

2018/19 Update from Humberside ICV scheme manager

The Humberside ICV Scheme was featured in national news reports due to our prompt response to a national campaign aimed at improving sanitary provision for female detainees.

The respect and dignity of all detainees is a strong focus for staff within the custody suites in Humberside Police. Working in partnership with ICVA and Jo Nicholls from the Humberside PCC's office, Sergeant Ash Rawson reviewed the sanitary care for females who are detained by the force, looking at the various products on offer. Detainees are now provided with an improved selection of items.

The products provided had been fairly limited due to the need to balance the safety of detainees with their dignity and health needs. After consulting with the local prison service, prison transport and courts services, it was deemed safe to provide female detainees with a wider selection of sanitary products. A full range of products is now available along with replacement underwear and comfortable replacement clothing if needed.

A female member of staff is always on duty as a point of contact for females so that they do not suffer the embarrassment of discussing their needs with male staff. Custody staff also raised concerns around the safe disposal of sanitary items and wax paper bags are used as the safest option.

ICVA had raised the issue nationally and this prompted Jo Nicholls, who manages the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Humberside to work with the police on the review. Jo also produced guidance for custody staff and independent custody visitors which has now been published on the ICVA Forum and shared with other schemes across the country.

Independent Custody Visitors are now more aware of the need to check that custody suites stock a good selection of sanitary items at all times. Recent feedback from visitors has given reassurance that there is always a good stock of items and that female members of staff are always rostered on duty to help female detainees.

Detainees will also be provided with an easy to read leaflet which will advise of their right to have a female point of contact and will also inform them about the products and replacement clothing that is available.

For more information on Independent Custody Visiting schemes go to www.ICVA.org.uk