the intervention of your NEC, that the status quo position will be maintained throughout the YCS Estate and any such plans will not go ahead.

I wish to make it clear to you that under no circumstances should any form of education in classrooms or any other facility take place in any of our Prisons.

The COVID-19 Operational Guidance is clear. There should be no association, large gatherings of prisoners, gym, non-essential workshops or education. Only vital services should be observed which include feeding, phone calls, showers and exercise in the open air. At all times social distancing should be observed.

The NEC and I will take any appropriate action we deem necessary to ensure you all adhere to the necessary regime restrictions that are currently in place. If this includes ensuring you abandon what you think is safe for your workplace in order to respect these essential restrictions, then I make no apologies for upsetting you.

COVID-19 does not discriminate or respect good intentions.

I reiterate the importance of not allowing large groups of prisoners to congregate on landings or exercise yards and to adopt social distancing protocols whenever we practically can.

I have spoken with the Secretary of State Robert Buckland about the Lack of PPE and COVID-19 testing for staff. He has confirmed that additional PPE has been secured and is due to arrive in the country on 6th April, specifically for Prison staff use. You should now be able to secure existing PPE from regional hubs. Prison staff have been prioritised for COVID-19 testing and there are plans to begin testing. As soon as a date for testing is confirmed I will relay it to you.

I also regret to inform you of the death of an OSG at HMP Pentonville. Mr. Bovil Peter sadly passed away due to COVID-19 symptoms. The POA have relayed our deepest sympathy to our colleague's family.

I wish to finish by relaying my total respect and admiration for you all during these most difficult of times, wherever you may work and whatever role you are performing. Please remember that your NEC is here for you all and we will continue to address the issues that you highlight to us.

Look after yourselves and your loved ones.

Yours respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Fairhurst', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MARK FAIRHURST
National Chair