

Thematic Report

The Lived Experience of Women in Prison



INSPECTION TEAM

Rebecca Gormley	Principal Inspector
Fiona Irving	Principal Clinical Inspector
Sagadhaven (Don) Govender	Inspector
Kymberley Jack-Thomson	Inspector
Glenda Mitchell	Inspector
Katrina Wolfgramm	Inspector
Sarah Penno	Clinical Inspector
Angelique Praat	Senior Writer

October 2021

Office of the Inspectorate – *Te Tari Tirohia*

Department of Corrections – *Ara Poutama Aotearoa*

Private Box 1206

Wellington 6140

New Zealand

Telephone: 04 460 3000

Email: inspectorate@corrections.govt.nz

Web: <https://inspectorate.corrections.govt.nz/>

Contents

Foreword	3
Executive Summary	4
Recommendation	6
Introduction	11
Profile of women in prison	15
Entering Prison – Reception, Induction and Escorts	18
Safe and Humanising Treatment	28
Environment	43
Health and Wellbeing	50
Rehabilitation and Reintegration	68
Relationships and Family and Whānau	94
Staffing	108
Conclusion	115
Works Cited	118

Office of the Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia*

Our whakataukī

Mā te titiro me te whakarongo ka puta mai te māramatanga

By looking and listening, we will gain insight

Our vision

That prisoners and offenders are treated in a fair, safe, secure and humane way.

Our values

We acknowledge the Department of Corrections' values: **rangatira** (leadership), **manaaki** (respect), **wairua** (spirituality), **kaitiaki** (guardianship) and **whānau** (relationships).

Office of the Inspectorate values:

Respect	We are considerate of the dignity of others
Integrity	We are ethical and do the right thing
Professionalism	We are competent and focused
Objectivity	We are open-minded and do not take sides
Diversity	We are inclusive and value difference



Foreword

My decision to undertake this thematic inspection arose from recognition of a real and present opportunity for the Department of Corrections, *Ara Poutama Aotearoa*, to reimagine and redesign the way in which women are managed in prison and prepared for transition back to the community.

My Office began with a foundation of contemporary insights with inspections of all three women's prisons in 2020: Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility, Arohata Prison and Christchurch Women's Prison. This was an important starting platform, necessary to best position the methodology for this thematic work. All three reports of these inspections have been publicly released.

This report provides insights into the vulnerabilities and specific needs of women which, while recognised in the Department's *Women's Strategy (2017-2021) | Wāhine E Rere Ana Ki Te Pae Hou*, were never fully realised. It importantly also shares the voices and lived experiences of both women in prison and staff, which provides perhaps the most powerful and compelling messages of all.

There is significant over representation of Māori in prison, who also make up the majority of the remand population. This demands particular attention and must be more robustly addressed with an authentic kaupapa Māori response across the three women's sites, alongside the Department's Hōkai Rangi strategy.

While I recognise there is much to be done, I felt it important to make only one over-arching recommendation and provide further areas for consideration, as work is designed and undertaken to respond to this report:

The Department must review the strategic and operational leadership, resourcing, operating model and service delivery across the women's prison network (including health services) to enable, and deliver, better outcomes for women, which are critically gender specific, culturally responsive and trauma informed.

The Department should focus on prioritising actions for better outcomes and closely monitor and report on progress to ensure visibility. There must be a positive and open culture which promotes and encourages continuous improvement.

I expect the Department to work collaboratively with key partners and stakeholders and, importantly also, to engage directly with women in prison and on release to best understand how improvements can be co-designed to reflect the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women.

I intend to revisit this thematic work as part of my ongoing monitoring activities and report publicly on progress.

I acknowledge those who have contributed to this important work and recognise the significant opportunity this presents.



Janis Adair
Chief Inspector of Corrections

Executive Summary

Women in prison in New Zealand share common experiences with imprisoned women around the world. Many women are likely to be caring for children, have low levels of literacy, have experienced trauma and abuse and to have mental health and substance use disorders. Many women cope with prison life by sharing their concerns with each other and with staff. In response to these experiences, experts have called for gender-responsive and trauma-informed practices in prisons. This has been a central pillar of Corrections' *Women's Strategy (2017-2021)* | *Wāhine E Rere Ana Ki Te Pae Hou*.

This Thematic Report is based on the lived experience of women in prison, as assessed under the Office of the Inspectorate's Inspection Standards. We note that women are diverse and their backgrounds influence their prison experience.

Reception into prison was a critical time for new prisoners. We observed that prisons need to promptly inform women about prison rules and resources and help them make arrangements for their families, if women are to transition well to prison life.

Safety and good order depended on both prison practices and the informal culture among women. Alongside induction processes, women learned about prison life from each other. Women felt safe when staff consistently followed rules and routines and responded appropriately to poor behaviour. Prisoner trust in staff, in the formal complaints system and the misconduct process is therefore important to women's wellbeing. For some women, strip searching is traumatizing and degrading. Corrections is trialling body scanners to maintain prison security and prisoner dignity. We welcome this initiative.

The design of prison units and access to basic items (such as clothing) influenced women's wellbeing. Women's prisons tended to lack space for all the activities available to different categories of prisoner (for example, remand or high security prisoners).

The need for health services was high among women in prison and women appreciated the health support they received. The current resourcing model for health services in prison does not reflect the higher health needs of women.

Women were supported with rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities. However, some women and staff thought education and work opportunities for women were limited, when compared with male prisoners, and particularly for women on remand. Many women were anxious about appearing before the Parole Board, and believed it would be difficult to find housing or a job to reintegrate into the community.

Prisons are developing their support for wāhine Māori. Women and staff said more work was needed to provide comprehensive kaupapa Māori pathways and care for wāhine Māori. We note the ongoing work and support provided for the Mana Wāhine Pathway project at Christchurch Women's Prison.

Connections with family and whānau heavily influenced women's lives in prison. Some women were managing their households from within prison, making regular connection to family and whānau and other supports crucial. Mothers appreciated being able to live with their young children in the Mothers with Babies (MwB) Units.

Women reported both positive and negative interactions with staff members. Custodial staff said they would like more training in trauma-informed practices, particularly for staff working with the most vulnerable women in Intervention and

Support Units. Staff shortages in some prisons meant women received less time out of their cell than expected.

Corrections' Women's Strategy has made some positive differences for women. We acknowledge the changes Corrections has made in creating and implementing its Women's Strategy. Women have access to social workers, trauma counsellors, and a wider range of rehabilitative, education and training opportunities.

This Thematic Report makes one overarching recommendation for Corrections' management of women in prison, and indicates areas of concern for consideration.

Recommendation

Overarching recommendation

The Department must review the strategic and operational leadership, resourcing, operating model and service delivery across the women's prison network (including health services) to enable, and deliver, better outcomes for women, which are critically gender specific, culturally responsive and trauma informed.

Corrections should regularly update its Wellness and Insights Advisory Board about progress with the recommendation and areas of consideration.

Areas of consideration:

Entering Prison – Reception, Induction and Escorts

1. Corrections should consider how best to develop consistency in induction practices across women prisons.
2. Corrections should consider developing specialist induction content for women, and additionally for mothers and foreign nationals.
3. Corrections should consider reviewing the items women receive at induction to ensure they are provided with adequate sanitary and hygiene products, underwear, clothing, bedding etc.
4. Corrections should consider reviewing induction telephone policies to acknowledge women's role in care arrangements for children, family and whānau.

Safe and Humanising Treatment

5. Corrections should consider reviewing classification review timeframes to support rehabilitation, taking into account the shorter sentences women generally receive.
6. Corrections should implement a gender-specific approach to the management of remand to ensure women are accommodated and managed according to their actual risk.
7. Corrections should consider reviewing the misconduct process to confirm staff have sufficient guidance and time to maintain the efficacy of this system.
8. Corrections should consider introducing a gender-responsive and trauma-informed incentive framework that positively reinforces pro-social and healthy behaviour and relationships.
9. Corrections should consider reviewing the use of restraints across women's prisons to reflect the actual risk of the individual.

10. Corrections should consider reviewing strip searching practices and procedures to ensure a trauma informed and culturally appropriate approach, with particular consideration given to temporary removals and releases.
11. Corrections should continue with work at pace to implement body scanning technology across all three women's sites.

Environment

12. Corrections should consider reviewing women's access to essential items such as underwear and clothing, to ensure a continuing supply is provided.
13. Corrections should consider reviewing property regulations and items available from the canteen that promote and support gender and cultural identities.
14. Corrections should consider a review of ISU policy to ensure a gendered approach is taken to supporting women while in these units
15. Corrections should consider how staff can engage with women about their preference for sharing a cell, where practicable, given the relational nature of women.
16. Corrections should consider gender specific needs when determining schedules for the laundering and replenishing of kit and bedding.
17. Corrections should consider international and national literature on women in prison and prison architecture when designing or redeveloping facilities.

Health and Wellbeing

18. Corrections should continue to consider whether the national menu and canteen are gender and culturally responsive and support women's health.
19. Corrections should consider reviewing the resourcing model for health (including mental health and trauma counsellors) to align the model with the demand of health needs of women.
20. Corrections should consider the wellbeing of women, alongside their actual risk and need, when determining custodial use of uniforms and restraints, for health escorts.
21. Corrections should consider providing on-going specialist gender-responsive, trauma informed training to support custodial staff working with high and complex need women in the ISU.
22. Corrections should consider providing access to alcohol and drug programmes/services for women on remand to support this identified health need.
23. Corrections should consider reviewing the impact of having only one DTP location, and its effectiveness, to support all three women's prisons.
24. Corrections should consider the availability and range of constructive activities, including a review of each site's funding to support such activities.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration

25. Corrections should consider reviewing its current suite of programmes and interventions to ensure gender specificity and cultural responsiveness is included within contract design and implementation.

26. Corrections should consider implementing IT solutions that support better access to education, training and employment opportunities.
27. Corrections should consider reviewing prison industries, particularly where opportunities are limited due to the size of women prisons and the need to deliver essential industry services.
28. Corrections should consider undertaking a review of the availability and demand for rooms to ensure all visits, programmes, interventions and interviews are available when required and are conducted in a suitable environment.
29. Corrections should consider reviewing the reintegration function of prison kitchens to support teaching women about budgeting, meal planning etc.
30. Corrections should consider how to better inform and support staff and women to identify opportunities for accessing temporary removals and releases that support reintegrative needs (including Release to Work and guided release).
31. Corrections should consider the review and implementation of services in Community Corrections to support women in their transition from prison to the community.
32. Corrections should consider conducting a review of the eligibility and suitability criteria for Self Care units based on an individual's actual risk and need, to ensure consistency across the women's sites.
33. Corrections should consider working with the NZ Parole Board to incorporate gender-responsive processes for women appearing before the Parole Board.

Relationships and Family and whānau

34. Corrections should consider implementing a data collection method to gather more reliable information from prisoners regarding their parenting status, number of children and the type of relationship with their children.
35. Corrections should consider a review of training and offer ongoing support for staff in the area of eligibility, suitability and working with women in the Mothers with Babies units.
36. Corrections should consider a review of telephone and other communication technologies to support women's ability to maintain contact with their children, family and whānau.
37. Corrections should consider a review of visits procedures and processes to create a more consistent humanising, healing and gendered approach/experience.
38. Corrections should consider exploring means to mitigate the barriers for family and whānau visiting women in prison due to geographical and financial challenges.

Staffing

39. Corrections should recognise that working with women in prison is a specialist role and tailor its staff recruitment accordingly.
40. Corrections should consider reviewing the resourcing model for all staff to ensure it is gender specific and responsive.
41. Corrections should continue designing and implementing an introductory and on-going training package that provides staff with the skills to work in a trauma informed, gender specific and culturally responsive way.

42. Corrections should consider reviewing policies and procedures to enable staff to work effectively with women based on their actual risk and need.
43. Corrections should consider monitoring the impact of Making Shifts Work on staff working in women's prisons and make changes to the approach as necessary.

New Zealand Prison Network

NORTHERN REGION

- A. Northland Region Corrections Facility
- B. Auckland Prison
- C. Mt Eden Corrections Facility
- D. Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility
- E. Auckland South Corrections Facility

CENTRAL REGION

- F. Spring Hill Corrections Facility
- G. Waikeria Prison
- H. Tongariro Prison



LOWER NORTH REGION

- I. Whanganui Prison
- J. Hawkes Bay Regional Prison
- K. Manawatu Prison
- L. Rimutaka Prison
- M. Arohata Prison

SOUTHERN REGION

- N. Christchurch Men's Prison
- O. Christchurch Women's Prison
- P. Rolleston Prison
- Q. Otago Corrections Facility
- R. Invercargill Prison

Introduction

1. In New Zealand, women make up 6.2% of the prison population (at June 2021). Currently, around 500 women are housed in the three women's prisons across the country.¹
2. At the time of writing this Thematic Report, the Department of Corrections (Ara Poutama Aotearoa) was working towards transforming the way it manages and cares for women.²
3. The Office of the Inspectorate offers this report to assist the ongoing programme of work to better support the management and care of women in prison.³
4. Our particular lens for this Thematic Report is our *Inspection Standards* and the lived experience of women in prison. We note that all aspects of prison life, from architecture to policies and practices, influence women's experiences. Many of these aspects of prison life were designed with men in mind. In this report we pay attention to the features of prison life that are particularly important to the women and staff we have spoken with. It is not, however, intended as a comprehensive gender analysis of prison policy and practice.

Women prisoners share the experiences of imprisoned women globally

5. People share common experiences in their journeys to prison. People in prison are more likely to have grown up in poverty, had poor educational experiences, lived in families with connections to crime, suffered health and developmental problems and been victims of violence.
6. While sharing some of the challenges of the male prison population, women's journeys through prison differ in many ways.⁴
7. Women are more likely than men to be caring for children, to have experienced significant trauma and to have mental health and substance use disorders. Compared with men in prison, women in prison are likely to have experienced violence from a younger age and for a longer period of time.⁵

Women generally have different offending patterns than men

8. Women tend to be in prison for less serious offences than men.⁶
9. A snapshot of offences for which women were sentenced as at 30 June 2020 shows women were more likely than men to be serving sentences for an offence against public order (27% vs 16%). Public order offences include drug offences and traffic offences. Women were also more likely to be sentenced for crimes against property

¹ For prison locations, see the map on page 11. For more information about each prison, see the Appendices. At June 2021, 511 women were housed in New Zealand prisons.

² Minister directs Corrections to overhaul processes and management of women in prison, 22 March 2021 <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/minister-directs-corrections-overhaul-processes-and-management-women-prison>

³ A special investigation into the treatment of three women at Auckland Region Women's Correction Facility (ARWCF) conducted by the Chief Inspector informed the Minister's decision.

⁴ Fair, 2009. International Review of Women's Prisons.

⁵ Bevan, 2017. New Zealand Prisoners' Prior Exposure to Trauma.

⁶ McGlue. 2017. Addressing the imbalance: Enhancing women's opportunities to build offence free lives through gender responsiveness.

(32% vs 14%). Property offences include burglary and dishonesty. Women were much less likely to offend against a person than men (41% vs 69%).

10. Women were less likely to be reconvicted of a crime in the two years after being released from prison than men (30% compared with 39% of men).

Women respond differently to life in prison

11. Evidence suggests women respond to life in prison in different ways to men. They are more likely to form friendships with other people in prison and to be more open about their needs with staff.⁷
12. Gender differences extend to the rehabilitative and reintegrative programmes needed by women. To be effective, programmes should address women's offending in a context of significant trauma, mental health disorders and addiction.

The move to gender-responsive prisons

13. The challenges in the lives of women in prison and their different ways of coping have sparked an international movement towards gender responsiveness in the criminal justice system.
14. The Bangkok Rules, introduced in 2010, identify standards for the minimum acceptable treatment of women in prison. These supplement the Mandela Rules for all prisoners and are in addition to the standards for transgender prisoners.⁸
15. New Zealand, like many other jurisdictions, has developed a strategy for working with women in prison. In 2017, Corrections released the *Women's Strategy 2017-2021 | Wāhine E Rere Ana Ki Te Pae Hou* (Women Rising Above a New Horizon).
16. The strategy prioritised:
 - » providing women with interventions and services that met their unique risks and needs
 - » managing women in ways that were trauma-informed and empowering
 - » managing women in a way that reflected the importance of relationships to women.
17. The strategy called for the evaluation of existing training, learning and rehabilitation programmes, which, where necessary, would be adjusted to better serve the needs of women.
18. The strategy introduced new roles to prisons including social workers and trauma counsellors. Trauma counsellors work with individual women who have experienced trauma from violence, neglect and grief. Social workers support women in parenting their children, either in or outside of prison.
19. To enable the Women's Strategy, Corrections recognised the need to recruit and train staff, helping them to develop skills in:
 - » understanding women's pathways into crime and how that impacts treatment and management
 - » understanding mental health issues and substance use

⁷ Wright, Van Voorhis, Salisbury, & Bauman, 2012. Gender responsiveness lessons learned and policy implications for women in prison: A review.

⁸ International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Yogyakarta Principles - Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, March 2007.

- » understanding trauma, its effects on behaviour, what can trigger a trauma response and how to appropriately respond to women who have been triggered
 - » understanding the importance of women's relationships and roles staff can play to support women through their sentences
 - » strategies and skills to avoid burnout.
20. Providing a more humanising experience of prison is also a central theme of Corrections' overarching strategy: *Hōkai Rangi*. This strategy aims to bring about transformative and intergenerational change for those in Correction's care and their family and whānau. Like the Women's Strategy, *Hōkai Rangi* recognises the impact of trauma, particularly on Māori prisoners.
21. Together, *Hōkai Rangi* and the Women's Strategy provide a framework for managing and caring for women in prison.
22. This Thematic Report examines the lived experience of women in prison as Corrections is refreshing its Women's Strategy.

Inspection purpose

23. The purpose of this thematic inspection is to:
- » examine the needs of women in prison (including specific health-related needs)
 - » examine whether women are being treated in a way that is fair, safe, secure and humane
 - » make observations and recommendations to Corrections to strengthen the gender-responsive and trauma informed management of women.
24. The scope of this inspection includes all women in prison. It does not include women serving community-based sentences or transgender prisoners accommodated in men's prisons.
25. To prepare for our women's thematic inspection, inspectors undertook a review of local and international research, inspection reports from other jurisdictions and other guiding best practice documentation on caring for women in prison. We used this information, along with our *Inspection Standards*,⁹ to inform our inspection criteria and lines of inquiry.
26. Like all our prison inspections, our assessment for this Thematic Inspection was guided by four key principles:
- » **Safety:** Prisoners are held safely.
 - » **Respect:** Prisoners are treated with respect for human dignity.
 - » **Rehabilitation:** Prisoners are able, and expect, to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them.

⁹ The Inspections Standards describe the standards of treatment and conditions we expect a prison to achieve. The Standards derive from the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners ('the Nelson Mandela Rules') and the HM Inspectorate of Prisons Expectations (England's equivalent criteria for assessing the treatment of and the conditions for men in prisons).

- » **Reintegration:** Prisoners are prepared for release into the community and helped to reduce their likelihood of re-offending.¹⁰

Inspection process

27. The inspection process comprised two phases of fieldwork.
28. Inspectors conducted routine inspections of each of the women's prisons in 2020.
 - » Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF, June 2020)
 - » Arohata Prison (September 2020)
 - » Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP, October 2020)
29. Following debrief and analysis of the inspection findings, inspectors identified issues that required further information. This initiated another round of inspection visits to each of the women's prisons between December 2020 and January 2021.
30. Six inspectors including a Principal Clinical Inspector and a Clinical Inspector were involved in these inspection visits.
31. Inspectors formally interviewed 68 women across the three women's prisons in the second phase of interviews. Over half of these interviews were with Māori women. Numerous prison staff and non-custodial staff were informally interviewed across all sites.
32. Women who were interviewed gave their consent for their information to be included in a report that would later be publicly available and were informed that they could withdraw from the interview at any time.
33. On 7 September 2021, we provided the Corrections' National Commissioner and Deputy Chief Executive Health with a draft of this report. The National Commissioner responded on 20 October 2021, and the response has been appended to this report.
34. This report includes quotes and case studies based on the women and staff we met and spoke with for this inspection. Personal details have been anonymised.

¹⁰ The four principles (or close variations) are used by prison inspectorates in the United Kingdom and Australia, among others. They are consistent with the principles of the Nelson Mandela Rules and the purpose and principles of the Corrections Act 2004.

Profile of women in prison

35. Women are diverse in many ways (such as ethnicity, age, religion, health status and other factors) and so are their experiences of prison. Figures in this section describe both a snapshot of women in prison at 30 June 2020 and also trends in the women's prison population over time.
36. Figure 1 shows that there were 616 women in prison at June 2020. This is a reduction from a peak of 766 in 2018 (see Figure 2.) At June 2020, 250 (40%) women were on remand, either waiting for their trial, or awaiting sentencing. Figure 2 (graphs 2 and 3) shows increasing rates of women on remand since 2011 as well as increases in the length of time they are spending on remand. Around one in three sentenced women are serving short sentences of two years or less.
37. Māori women are over-represented in prison and this has been a long-standing trend. Māori women aged 20-60 years comprised 15% of the general population at June 2020, but for women in prison the figure is 61%. By comparison, Māori men comprised 50% of the prison population.
38. The majority of women (70%) were aged between 20 and 40 years. Six women were aged under 20 and 11 were over 60.
39. Also in June, Corrections recorded that 155 women in prison had links to gangs (25%). This compares with 40% of male prisoners with gang affiliations.
40. As noted earlier, women in prison are likely to have low levels of literacy and numeracy. Of those women who had a literacy and numeracy assessment in 2020, 67% of women had literacy levels which would limit their ability to cope in everyday life and 74% had low numeracy levels.¹¹
41. Corrections does not routinely collect information on the socio-economic status of prisoners. However, the link between poverty and imprisonment is well established in the literature.¹²
42. Corrections' data about women's parenting status is limited to women who were directly caring for a child before entering prison. This is likely to underestimate the number of children women are concerned with.¹³ Based on research conducted in 2013, Corrections estimates that 29% of women in prison have a direct parenting role prior to imprisonment.¹⁴

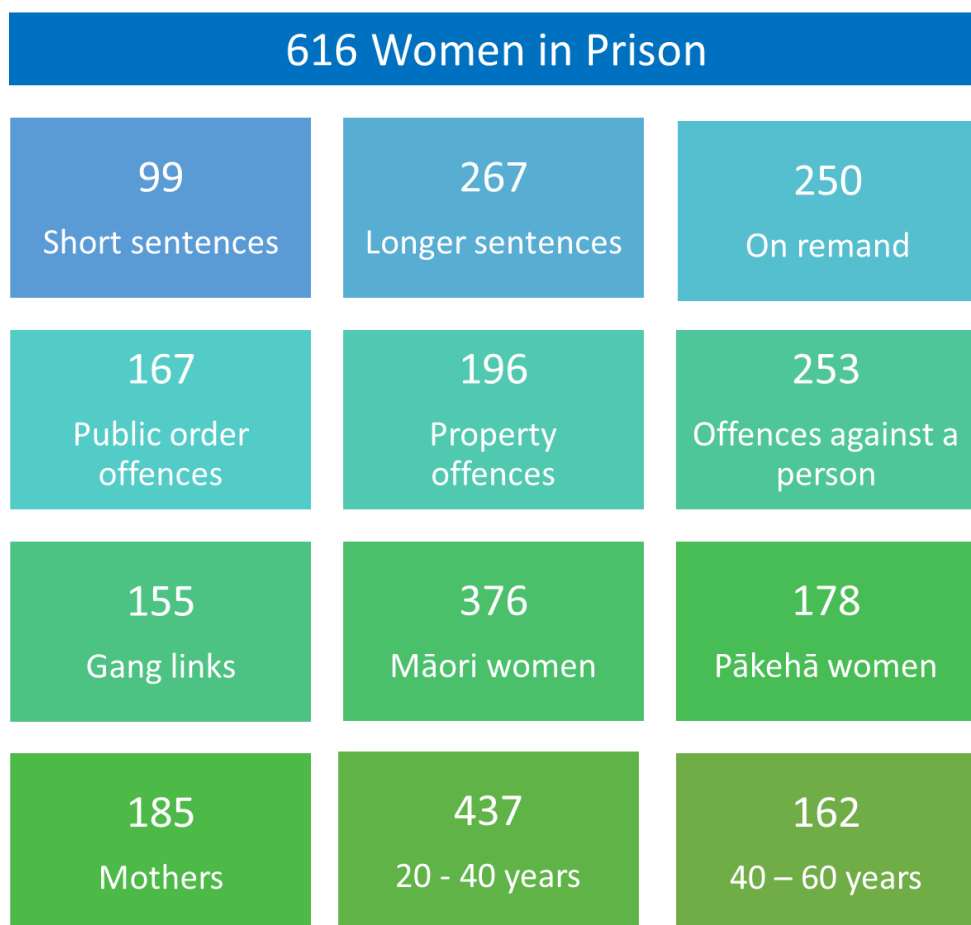
¹¹ Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT) assessment. Note these figures are for prisons who completed an LNAAT, not all prisoners. The majority of prisoners complete an LNAAT due to little other information about their qualifications being available.

¹² See Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, 2018. Using evidence to build a better justice system: The challenge of rising prison costs.

¹³ Many are involved with Oranga Tamariki and may have had children uplifted.

¹⁴ Direct parenting role was defined as: a child under 18 living with a parent prior to imprisonment.

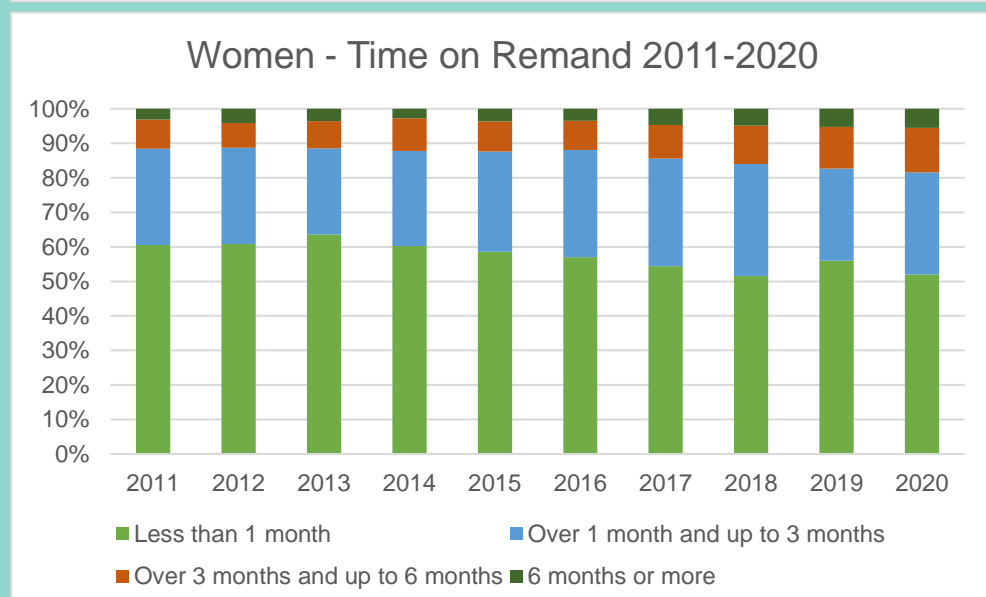
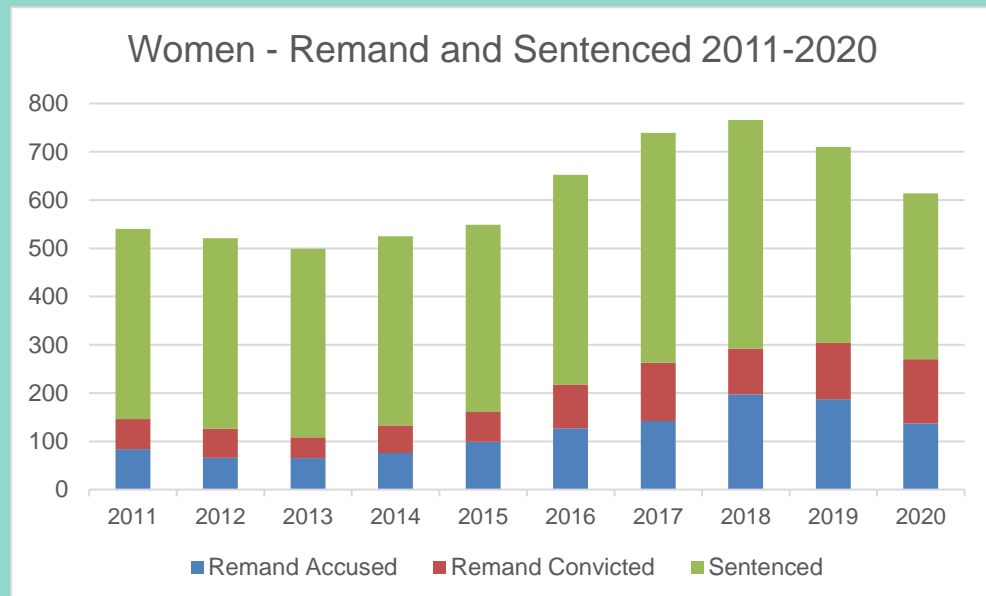
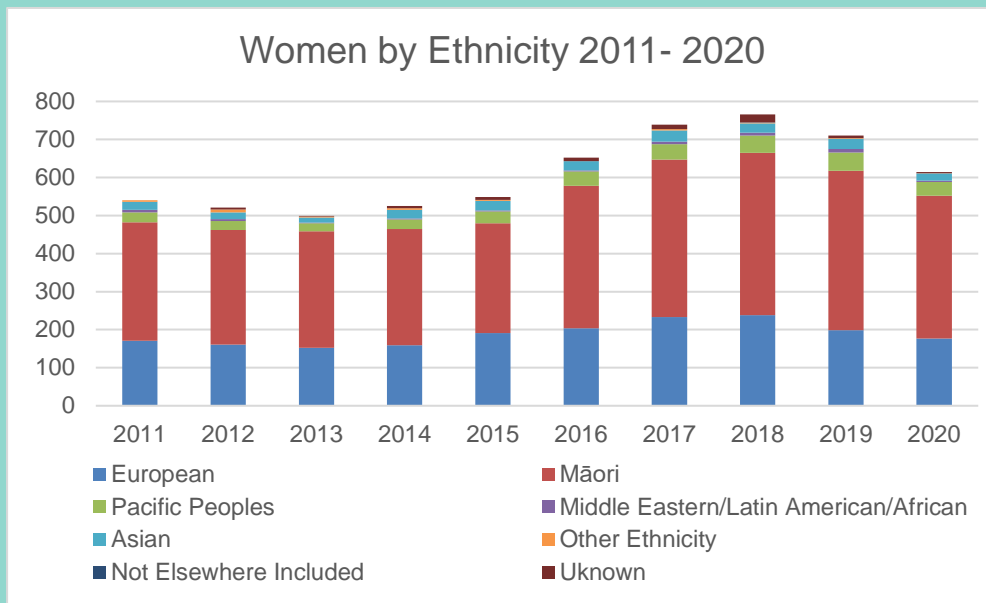
Figure 1. Snapshot of women in prison, June 2020



43. Corrections' data records four women identifying as transgender in women's prisons in June 2020.
44. Finally, women in prison have been exposed to high levels of family and sexual violence (75%) and consequently have high levels of mental health conditions and alcohol and drug misuse. We note also that women are likely to have high levels of traumatic brain injury which can affect decision-making and emotional regulation.¹⁵

¹⁵ This information sourced from Indig, Gear, & Wilhelm, 2016. Comorbid Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders Among New Zealand Prisoners.; Bevan, 2017. New Zealand Prisoners' Prior Exposure to Trauma and Woolhouse, Kinlay and Grace, 2017. Women in Prison with Traumatic Brain Injury.

Figure 2. Women in Prison



Entering Prison – Reception, Induction and Escorts

This section follows the journey of women as they enter prison, which is a stressful time for women and their families and whānau. It is also a critical time for staff who may be working with prisoners for the first time.

Escorts and transfers

45. Prisoners usually arrive at prison in an escort vehicle from court, from police cells, or transfer from another prison.
46. Escorts generally refer to shorter outings into the community, for example, between a prison and courthouse or between a prison and health care provider or hospital. A transfer is a relocation to a different prison.
47. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should travel in safe, decent conditions and be treated with respect, with attention paid to their individual needs. Further, prisoners should understand why and where they are being transferred to.¹⁷
48. International Standard Minimum Rules for Prisoners number 73 states: “When prisoners are being removed to or from an institution, they shall be exposed to

¹⁷ *Inspection Standards* 10 and 11.

public view as little as possible, and proper safeguards shall be adopted to protect them from insult, curiosity and publicity in any form.”¹⁸

Escorts

Escorts to some courts were distressing for women

49. Even a short journey can be traumatic for women depending on the conditions of their escort. Some women told us they had been transported to prison from court in a vehicle with men. For women who have experienced trauma or abuse by men, being locked in a small, confined space near men who may make crude or abusive comments is distressing.
50. We note that not all escort journeys are short and there are difficulties outside Corrections’ control that have resulted in poor experiences for women.
51. The small number of women’s prisons and New Zealand’s wide geographical spread means it is likely that a proportion of women cannot be housed in a prison while attending court. Rather they are held overnight in police cells.¹⁹
52. Women made 2,196 court appearances in the year to June 2020.
53. In the same time, women spent 1,655 nights in a police cell. We understand that there are four main police hubs where women can be accommodated: Rotorua, New Plymouth, Gisborne and Nelson. If women need to stay somewhere else, they are accommodated in police cells. Women spent 856 nights in police cells outside the main police hubs in the year to June 2020.

“Some of our women are required to attend Court in the West Coast ... while in custody they travel with our staff ... or they could be in Police custody ... there have been instances where the women have not showered for up to five days ... there were no female Police officers on duty at the Police stationthe women return to the site having not showered, where they then face a strip search ... this leaves the women in tears, especially if they also have their period during this time” [Manager]

54. The responsibility for the oversight of police cells sits with the National Preventive Mechanism, the Independent Police Conduct Authority.
55. Women might also leave a prison with an escort on a temporary removal. Reasons for temporary removals include to attend a medical appointment, give birth or to participate in activities that meet a prisoner’s rehabilitative or reintegrative needs.²⁰ Escorts for temporary removals often required staff to be redeployed.
56. In 2020, per head of population, women’s prisons made up twice the number of medical escorts compared to men’s prisons.²¹ These escorts removed staff from units which sometimes resulted in women in the unit being locked in their cells for longer because of the ensuing staff shortage. This was more likely if the escort was unforeseen, for example, because of a medical emergency.

¹⁸ United Nations, 2015. United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

¹⁹ Women may be held more than one night if the court case spans multiple days. Section 34 of the Corrections Act allows for the detention of prisoners in police cells in some circumstances, including to attend court (see section 65 (1) of the Act).

²⁰ POM M.04.05 Temporary Removals.

²¹ Medical transfers calculated by the sum of escorts for women’s prisons divided by women’s population at 30 June 2020 compared to the sum of escorts for men’s prisons divided by men’s population at June 30.

57. Women understood the need for medical escorts. However, they were frustrated when these activities impinged on the time out of their cells.

"The staff get to go home and do their things – we don't. Just getting to go out in the fresh air is important to us and to take it away from us for something we have not done is unfair. If there is a medical emergency we get locked, we understand someone needs to go to the hospital but to lock because there is not enough staff is not our fault. Then we don't get told what is going on, then everyone wants to know why we are being locked which creates anxiety and tension." [Prisoner, CWP]

Transfers

58. Every year Corrections completes many thousands of prisoner transfers of which only a small proportion are for women.²² In 2020, just over two-thirds of the 159 inter-prison transfers for women were for the purpose of rehabilitation or reintegration. This assistance included access to programmes, moving prisoners to their home regions²³ for release, and moving prisoners to safeguard their wellbeing. In the same year, 12% of transfers were made to manage prison population pressure and 19% of transfers enabled court appearances.

59. Women may be transferred in a Prison Escort Vehicle by road or on a commercial flight.

60. Among the women we talked to about their experiences of prison escorts and transfers, we found mixed accounts. Some women had positive experiences.

"The drivers were great" [Prisoner, Arohata]

61. Others had a disappointing experience. The following quote is from a woman moving back to Christchurch Women's Prison from Arohata. It illustrates the difficulties faced by Corrections between managing prison population pressure, while trying not to hinder women's rehabilitation or reintegration needs. This quote also highlights how some women cope in prison. For women who may have established their support networks and routines in one prison, a move to another might be particularly stressful. This is because women are more likely to build close relationships with other prisoners and staff to cope with imprisonment.

"I was told to pack my shit ... I didn't want to go ... I had made connections; I was working... and I was loving it.... I was earning top pay and I liked the boss ... I was not supposed to transfer, I popped up on the list ... I was supposed to be working in the kitchen here ... I was moved on the day when I was supposed to be getting my certificate at the presentation" [Prisoner, CWP]

62. Some women shared their experiences of being transported:

"The vehicle smelled of urine and vomit; the temperature inside the metal cubicle was either too hot or too cold depending on the time of year." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

²² See the Inspectorate's Report on Inter-prison transfers (forthcoming) for more information about this topic.

²³ The region where a prisoners commits their most serious offence and is sentenced. This is not necessarily the same as the place a prisoner resided or where they would want to be released to.

"It was claustrophobic being locked in the cubicle. The trip was traumatic. It stripped me of mana and made me feel like a dog. There is huge trauma for women, cuffed, caged no water, no toilet and then stripped, even worse if they have their periods." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

63. However, we also heard from women who appreciated Corrections' attempts to improve prisoner comfort, including being offered water for transfer journeys.
64. According to some staff, the process of transferring prisoners and their property was inconsistent between prisons. For example:

"The M.04 process has a standardised set of instructions ... although they are standardised, there is all sorts of crap that arrives in a prisoner's property from an inter prison transfer that we will not allow This causes frustration for the staff." [Manager]

65. There were specific challenges for women travelling on commercial flights.
66. Current guidance for commercial flights requires that prisoners wear waist restraints, unless they are pregnant or have a confirmed medical exemption. A waist restraint is a belt to which handcuffs are attached. Once seated on a plane, waist restraints must have the handcuffs removed. Guidance does consider the dignity of the prisoner to some extent. For example, waist restraints can be worn under a layer of clothing to ensure the restraint is not clearly visible to members of the public, and staff are to wear civilian clothing if possible.²⁴
67. For some women, transferring on a commercial flight was a distressing experience.

"You feel like you are on display being paraded through the airport – the criminal for all to see. The worst part is that the handcuffs scare people and you see them drawing their children close to them and out of your path, you feel so bad. [Prisoner, CWP]"

68. One prisoner said she needed to go to the toilet on her flight, she could not wait any longer and wet the back seat on the plane. She had to wait until she arrived at the prison to change. Corrections' guidance implies that comfort breaks on escort are at the discretion of staff organising the escort.²⁵
69. The Office of the Inspectorate's Inter-Prison Transfer Thematic Report also found mixed accounts of transfers by prisoners. We made nine recommendations about this issue including considering how women's privacy could be better protected on commercial flights. We note Corrections is actively working towards improving road transfers between prisons.

Reception into prison

70. Prisoners enter prison through the Receiving Office.²⁶ Staff search prisoners to identify items prisoners cannot keep with them in prison.²⁷ Property may be given

²⁴ POM M.04.01.Res.03 Transfer of prisoners via commercial aircraft. Accessed 1 April 2021.

²⁵ POM M.04.01.Res.03 Transfer for prisoners via commercial aircraft states: All prisoners must be given the opportunity to use the toilet facilities prior to the escort departing the prison. If the prisoner is permitted to use the toilet during escort, escorting staff are to ensure the toilet block is secure prior to the prisoner entering. If required, the appropriate restraint must be applied as identified on the M.04.01.Form.01 Prisoner escort instructions.

²⁶ Custodial guidance for initial prison reception is provided in the Prisons Operations Manual (POM), 1.0.

²⁷ Note all prisoners are stripped searched on entry to prison. We discuss strip searches in Safe and Humanising Treatment.

back to the prisoner, stored or disposed of.²⁸ If a prisoner has money with them it is deposited into their prison trust account. Prisoners can later use this account to buy a range of approved items from the prison canteen including snack food and telephone cards.

71. They must wear prison-issue clothing after they are convicted or sentenced for their offending.²⁹ But if they choose, remand accused prisoners can wear their own clothes. Clothing displaying common gang affiliated colours or paraphernalia is never permitted.
72. Prisoners are interviewed by staff on arrival to establish general details like next of kin and if they have any immediate needs, including whether they have children they need to make arrangements for.³⁰ Prisoners are also supported by staff to make one free telephone call.³¹
73. Photographs and fingerprints are recorded for each new prisoner and these are registered in the prison's kiosk. The kiosk is a computer terminal that gives prisoners access to information and a range of services. Among other things, prisoners can make requests to see senior custodial staff or case managers, view their trust account balances, see key dates or appointments and make a canteen order.³²
74. The reception process also involves Health staff who complete a gender-responsive Reception Health Screen and Initial Health Assessments with every new woman, which includes mental health screening. Upon reception, health conditions including those unique to women, such as pregnancy, are identified.
75. We note that guidance for custodial staff receiving people into prison in the Prison Operation Manual does not note special considerations for women (except for when searches are conducted). However, it does include guidance for managing transgender prisoners.³³
76. The *Inspection Standards* for reception and induction in prison state that prisoners should be safe and treated with respect on their reception and during their first days in prison. Prisoners' immediate needs should be identified on arrival and staff should ensure that individuals' immediate anxieties are addressed before the end of the first day. Further, prisoners should be promptly inducted and supported to understand life in prison and know what will happen to them next. Finally, information relating to prison life should be accessible for all prisoners.³⁴

²⁸ Department of Corrections Authorised Property Rules (2020) guide what prisoners may keep on arrival, in storage, or what needs to be disposed of.

²⁹ Authorised clothing must be in good condition. Where prisoners do not have access to clothing the prison is obliged to provide clothing to the extent that this is necessary to ensure that the prisoner has adequate clothing to provide for their safety, warmth, health and comfort. 4.1.7 Authorised Property Rules, 2020.

³⁰ Immediate Needs Assessments POM 1.04.

³¹ Note, prisoners are able to make more than one call if there is no answer. If contact is unsuccessful, a prisoner can try again in the next shift or the next day. POM C.02.Res.04 Initial Call.

³² Prisoners can make regular purchases of basic goods for personal use or consumption and have access to a range of items not provided by the prison.

³³ POM Section I.10 Management of transgender prisoners.

³⁴ *Inspection Standards* 12, 13, 14 and 15.

Women we spoke with said coming into prison for the first time is daunting

77. In the year to June 2020, 1,924 women entered prison on remand and 656 women started a sentence.³⁵
78. Some women said staff on reception were kind to them, especially women who were upset by being sent to prison.

"I was shocked to be sent to prison from court ... pretty scared. Staff at the RO were nice. I called my nan. They explained prison briefly." [Prisoner, Self Care, CWP]

79. One woman in prison multiple times, told us she was used to going through the Receiving Office. She said staff were good and she had no issues, but added that the Receiving Office is the most important place for a first-time prisoner.

"A prison should provide everything a woman needs within 24 hours of her arrival. She shouldn't be sitting in a cell not knowing or understanding what she is entitled to. If she doesn't know what she can ask for then she is not going to ask for it and she will continue to go without which will have some kind of impact on her health, hygiene, mental and wellbeing." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

80. Some women told us they appreciated how staff went out of their way to help them make arrangements for their children by allowing more than one free telephone call. Women said childcare is a significant source of stress, especially if they did not expect to be taken into custody.

Women noticed differences in reception experiences between prisons

81. Some women participating in the Drug Treatment Programme at Arohata Prison, who had transferred from ARWCF, were very positive about the way Arohata staff treated them, supported them and addressed their needs during their reception. One woman in the Drug Treatment Unit (DTU) we spoke with said that she had observed women arriving from ARWCF appearing "shell shocked" when arriving in Arohata because of the level of support available from staff.
82. We note that Arohata Prison offers all new women a 'Given for You' bag,³⁶ containing shampoo, body lotion, socks, hairbrushes, soap, hair ties, toothbrush and paste and lip balm. Women appreciated these items.
83. Our three inspection reports of women's prisons found that the Receiving Offices at each of the prisons generally offered women a safe and respectful first experience of prison.
84. Two reports noted that women were not given information about the Mothers with Babies Units as part of their reception. Women found out later from social workers, or from other prisoners. Some women also experienced delays in contacting their families. These issues are discussed further in the Relationships and Whānau section of this report.
85. One prison had limited supplies of bras. This issue is considered further in the Clothing, Hygiene and Bedding section.

³⁵ Corrections, Volumes Report 2019/2020.

³⁶ This is supplied by the Given for You organisation <https://www.givenforyou.co.nz/projects>

Foreign national women faced specific challenges

86. We note foreign national prisoners (that is, non-New Zealand citizens) frequently find it difficult to contact their families overseas when they arrive in prison. This is because the free telephone call that prisoners are entitled to during the reception process is confined to national calls.
87. Foreign national prisoners can expect to be supported in prison to access their consular representative,³⁷ if required, and to use a translation service if they need support to understand information given during inductions. Foreign national prisoners should also have their health, culture, religion, and dietary requirements met.
88. The quote below shows the challenges faced by a woman from another country who is imprisoned here. In this case, the woman's family did not know which prison she was accommodated in.

"When I first arrived, I had difficulty trying to contact my family. I came in with some cash and thought I could use it but it was the wrong currency and the prison would not change it. An officer gave me a job straight away because she knew I would have problems trying to contact my family and would need to buy phone cards. Then when I did have enough money to buy a card, I wasn't using the right country code. It took me about four months to contact my family. I was submitting phone number approvals that kept getting turned down because the numbers were wrong."
[Prisoner, CWP]

89. We note that the process of contacting consular staff often delays women's ability to access support, if they don't have family or community contacts in New Zealand. Prisoners reported they wanted to be prioritised for video calls with their families.
90. One woman we talked to suggested prisons should offer induction information tailored to foreign nationals, so that contact with their families could be easily arranged.
91. For women for whom English is not their first language, the challenges of understanding verbal and written information and communicating with staff, continues throughout their time in prison. We note the introduction of the Ezispeak telephone interpreter service has provided staff with improved access to qualified interpreters.

Inductions

Designated first night cells were generally supported

92. Soon after women arrive in prison they should receive an induction interview where they are informed by staff of the rules and regulations of the prison and the routines for their unit. This includes how they can contact family or whānau, receive visits, access health services and request contact with staff like the social worker, their case manager or chaplain who can help them adjust to prison life.
93. ARWCF and CWP have recently introduced designated 'first night' cells. These areas house new prisoners for a short period of time while they adjust to prison life. In

³⁷ Section 87 of the Corrections Regulations 2005 states a prisoner detained in a prison who is not a New Zealand citizen must be given reasonable access to a telephone, free of charge, for the purpose of communicating with a consular representative of the country of which that prisoner is a citizen.

ARWCF, Te Waharoa Whakatautangata, in the low security section of the prison, aims to provide multidisciplinary support to new arrivals. It is envisaged that this support will help staff and women plan their time in prison, including where they may be best accommodated and supported immediately and in the longer term.³⁸

94. CWP has partitioned an area in Wing 3 to serve as 'first night' cells. Wing 3 houses women from minimum to high security classifications. This approach was introduced to ensure all arriving women receive a comprehensive induction to prison life and have their immediate needs promptly met.
95. ARWCF staff were positive about how new prisoners were being supported. For example, a senior custodial staff member said the new induction unit was identifying very vulnerable women, so fewer people were being housed in mainstream high security units where they may be bullied or victimised. Some staff we spoke with felt some women would benefit from a longer stay in the induction unit.
96. Staff at CWP said they had received positive feedback from women too. However, a few women we spoke with at CWP said some still felt intimidated by other prisoners in nearby cells. This problem arose because the new prisoner cells are located alongside cells holding other categories of prisoners.

"In Wing 3 there are remand accused, remand convicted, low medium sentenced, high security sentenced, voluntary segregation and directed segregation, all housed together, along with the new arrivals.... the facility is not big enough to house us all to allow everyone to feel safe." [Prisoner, CWP]

Many women we spoke with were satisfied with the induction into their units

97. We note that Corrections has developed Kia Rite, a culturally responsive information and skills programme primarily intended for remand and sentenced women who in the early stages of imprisonment. The programme is designed to help women learn the skills and coping strategies they need during their time in prison.
98. Some women we spoke with said that Kia Rite was helpful as it assisted them to address their immediate needs and transition into prison life.
99. We note that for women who are detoxing or otherwise traumatised, the induction process may need to be repeated over a couple of days.
100. A few women we spoke with had not received a timely induction into their units, which left them at a disadvantage. The quote below is from a woman in prison for the first time. After a good reception experience, where she was given clothes (except a bra), she says she did not receive an induction to the remand unit. The lack of induction shows in her efforts to raise concerns about clothing outside of the standard Corrections complaints process. She said she did not know about the complaints process or how to contact the Office of the Inspectorate or the Office of the Ombudsman.

"I didn't get an induction in the remand unit and didn't get another kit. For a week I had to sleep in undies because I had to wash my clothes in my cell and then dry clothes through the night on the floor. They didn't always dry by morning and the clothes smelt. After a week I started complaining and even wrote a letter. One night I pushed the letter out (under) my door and later that night one of the staff members read the letter and said he

³⁸ Department of Corrections' Response to the Inspectorate inspection report on ARWCF June 2020.

would inform the PCO. The next day, the letter was given back to me and I got a second kit, and another pair of shorts." [Prisoner, High Security, ARWCF]

101. We note that ARWCF has introduced first night cells since this interview. We further note that women should receive an induction each time they are moved to a new unit.

Many women reported learning about how the units worked from other women

102. Even with the support of induction processes, women told us they also learned about how prison worked from each other. This finding is consistent with the literature which suggests women are more likely to develop relationships in prisons both with other prisoners and with staff.

"We are provided with a booklet and an induction but if you want to know what happens in the unit or what to do then the women in the wing would give you more information. It is a natural thing in prison for the women to help each other. We provide for the new arrivals – with clothing, food etc." [Prisoner, CWP]

103. We note that this point is not a criticism of prison induction processes, rather a reflection of how people in new environments learn from each other.
104. However, women also told us that staff often viewed these supportive acts between women negatively and not in the way they were intended. For example, if one woman offered another an item that they needed then staff could identify this behaviour as 'trading'. Trading is an unauthorised activity in prison as it can lead to increased tension or 'standovers' in the units. Women we spoke with felt that if they were provided with what they needed from the outset then there would be less need to share items with others.

"If this was done quickly there would be no need for prisoners to share – and less problems." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Timeliness and consistency were important to women's feelings of safety and security

105. Having telephone numbers approved promptly, and timely access to calls and requested items helped to reduce uncertainty and anxiety for women. Delays caused concern and challenging behaviour if women were left without access to goods and support services without an explanation.
106. In ARWCF and CWP, we learned that some women misbehaved as a strategy to gain access to the Management Unit where staff were perceived to be more responsive as there were fewer women in the unit.

Summary

107. Journeys to and from prison can be difficult, such as if women share escorts with men who are verbally abusive. Long journeys by Prison Escort Vehicle can be uncomfortable, although improvements are being made. Travelling on a commercial flight could be humiliating.
108. Reception into prison is a critical time for new prisoners. Women noted inconsistencies in the quality of reception between prisons. Some found staff and/or other women supportive.

109. Two women's prisons have introduced first night cells. These have the potential to better prepare women for their time in prison.
110. Corrections has developed Kia Rite for women in the early stages of imprisonment to address their immediate needs and transition into prison life.

Areas for consideration

1. Corrections should consider how best to develop consistency in induction practices across women prisons.
2. Corrections should consider developing specialist induction content for women, and additionally for mothers and foreign nationals.
3. Corrections should consider reviewing the items women receive at induction to ensure they are provided with adequate sanitary and hygiene products, underwear, clothing, bedding etc.
4. Corrections should consider reviewing induction telephone policies to acknowledge women's role in care arrangements for children, family and whānau.

Safe and Humanising Treatment

This section considers prison practices that aim to ensure safety and good order in the prison. These include searches and restraints, some of the most debated practices in gender responsiveness in prisons.

Classification

- 111. All prisoners sentenced to imprisonment for more than three months should receive a security classification.³⁹ Corrections' policy is for sentenced prisoners to receive an initial security classification within 14 days of being sentenced.⁴⁰
- 112. Current security classifications are minimum, low, low-medium, high and maximum security.
- 113. Remand accused and remand convicted prisoners remain unclassified but are managed as high security prisoners and typically accommodated in high security units. The standard of accommodation is identical to that used for sentenced prisoners. Remand prisoners must be treated in a way that acknowledges their particular legal status.⁴¹ Remand accused prisoners must be kept separate from remand convicted and sentenced prisoners, unless an exemption is applied for by the Prison Director.
- 114. Security classifications determine where a prisoner is placed within a prison and within the prison network. Prisoners are housed with people of similar security

³⁹ Corrections Act, 2004, Section 48-49.

⁴⁰ POM Section M.02 Security Classification.

⁴¹ POM Section M.01.01.Res.01 Prisoner group definitions.

classifications or category (for example, remand accused or voluntary segregation).⁴² This classification or category also influences a prisoner's eligibility for activities, including programmes and work opportunities, and access to certain areas within the prison. If a programme or activity is delivered in a lower security area of a prison then high security and remand prisoners are typically not eligible to attend.

115. Using a standardised tool, security classification assessments are completed by custodial staff who consider the risk a prisoner poses to people inside and outside the prison (for example, while on an escorted outings). The tool generates a score and the thresholds determine the prisoner classification.
116. In New Zealand, the security classification thresholds are different for men and women. Women must receive a higher score than men to receive a high or maximum security classification.
117. Within the literature, some commentators suggest that using models developed for men to determine women's security risks may result in women being classified at security levels that are too high for the risk they pose.⁴³
118. Our *Inspection Standards* state that classification, placement and treatment should be based on an individual assessment of each prisoner's risks and needs. Further, prisoners should be held in the appropriate security conditions and be able to seek a review about decisions on their security classification.⁴⁴
119. At 30 June 2020, most women who had received a sentence were classified between minimum and low-medium security (84%). Twelve percent of women were classified as high security and one percent as maximum security.

Some women thought the classification system worked against people who behaved well

120. Reclassification must occur at least once every six months, or when there is a significant change in a prisoner's circumstances.⁴⁵ Prisoners can also apply to the Chief Executive (or their delegate) for an early reconsideration of their classification.
121. Some women believed people with good behaviour waited too long before they could be reclassified and access the benefits of living in a lower security unit in the prison. This is an important point, given women tend to have shorter sentences than men. This suggests women may not be aware of the ability to ask for their classification to be reconsidered.
122. When women were transferred between prisons, some said they felt they had to start from scratch to build their good reputation again in the new prison. A transfer typically excluded their access to a Self Care Unit right away – even if they had just come from a Self Care Unit at their previous prison.
123. Deportees at ARWCF were also excluded from Self Care Units. This is a local policy which appears to prioritise local sentenced prisoners due for release, over prisoners who may be directly deported from the country. In these cases, deportees are not expected to reintegrate into New Zealand communities. However, denying

⁴² Voluntary segregation or voluntary protective custody happens when a prisoner requests to be separated from mainstream prisoners for their own safety. These prisoners are housed separately from mainstream prisons. POM M.01.05 and Corrections Act 2004, section 59.

⁴³ The Correctional Investigator Canada, 2007. Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator 2006-2007.

⁴⁴ New Zealand Standards 61 and 62 aligned with SMR 89 and 93.

⁴⁵ Corrections Act, 2004, section 47 and POM M.02 Security Classification.

deportees access to Self Care Units may prevent them from completing rehabilitation requirements set by the Parole Board, thereby delaying their release.

Security classification for remand prisoners?

124. We note also that prisoners on remand, both women and men, are housed in high security units which tend to have the most restricted regimes and less opportunity for out of cell activities. The conviction rate for all prisoners is around 70% and is expected to remain stable over the next ten years.⁴⁶ This suggests that not all prisoners held on remand will end up with a sentence of imprisonment. It also means that people who may not be convicted of a crime are spending time in highly restrictive prison conditions.⁴⁷

125. The following quote came from a woman who was asked what Corrections could do better.

"The strangest thing I've found is – remand convicted and sentenced people. Classifications should be based on your behaviour not if you're on remand etc. I think things like getting jobs should go based on behaviour. Same with unit placements. This is purely for the fact that I was on remand for a year, and I was stuck in high security and I was good – I didn't play up. I was in remand for a year, and I wasn't able to do anything. So then when I got sentenced, I was straight up [eligible for] parole and then they said I had to do all these programmes which I could have started earlier. So that has made me do close to my whole sentence. It is quite hard having to wait a year and a bit before getting on to the DTU. It's not like those behaviours were yesterday." [Prisoner, Arohata]

126. While the number of people being held on remand is outside of Corrections' control (this is decided by the Courts), Corrections' High Impact Innovation Programme has introduced initiatives to reduce the time people spend on remand. These include, for example, the sentencing team which liaises with relevant parties ensuring that all relevant information is ready for the first hearing. This means that sentencing is more likely to go ahead as scheduled, without the need for adjournments and unnecessary time spent on remand.

127. Corrections has also begun to look at opportunities for introducing a new classification system for remand prisoners in the future.⁴⁸

"This will allow a remand prisoner to be security classified and then accommodated in units that are consistent with the risk they pose (currently remand prisoners are not classified and managed in a high security environments). The proposed changes would have the anticipated benefits of helping to reduce the risk to staff safety, allowing for more effective use and management of the prison network and laying foundation for future improvements in the remand space as part of Hōkai Rangi. [Staff Member, Partnerships and Pathways team]

⁴⁶ Ministry of Justice, 2020. Justice Sector Projections 2020-2030.

⁴⁷ This concern has been noted by the Ombudsman. See Annual Report, 2019/2020 (The Ombudsman, 2020).

⁴⁸ Information about the current status of the Remand Classification Project were given in personal communication by staff from the Population Prison Team (12 April 2021).

Time out of cells varied across prisons, units and classifications

128. Classification and placement in a unit determine how much time women can spend out of their cells. Other factors include remand status and how many groups of prisoners – who should remain separated – are being housed in the same unit. The number of staff available in a unit also influences time out of cells. Units have regimes that allow prisons to manage different groups of women safely. Generally, people with lower security classifications spend more time out of their cells.
129. The classification system itself provides an incentive for women to behave well so they can move to lower security areas of the prison which offer more choices.
130. The following examples, taken from our inspection reports, show the complexity of unit management as well as the differences in the opportunities offered to women of different classifications and prisoners on remand.⁴⁹
- » Remand Unit (high security unit, ARWCF) – Two unlock regimes to ensure remand accused and directed segregation women remained separate. Each group received two to three hours out of their cell each day, split between morning and afternoon.
 - » Tizard Unit (high security unit, Arohata) – Groups of women averaged one and a half hours out of their cell each day, split between morning and afternoon. Four unlock regimes were in operation to ensure different categories of prisoner remained separate.
 - » Wing 3 – (low medium to high security and remand prisoners, CWP) – Women said they had no set unit routine but spent an average of four hours a day out of their cells in either the yard or in the unit for recreation time. Unlock times varied daily and the recording of unlock hours in the unit diary by staff was inconsistent.
 - » Drug Treatment Unit (Arohata) – Women received between six and seven hours out of their cell each day to attend their programme, exercise and socialise in the common areas. This unit is run as a therapeutic community.
 - » Employment Hub, Self Care and Mothers with Babies Units (low-medium or minimum security, ARWCF) – Women were typically unlocked from 7am to 7pm.

Inconsistency in time out of cells was frustrating for women

131. We observed inconsistencies in hours of unlock between and within prison units. Unscheduled lockdowns could occur if staff were called to support another part of the prison. Inconsistency could also occur when new staff came into the unit and changed routines.
132. This uncertainty adds to women's sense of frustration and trauma, and is a source of challenging behaviour which staff then have to cope with.

"If something is changed the staff need to tell the women – rations were not being delivered to the wings, now they are to be collected at the staff base but no one said anything, unlock times change....sometimes the wings are unlocked late, there is an impact – women who need to go to medical can miss collecting their medication as the window closes at 9am and they have to come back later. If women are going to be unlocked late then tell

⁴⁹ From ARWCF inspection report, 2020.

them as early as you can so they know, they are not going to be happy but they are less likely to kick the doors and yell.”[Prisoner, CWP]

“I was meant to be doing study – previously we could go to the [computer] suite by ourselves and study – but then when the PCO changed we weren’t able to do that anymore.” [Prisoner, Arohata]

133. Regarding classification, the Chief Inspector has indicated that a review of the maximum security classification for women may be required.⁵⁰ Her preliminary findings from the special investigation into the management of three prisoners at ARWCF (March 2021) led her to ask whether this security classification was appropriate for women, given the low numbers at any one time to allow socialisation. She noted that in the case of the prisoners subject to her investigation, it may have been more appropriate for them to remain high security prisoners, but subject to directed segregation.
134. A review of the maximum security classification for women is underway.⁵¹

Promoting acceptable behaviour

135. Related to the assessment of classification at prison are prison efforts to encourage positive behaviour.
136. The Corrections Code of Conduct states that “all staff are held to a high standard of integrity and professionalism and must act as role models for the offenders and communities we work with”.
137. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prisons should establish systems of rewards and privileges, appropriate for different categories of prisoners, to encourage prosocial behaviour, develop a sense of responsibility and secure the interest and cooperation of prisoners.⁵²
138. Conversely, where there is a need for discipline, prisoners are subject to disciplinary procedures which are fair and proportionate and follow due process. Further, prisoners should be promptly informed of any disciplinary sanction, and understand the charges and procedures they face.⁵³

We observed few incentives for pro-social behaviour

139. As noted above, six monthly reviews for security classification is a long time to wait for people behaving well, particularly for women spending a short time in prison. During our inspections we observed few incentives in prisons to promote pro-social behaviour.
140. Some women we spoke with shared that informal rules were often established by the women themselves which affected behaviour. A few accounts coalesced around themes of leadership or popularity. Women leaders, nannies or ‘top dogs’ received respect among the other women because they helped women access what they needed. Often these unofficial leaders were women who had past experience of

⁵⁰ Chief Inspector Janis Adair. (17 March 2021). Special Investigation into the Management of Three Prisoners at Auckland Region Women’s Corrections Facility. Preliminary findings.

⁵¹ Minister of Corrections, Kelvin Davis. Letter of Expectations to the Department of Corrections, 22 March 2021.

⁵² Inspection Standard 67; SMR 95.

⁵³ *Inspection Standards* 69 and 70; SMR.

being in prison, were older and they appeared to work hard on behalf of other women.

"There is a perception that the Top Dog is a bully and will protect you if you do their bidding – this is not the case in my experience... The TD is the person who shows they are there to help – they are the ones that stick. The ones who show everyone that they care about everyone and they are wanting to help you – it is more the manipulative person – They are seen as the mother figure. Usually older but not always, will listen to people's problems and they offer something to everyone and that is how they get to keep that role. Whether they bring drugs in and do other things... –There are tough TD, but the girls don't like the standover mentality and people do not support them. They get manoeuvred out by the women to the pound usually and they don't come back – people put alerts on them." [Prisoner, CWP]

141. Some women said that prisoners outside the popular group could be vulnerable.

"In jail you need to support yourself, I prefer to keep to myself, which has made me a target. A group of bullies on my wing threw my phone cards on the roof. I didn't tell the officers because that would make things worse as I would be viewed as a nark...there are two queen bees on the remand side and their sheep who do their dirty work and it started around lozenges because I wouldn't give it to them. From there it moved to people not letting me use the phone, I would be walking around the yard and there would be comments made. I didn't take it to the officers, I wish I had because that group would probably have been removed from the unit by now." [Prisoner, CWP]

142. Other women we spoke with said prisoners who behaved badly attracted attention and subsequently got what they wanted. It was their belief that quieter prisoners went under the radar and that their needs were easily overlooked because staff were busy dealing with the disruptive prisoners.

"The ones who get everything they want are the ones who yell and scream, throw tantrums and stomp their feet. They are the ones who get the attention – the staff run to them. Also they are the ones who are moved to other units, the high risk units – to Wing 3 or the pound but there are no real changes in them when they come back to the wings, they are still the same. The one who throws the wobbly is the one who gets the attention and the one who says nothing – just gets left alone." [Prisoner, Minimum Security, CWP]

"There is a degree of 'unfairness'. The 'top dogs' in the unit get things because they are loud. Some prisoners get their own products sent in, and when their cells are searched, the items stay in the cell." [Prisoner, Arohata]

143. One prisoner, serving a long sentence, summed up her reflection of women's behaviour:

"70% of the prisoners follow the rules, 25% blur the lines and 5% don't believe the rules apply to them. If prisoners can't adhere to the rules in here, how are they being prepared for the community? They are being set up to fail." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Incident responses can penalise bystanders

144. Some women in low security units at ARWCF felt they were being punished for incidents happening in the high security area of the prison (for example, lighting fires). They reported cleaning implements and scissors used for preparing harakeke (flax for weaving) being locked away in the staff base and tables being removed. As a result, they said prisoners had less to do and *"ended up watching TV all day"*.
145. Other women also said that everything had been removed from their unit so they felt there was nothing left that staff could take away from them. This created a situation where they had nothing left to lose and little incentive to behave.
146. 'Group punishment' was also felt in some units at other prisons where one woman might break some equipment which resulted in all women missing out.

"I know our rights ... usually in a unit kitchen there is a microwave, fridge/freezer and a sandwich press available to be used ... there is nothing here ... one idiot who will treat it badly ... we all miss out" [Prisoner, CWP]

Safety

Safety was sometimes compromised by unwanted attention from other women

147. Some women reported feeling unsafe because of the attention of other women. Some felt they were being sexually harassed. Staff also told us that relationships between women could be problematic.

"Relationships are a big problem – the biggest for women. We see many toxic relationships – many issues we have, particularly with double bunking. Many manipulate placement to get moved to see [their] girlfriend – in the management unit." [Principal Corrections Officer]

"At night after lock the women yell out to others in the wing – they openly talk about who they would want to have a relationship with...they like to shock – attention seekers. There's a small group will dare other prisoners to do things like grab someone's breasts, do disgusting things to show their dominance – sometimes they do carry out these acts. You can't do anything because they are popular, they put the person on the spot who they have just sexually assaulted – the victim has to not show that they are upset, they can't snitch – it is degrading." [Prisoner, CWP]

"Relationships are big here. They flirt and try to touch you. It's so bad. They flash you as well. It's so bad when there are break ups. They argue and fight. There is a lot of kissing. Staff are mainly in the hub. They know it's going on, but they ignore it, they don't think it's serious. Most of us are getting sexually harassed by other women. You can't hug inmates – it leads them on." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Some women expressed concern about bullying or standovers

148. Some women expressed concern about bullying or standovers. This was a particular concern when women were new to the prison.

"I was stood down for one year from the Parole Board ... I was being bullied ... my mum was diagnosed with cancer ... no one checked on me ... no one asked me if I was OK." [Prisoner, CWP]

149. One transgender woman we spoke with said she had been bullied all her life and her experience of prison was no different. Women had different strategies for coping with bullying, including complaining to staff or hanging out with their friends.

"I walk over to the phone with my friends to keep safe and then I would be walked back by my friends. This doesn't completely stop the abuse, but I feel better for the support." [Prisoner, CWP]

150. Some women also reported that some staff did not treat them decently, but noted this was the exception, and was a minority of staff.

"Staff can brush you off and don't listen to you. They don't have much time for you. They don't care. There is favouritism." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"Everyone is having a problem with (staff member X). When she is on duty, you get out late, locked early, don't get P119⁵⁴ on time.... She is the one all the girls are hating on – when she is on, prisoners' needs are never met. She said, 'At the end of the day you are just prisoners.' But (staff member Y) is cool. When he is on everyone gets treated fairly, no one fights over the phone." [Prisoner, CWP]

"This unit is the worst unit because staff don't care and they treat prisoners like animals." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

151. Staff we spoke with supported the need to have the right staff working with women.

"Get more staff but the right staff. Some staff are just here for the money, not the job. It's important to have the right staff as we don't judge them and have the right personalities. If the girls can relate to us, they can open up to us, but they won't do this with some staff." [Principal Corrections Officer]

Managing challenging behaviour

Use of restraints

152. The use of restraints and use of force are contentious issues in the literature with guidance generally suggesting restraints be used only when necessary and with special provisions for some prisoners such as pregnant women.⁵⁵
153. Our *Inspection Standards* state that instruments of restraint should be used only in clearly defined circumstances, when lesser forms of control fail, and only for the time strictly required. Further, force is to be used only against prisoners as a last resort and never as a disciplinary procedure. When used, force should be legitimate, necessary, proportionate, and subject to rigorous governance.⁵⁶
154. As noted in the previous section, women might have a temporary removal to leave prison to attend a medical appointment, give birth or participate in activities that meet her rehabilitative or reintegrative needs.⁵⁷ Restraints are commonly used when escorting prisoners.

⁵⁴ P119 is the form for purchasing items from the prison canteen. Prisoners can pay for items such as snacks, pens or personal care products.

⁵⁵ See for example HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, *Women in Prison*, 1997; and Penal Reform International, 2013. *Instruments of Restraint*

⁵⁶ New Zealand Standards 74, 75 and SMR 47, 48, 49 and 82.

⁵⁷ POM M.04.05 Temporary Removals.

155. At the time of our inspection, Corrections' guidance stated mechanical restraints (handcuffs) should not be used in any circumstance while women are giving birth.⁵⁸ This guidance was changed on 16 May 2021. Current guidance requires that:

"Mechanical restraints will not to be used on wāhine / women who are 30+ weeks pregnant, are in labour, or remain in hospital with their pēpi / baby after giving birth. [POM M.03.02 Wāhine / women and pregnant prisoners]"

156. This is in line with other jurisdictions and consistent with the *Inspection Standards*.
157. Custodial staff determine whether to apply a restraint (handcuffs or waist restraint) when escorting prisoners. A decision to use restraints for temporary removals is determined by a risk assessment, prisoner circumstances, including the reason for an escort, and the type of vehicle being used for an escort.
158. Health staff are responsible for providing information to custodial staff about how a woman's clinical condition may affect her safe and humane containment.⁵⁹ Health staff are obliged to notify custodial staff if women are pregnant or have other medical conditions which prevent them from being placed in a waist restraint.

Women said restraint should be proportionate to risk.

159. Women we talked to supported the idea of restraints on escorts being proportionate to risk. In particular, some said not all women should have handcuffs – rather they should only be restrained if they present risks to staff or the public.

"Well behaved prisoners should not have to wear padlock handcuffs - only prisoners who are abusive or have alerts should have those. I saw a little old lady cuffed – being escorted to Court – I know what she is going through. Perhaps the people making her wear those handcuffs are looking at the crime and not her, she has done what she has done, but she seemed harmless." [Prisoner, CWP]"

160. The quotes below reflect women's experiences while handcuffed during medical procedures.

"I was taken to the doctor's appointment and was asked to have a pap smear done whilst in short handcuffs." [Prisoner, ARWCF]"

"Even though I'm minimum security, officers stayed in the room during my doctor's appointments and I remain handcuffed even though I was having a mammogram." [Prisoner, ARWCF]"

161. Women thought that the rules governing use of restraints became more stringent in response to the behaviour of other prisoners. For example, women noted how restraints changed after an incident with male prisoners. These women felt the blanket rule for escorts punished them.

"A male prisoner escaped and the rules for female escorts got changed. We are now subjected to handcuffs as well as a bracelet even though we are minimum security prisoners." [Prisoner, ARWCF]"

⁵⁸ POM M.03.02 Female and pregnant prisoners.

⁵⁹ POM M.04 External movements – Health policy - Prison escort and transport accessed 13 April 2021 (page updated 20 August 2020).

Misconduct processes were not working well in some prisons

162. Prisons are required to maintain good discipline and order through effective supervision, communication and fair and effective disciplinary procedures. Offences against discipline committed by a prisoner can result in a misconduct charge. Disciplinary action must be well documented by staff, and disciplinary hearings must comply with statutory and regulatory requirements.
163. Offences against discipline are outlined in the legislation, with guidance on the misconduct process described in the Prison Operations Manual.⁶⁰
164. Prosecutors are staff trained to charge prisoners with an offence and who have responsibility for proving that charge. Hearing adjudicators are staff who hear charges relating to alleged offences. If a prisoner is not satisfied with the outcome of a hearing, they can appeal to a Visiting Justice within 14 days of the adjudicator decision.
165. Charges must be laid within seven days of an incident, with a hearing held within 14 days of a charge being laid.
166. The number of misconducts raised in women's prisons is proportional to the population of women in prison (around 6%).
167. In some prisons, misconduct charges failed because the time to investigate had lapsed before action was taken or hearings were delayed. At ARWCF, problems with the misconduct process for maximum security prisoners contributed to deteriorating care and challenging behaviour over time.⁶¹ This appears related to the availability of staff and competing priorities, for example, misconducts being dismissed because of staff delays in meeting deadlines for laying charges or for adjudicators conducting hearings. We note CWP shared an adjudicator with the men's prisons in the Christchurch region.
168. An ineffective or poorly applied misconduct process can add to a prison culture where poor behaviour goes unsanctioned.

Use of force

169. In the year to June 2020, the majority of women (90%) were not involved in incidents involving aggressive behaviour. The remaining 10% were involved in prisoner on prisoner assaults (7%), fighting (4%), prisoner physical assault on staff (2%) with standovers and intimidation making up one percent of aggressive incidents.
170. Use of force may be initiated in response to an incident at a prison. Corrections' policy outlines the circumstances in which use of force may be needed and what intervention should be deployed, such as pepper spray. Staff may use force only if there is no other option in situations of self-defence or the defence of another person, in the case of a prisoner attempting to escape, if a prisoner is damaging property or resisting a lawful order.⁶²
171. In the first three months of 2021 Arohata recorded 5.32 use of force incidents per 100 women, CWP 1.68 per 100 women and ARWCF, 7.57 incidents per 100 women. The rate of use of force incidents varies by prison and by period, this may be as a result of specific prisoners accommodated at these times.

⁶⁰ Corrections Act, 2004, section 128-140. POM MC.01.

⁶¹ An investigation into the treatment of maximum security prisoners at ARWCF is the subject of a separate report.

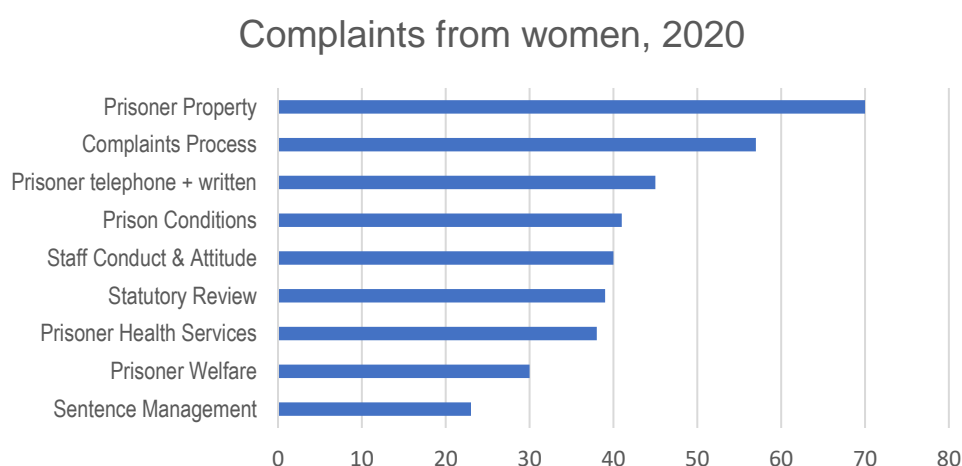
⁶² POM IR.02 Incident Response.

Complaints

172. If prisoners are unhappy with their treatment within prison, they can make a complaint to the prison by submitting a completed PC.01 form or a Health Services Complaint Form. If the matter is not resolved, then the prisoner can lay a complaint with the Office of the Inspectorate. Women can also make a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman.
173. In late 2020, the Office of the Inspectorate established an Early Resolution Team to deal promptly with complaints. Many complaints made to the Office of the Inspectorate are referred back to the prison's complaints process in the first instance, in line with the policy that complaints should be dealt with at the lowest possible level before being escalated. However, complaints about prisoner safety can be managed by the Office of the Inspectorate without prisoners going through the prison first.
174. In 2020, 511 complaints were made to the Office of the Inspectorate by 199 women. Features of prison life attracting more than 20 complaints fell into nine categories which made up 75% of complaints. These are shown in Figure 3 below. Concerns about property generated the most complaints. The majority of these related to claims for lost property.
175. Complaints about the complaints process within prisons was the second most common form of complaint. Around 40% of complaints about the process were due to dissatisfaction with the outcomes of the process (PC.01). Other concerns related to the timeliness of responses or not receiving a receipt that a complaint had been dealt with. A receipt is the prisoner's assurance that a complaint has been passed on.
176. More than half of complaints about telephones were about women wanting better access.
177. Prison conditions covers complaints about hours of unlock through to concerns about cells and the prison environment, while staff conduct and attitudes are complaints about how staff treat prisoners. Allegations against staff within Corrections are handled by a separate process (IR.07) and serious complaints are monitored by the Office of the Inspectorate.⁶³
178. Statutory review captures complaints about the timeliness of misconduct processes and prisoner welfare includes concerns about prisoners' own safety. Sentence management typically captures complaints about the length of time it takes to have telephone numbers approved. We note women's complaints reflect many of the issues discussed in this Thematic Review.'

⁶³ PO IR.07 Allegations against staff.

Figure 3. Top reasons for complaints to the Office of the Inspectorate, 2020



179. Finally, we note that Corrections has been directed to engage an external team to review the complaints process.⁶⁴ This work, being carried out within the Office of the Inspectorate, is currently in progress.

Searches

180. Searches are conducted to ensure no unauthorised items enter a prison, thereby creating a security risk. Within the international literature the role of strip searching prisoners to maintain security is highly contentious and has been for many years.⁶⁵ We note variations in the processes for strip searches across jurisdictions and rules for determining when strip searches should be conducted.
181. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should be held in a safe environment where security is proportionate to risk. Searches of cells and prisoners should be carried out only when necessary and are proportionate, with due respect for privacy and dignity. Women prisoners should only be searched by women staff. Finally, strip searches should only be carried out where necessary, with two appropriately trained female staff present and women should never be fully naked.⁶⁶

Strip searching felt traumatizing and degrading for some women

182. The Corrections Act (Section 98, 7a) and Prison Operations Manual (POM) guidance says strip searches are mandatory for all people on first being admitted to a prison, including after a prison transfer.⁶⁷
183. In 2020, 1199 strip searches were conducted in women's prisons. The main reason for strip searches were women entering prison for the first time (78%). Other reasons

⁶⁴ Minister of Corrections, Kelvin Davis. Letter of Expectations to the Department of Corrections, 22 March 2021.

⁶⁵ As early as 1997, a report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons on Women in Prison noted a lack of evidence that bending or squatting is an effective method for detecting items that were internally concealed. This report also noted the potentially damaging effect of strip searches on women who had previously suffered sexual abuse. Advocates for women in prison have also raised concerns about strip searching as a source of trauma for women with abuse histories. See for example, WIPAN, 2015.

⁶⁶ *Inspection Standards* 60,76, 134 and 135.

⁶⁷ POM A.01.Res.11 Event based strip searches.

included an officer having reasonable grounds for believing a prisoner may have an unauthorised item (98, 3a) or one of many reasons given in section 98 (6) of the legislation. These include prison transfers, temporary releases, and before or after visits.

184. Corrections has specific guidelines for staff on appropriate search practices for women.⁶⁸ These include removing clothes from the top half, then replacing them before moving to the bottom half of the body. Women are required to lift folds of skin. They are also required to squat. We note that these requirements are not mandatory in other jurisdictions (in Queensland for example).⁶⁹ Only female staff may strip search women prisoners.
185. Women accepted the need for strip searches when entering the prison, although they said they did not like the procedure. Some women thought the strip searching procedure had improved – though this is contrary to Corrections’ guidance.

“I have no issues with the way staff do strip search. It’s easier now as they don’t make us squat.” [Prisoner, Arohata]

186. Many staff and women prisoners we spoke with said that strip searching was traumatizing and degrading.
187. We received reports of women refusing medical appointments to avoid the strip search that followed their return to prison. Some women, who feel vulnerable or are reminded of past traumatic experiences because of the strip search, would rather forgo their medical appointment.
188. One woman, who was still bleeding after giving birth, was required to have a strip search, while another woman recounted her experience of returning to prison after having invasive surgery which required padding to staunch the bleeding.

“One of the staff did not want to complete the strip search ... the other staff member did ... my padding was removed ... I was made to squat, which meant the blood went everywhere.” [Prisoner, CWP]

189. Women generally said officers were understanding and processed them as quickly as possible to avoid any further distress.
190. We note further that a Pasifika staff member expressed concern about strip searching in the context of Pasifika cultures:

“Strip searching is extremely distressing for both women being searched and for Pacific officers doing the search. For many cultures this is really difficult.” [Staff]

Women suggested changes to the search process

191. Some women we spoke with suggested changes to the strip search process. These included forgoing strip searches when re-entering prison when a woman had been in the presence of a custodial officer at all times.⁷⁰ For example, one woman who was strip searched at the airport, then spent the night in police cells and arrived at prison and was strip searched again, said:

⁶⁸ Strip searching a female prisoner. Note this guidance says not to ask women to remove tampons.

⁶⁹ Ombudsman, Queensland, 2017. The Strip Searching of Female Prisoners Report. 2014.

⁷⁰ Following an amendment to the Corrections Act in 2019, strip searches following an escort are no longer mandatory.

"What could I have possibly done between that timeframe of me already having my first strip search in the airport to spending the night in the police cells, to coming here and being stripped again, it was degrading. I had not left the sight of the authorities and couldn't go anywhere else." [Prisoner, ARWCF].

192. Another woman suggested alternatives to strip searches where staff were concerned about the risk of internal concealment:

"If internal concealment is an issue then the prison needs to have a process that is less invasive and traumatising and purchase equipment that can scan prisoners. No one likes to be stripped and I'm sure staff don't like stripping prisoners either." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

193. We note this comment is in line with the international literature and Corrections' initiatives to introduce body scanners.
194. The Corrections Act was amended to allow body image scans to replace a strip search on 29 October 2019:

98 (9) If a prisoner is required to undergo a strip search under this section, a scanner search may be undertaken as an alternative if the chief executive has approved the device as suitable for the purpose of replacing a strip search.

195. We note that Corrections is trialling body scanners. We welcome the introduction of appropriate technology to reduce the need for strip searches in prisons

Rub down searches are used routinely in prisons

196. Rub down searches are routinely used when women move from one part of a prison to another, for example, from work areas to residential units. Searches are only conducted by female members of staff. Some women felt uncomfortable with rub down searches.

Summary

197. Maintaining safety and good order in prison depends on the formal rules and policies of the prison as well as the informal culture among women. Relationships between women can be problematic and some reported feeling unsafe.
198. Remand prisoners remain unclassified but are managed as high security and typically accommodated in high security units, which have highly restrictive regimes.
199. Inconsistent unlock hours adds to women's sense of frustration and can lead to challenging behaviour for staff to cope with.
200. Prisoner trust in the complaints system and the misconduct process is essential to a well-functioning prison network.
201. Some women felt strip searching was traumatizing and degrading. The use of technology to maintain prison security and women's dignity is important and is being trialled.

Areas for consideration

5. Corrections should consider reviewing classification review timeframes to support rehabilitation, taking into account the shorter sentences women generally receive.
6. Corrections should implement a gender-specific approach to the management of remand to ensure women are accommodated and managed according to their actual risk.
7. Corrections should consider reviewing the misconduct process to confirm staff have sufficient guidance and time to maintain the efficacy of this system.
8. Corrections should consider introducing a gender-responsive and trauma-informed incentive framework that positively reinforces pro-social and healthy behaviour and relationships.
9. Corrections should consider reviewing the use of restraints across women's prisons to reflect the actual risk of the individual.
10. Corrections should consider reviewing strip searching practices and procedures to ensure a trauma informed and culturally appropriate approach, with particular consideration given to temporary removals and releases.
11. Corrections should continue with work at pace to implement body scanning technology across all three women's sites.

Environment

This section considers the physical environment in prison and women's access to basic everyday items, both of which influence women's prison experience.

An overview of women's prisons in New Zealand

202. The history of accommodating women in New Zealand prisons reflects prison philosophies of the day. Women were housed in men's prisons in the nineteenth century and the first women's prison opened in Addington in 1913. This was followed by the opening of Arohata Girl's Borstal in 1944, which is now Arohata Prison. Addington women's prison was closed in 1950. Most women were held in separate sections of men's prisons until the 1970s.⁷¹ At that time, Christchurch Women's Prison opened and prisoners and staff transferred to the site from Dunedin Prison and Christchurch Prison's Women's Division. Christchurch Women's Prison remains the only women's prison in the South Island and still shares staff for some functions with the men's prisons in Christchurch. These include activities such as property distribution, the SERT team⁷² and the Principal Case Manager. In 2006 Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility opened, taking the number of women's prisons to three.
203. Providing trauma-informed and gender-responsive interventions to help women to lead offence-free lives extends to the prison environment they live in. Generally, women's prisons are not therapeutic environments conducive to rehabilitation and reintegration.⁷³

⁷¹ Te Ara Encyclopaedia. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/prisons/page-6>.

⁷² Site Emergency Response Team. SERT were introduced in 2013 with aim of enhancing prison safety.

⁷³ Some experts suggest that the attempts to brighten prisons up do not go far enough. In short, prison architecture can re-trigger trauma for people rather than supporting the rehabilitative efforts of custodial staff (including health staff). Jewkes, Jordon, Wright, & Bendelow, 2019. Designing 'healthy' prisons for women: Incorporating trauma-informed care and practice (TICP) into prison planning and design.

204. The *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should live in a clean and suitable environment which is in a good state of repair and fit for purpose.⁷⁴

Residential units

205. Prisoners spend much of their time in their residential units. Units provide places for sleeping, exercising (the yards), socialising, eating and sometimes places for learning, rehabilitation and other constructive activities.

The quality of accommodation in the residential units varied across the estate

206. During our inspections, we observed that the older women's prisons had some worn or poorly maintained facilities, and lacked storage space. Some units needed repairs to floors and bathroom facilities.
207. Women we spoke with were aware of the lack of healing spaces. We note that many outdoor areas accessible to women (that is, the yards), particularly in high security and remand areas of a prison, were simply hardened concrete enclosures with wooden seats and limited exercise equipment or activities.

"We need to live in a therapeutic environment – flowers, plants, calming area, grass areas for women to walk on, fresh air, murals painted on walls."
[Women Prisoners, CWP]

Prison design limited some opportunities for women

208. The women's prisons tended to lack space to conduct all the activities available to different categories of prisoners (e.g. remand or high security). When activity spaces such as common rooms or dining rooms were used for storage instead, opportunities for socialising among women were further limited.
209. The quote below is from a woman moving to a new unit at Arohata Prison.

"The positives are more time out of my cell, a bigger day room with more stuff like table tennis, chairs, TV and a bigger yard. But there is no natural light and I can't see outside. That dehumanises a person." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Sharing accommodation posed challenges for some women

210. Older prisons were built for single-cell occupancy. Women felt they lacked space for two occupants when single units were repurposed to hold two occupants.

"Double bunking is not fit for purpose ... the cell was designed for single occupancy ... when the Department was looking to increase muster size, they put another bunk into the cell that was not designed for it." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"When double bunked, if you don't get on with others, it can be hell."
[Prisoner, Arohata]

211. ARWCF was built specifically with double-bunking in some units. When the prison is at full occupancy, this precludes women having a choice to be on their own, despite the challenges they might be facing.

⁷⁴ *Inspection Standards* 21 -24 and Gender Responsive Standards 57. These are consistent with Corrections 2004 minimum entitlements.

"In Auckland it's all double cell in low security. I don't cope well with being double celled. And after a course, when it's pretty heavy, to then be celled up with someone is really hard. And the person I was celled with didn't do the course, so they don't know what I was going through. But, down here in this unit, it's great." [Prisoner, Arohata]

212. Sharing cells, units and common spaces were an issue for some women whether or not they were designed with sharing in mind. We note staff assess the suitability of prisoners for sharing cells. The Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment (SACRA) reviews whether or not a prisoner is suitable for cell sharing (being double bunked), and then, who they may be compatible to share a cell with.⁷⁵ For example, some older women said they would prefer to be placed with another older women.

"There should be a wing specific to women over the age of 50, as they are generally more mature, and the young ones have no respect ... the mentality is different ... the life skills that the older women have are more advanced." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Conversely, some women preferred to share cells

213. Some women told us they preferred to share cells because they liked the company and the support. This was especially the case if women could share with members of their family and whānau. Some women linked their preference to share cells with their identity as wāhine Māori – who had a strong sense of whānau.

Self Care Units

214. Self Care Units are residential style houses designed for prisoners who are nearing release to ease the transition from the prison environment to the community. We discuss Self Care Units in the reintegration section of this report.

Clothing, hygiene and bedding

215. Access to everyday items used by women also helps shape their prison experience. Access to adequate clothing, bedding and hygiene products contribute to a sense of wellbeing. Where these items are less available, they can become sources of tension. Regulations state that authorised clothing must be in good condition. Where prisoners do not have access to clothing the prison is obliged to provide adequate clothing for safety, warmth, health and comfort.⁷⁶ Authorised clothing can be sent to women from supporters outside the prison.
216. The *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should have access to a variety of clean clothing, including underwear, of the right size and quality, which is seasonally appropriate and designed for their gender-specific needs.⁷⁷
217. Access to suitable clothing was variable across women's prisons.

"When we arrived here from Auckland – our property didn't come down with us so we had no bras or undies, so the staff took us down to this room where there were tons of bras and undies that we could select from. In Auckland, we only had what we were wearing when we were brought in and it was rough. You had to wash that single bra in the sink and dry it

⁷⁵ SACRA. POM 1.08.

⁷⁶ Department of Corrections. 4.1.7 Authorised Property Rules, 2020.

⁷⁷ *Inspection Standards* 120.

every night. In Auckland it was so bad. For women, underwear is a definite issue – they should get clean underwear asap.’ [Prisoner, Arohata]

218. We found some women did not have access to suitable clothing when they were pregnant. Instead they tended to be given larger clothes rather than maternity clothes. We also noted women altering clothes (for example, cutting off sleeves or legs) to cope during warmer weather, then consequently being charged for damaging their clothing.
219. If unauthorised clothing is taken from women, for example bras with underwires, or where women are required to wear prison clothing, the expectation is that they should be supplied with clothing that fits them. This is the experience of one woman regarding access to clothing:

“Women are washing their clothes and underwear. It’s hard if you have your period and no underwear, no one seems to think that is a problem. Staff said they don’t have anything to give us. You have to wait until the property office opens to see what they have. One woman in the wing is a medium size but she was given 3XL pants to wear and a jersey. She has tied a knot in the pants to keep them up.” [Prisoner, ARWCF]

220. The following quote is from a focus group with women in a Self Care unit.

“Most of us get our second pair of undies from other girls in the unit. These come at a cost: your lozenges, your noodles. Girls expect payment, or you end up owing someone.” [Self Care Focus Group, ARWCF]

221. We note that underwear is not available for women to purchase on the prison canteen list. If women don’t have family and whānau to send clothing in, they need to make a special order with prison officers and have enough money in their trust accounts to purchase it.
222. Some women we talked with were not aware they could ask for underwear from the prison, while others thought their request might be negatively received.
223. Access to enough clothing is an issue specific to women where clothing is needed to make them feel safe. Being trauma-informed and gender-responsive requires meeting the women’s health needs.

“When women arrive in remand they should be provided with what they need. If they are detoxing then wash and change their bedding more frequently, provide them with a change of clothes every day, give them underwear so they feel human – does anyone know what it’s like to be without underwear? It makes you feel vulnerable.” [Prisoner, CWP]

Access to sanitary items was mostly good.

224. While many women told us access to sanitary items was good, some women said they had to ask for sanitary items and were not always given enough. Some women felt embarrassed at having to ask.
225. In the Intervention and Support Unit (ISU),⁷⁸ women at risk of self harm are required to wear a stitch gown and their underwear is removed. This makes it difficult to hold sanitary pads in place for women who prefer not to use tampons. Our further points concerning the ISU are discussed in the next section (Health and Wellbeing).

⁷⁸ Women are placed in the ISU if they are deemed at risk of self-harm. The ISU is discussed further in the health and wellbeing chapter.

The quality of bedding varied within and between prisons

226. The impacts of sleep deprivation on wellbeing are numerous and well established in the literature. These include impacts on mood, energy levels, concentration, accidents, memory and weight, as well as increasing the risks of high blood pressure, depressed immunity and cardiac disease.⁷⁹
227. Many women we talked to reported issues with being able to sleep.
228. Having a bed of reasonable comfort is one of the contributors to a good night's sleep. Access to decent bedding is a legal requirement which includes bedding that is clean, of reasonable comfort and regularly laundered.⁸⁰
229. Bedding quality varied between sites.

"The pillows, blankets and duvets are all poor ... the mattresses hang off every bed and are too thin ... the pillows are too thin and small In the duvets, the fluff is all in one area which makes them unhelpful when it is hot." [Prisoner, CWP]

230. Changes in bedding may need to happen more regularly for women who are detoxing (and sweating a lot), sick, or experiencing menopause. We note that pregnant women are able to ask for a second mattress. Most women we talked to were not aware of this.

Women wanted more access to items to help them maintain their appearance

231. The *Inspection Standards* state that women's prisons should operate under gender-sensitive prison management policies in order to ensure that the particular needs of women prisoners are taken into account, based on their ethnicity, race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or other status.
232. The way women look is connected to their identities. A transgender prisoner at CWP told us she needed better access to wigs and makeup to support her identity. We note wigs are not an item listed in the Authorised Property Rules, however POM 110.04 Property states that:

"Any other items the prisoner uses to maintain their gender identity may be issued in the normal way following an application on the P.01.Form.01 Request for property on request and following POM P.03 Issuing property.

Items requested by the prisoner to maintain their gender identity in prison can only be withheld from the prisoner if the prison director determines that it is a risk to the safety and security of the prison." [POM110.04]

233. Women can purchase basic makeup supplies from the prison canteen. These includes emery boards, a lip balm, three hair dye colours and two mascaras.⁸¹ Called 'consumables', these are items that cannot be sent into the prison from family and whānau, but need to be purchased using funds from a prisoner's trust account.⁸²
234. Women must have enough money in their trust account to buy these items. Women can work in prison to earn money (see the discussion of work in Rehabilitation and

⁷⁹ Source National Institute of Health, (2019) Brain Basics: Understanding Sleep. <https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Understanding-Sleep>. The *Inspection Standards* state prisoner should have sufficient bedding that is laundered regularly. *Inspection Standards* 52.

⁸⁰ Corrections Act 2004, Section 71.

⁸¹ From canteen list of November 2020.

⁸² POM F.05.01 Prisoner Accounts and Purchases.

Reintegration) or their supporters can top up a trust account to a maximum value of \$200.⁸³ Prisoners are permitted to spend up to \$70 per week from their trust accounts unless they have special authorisation from the prison to spend more.

235. Alternatively, women told us they created their own makeup. We heard accounts of women mixing coffee with sunscreen to make foundation and mixing ground-up coloured pencil led with ointment for lipstick.
236. In short, many women felt they were not able feel feminine with the items available in prison. This point was also identified by staff.

"Females just aren't females anymore ...Having my hair done and wearing makeup is about how I feel ... a lot of the women do not have good self-esteem and we hang on to what we have that leaves us feeling good"
[Prisoner, Arohata]

"There is a need to help the women take care of themselves ... there are no decent mirrors available to the women on site, however there are mirrors in the hair salon ... some women turn away from the mirrors when they are confronted with themselves." [Tutors, CWP]

Summary

237. Providing trauma-informed and gender-responsive interventions to help women lead offence-free lives extends to the prison environment. Generally, women's prisons are not therapeutic environments conducive to rehabilitation and reintegration.
238. The quality of accommodation in the residential units varied across the estate and prison design limited some education, training and rehabilitation activities for women.
239. Access to adequate clothing, bedding and hygiene products contributes to a sense of wellbeing. Where these items are less available, they can become sources of tension.
240. Bedding quality varied between sites and many women reported issues with being able to sleep.

Areas for consideration

12. Corrections should consider reviewing women's access to essential items such as underwear and clothing, to ensure a continuing supply is provided.
13. Corrections should consider reviewing property regulations and items available from the canteen that promote and support gender and cultural identities.
14. Corrections should consider a review of ISU policy to ensure a gendered approach is taken to supporting women while in these units.
15. Corrections should consider how staff can engage with women about their preference for sharing a cell, where practicable, given the relational nature of women.
16. Corrections should consider gender specific needs when determining schedules for the laundering and replenishing of kit and bedding.

⁸³ Trust Accounts, 4.0 Policies and Procedures- General Principles.

17. Corrections should consider international and national literature on women in prison and prison architecture when designing or redeveloping facilities.

Health and Wellbeing

This section considers support for the wellbeing of women including their physical, mental and maternal health.

Health and Wellbeing of Women in Prison

241. As noted in the introduction, women prisoners in New Zealand share many of the same challenges as women imprisoned all over the world. Among these challenges are a history of abuse and trauma, poor mental health and alcohol and other drug misuse.⁸⁴
242. Research suggests that in New Zealand more than three-quarters of prisoners have experienced some type of violence in their lives before imprisonment (See Figure 4). Women are likely to have experienced more family and sexual violence than men and to have experienced violence from a young age, for longer, and to be exposed to a wider range of family and sexual violence.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Indig, Gear, & Wilhelm, 2016. Comorbid Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders Among New Zealand Prisoners.

⁸⁵ Bevan, 2017. New Zealand Prisoners' Prior Exposure to Trauma.

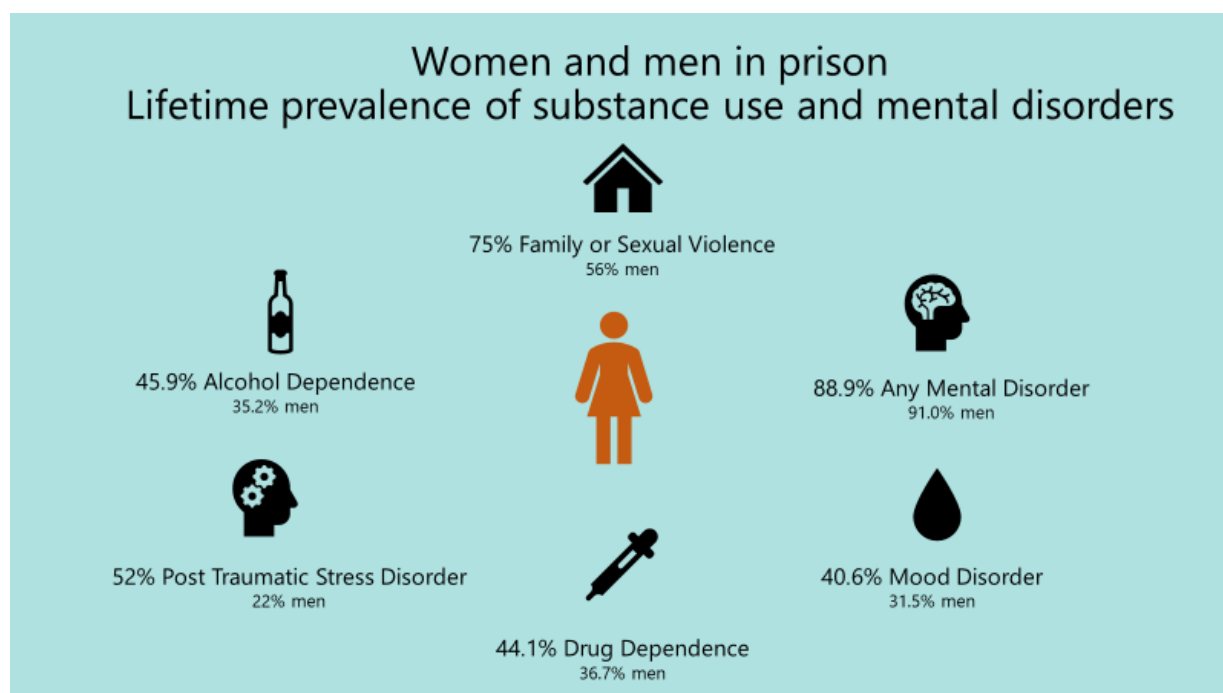
243. While the parameters of trauma are debated in the literature, the impacts of trauma are well understood. Many people who suffer trauma remain in a constant state of extreme stress and self-protection and may have:
- » difficulty maintaining healthy close relationships
 - » negatively affected cognitive abilities
 - » self-destructive and impulsive behaviours
 - » hypervigilance and fearfulness
 - » physical pain or illness symptomology
 - » emotional numbing, feeling nothing most of the time
 - » freezing when there is a present or perceived danger
 - » addictions including substance abuse and alcoholism.⁸⁶
244. Prison environments can trigger trauma responses because many of the day-to-day occurrences in a prison can be perceived as threatening for trauma sufferers. Loud noises, banging doors, shouting, confined spaces, control and restraint techniques, lack of privacy and body searches can all trigger responses for trauma sufferers, or retraumatise them.
245. This means that many of the behaviours that staff in women's prisons witness on a daily basis may be better understood and explained as the result of trauma, and not as women being "attention seeking", or "non-compliant".⁸⁷
246. The high incidence of trauma in women's lives supports central pillars of Corrections' Women's Strategy, including trauma informed practice and providing trauma counsellors for women.
- "Prisons are trauma paradigms. Effectively the authoritarian nature between the officers and inmates - there is a standard power differential. From the officer's perspective, that power differential isn't understood well ... without officers understanding [these] power dynamics they don't understand how they wield power over women ... And that is a constant trauma reinforcement....In the women's space we have tried to roll out trauma informed study but then we don't offer enough recourse to embed it in a meaningful way - it's very hard to expect them to do that well and work well, especially in that environment. And officers fall back to feeling like they don't know or haven't been trained and they fall into a helplessness space and then the natural course is for them to use power to feel in control." [Principal Psychologist]*
247. Conversely, research suggests some women feel safer when entering prison because they are freed from homelessness and abusive or exploitative relationships. This change in circumstances can help women realise the danger they were living in and provide the space for them to identify their trauma symptoms and triggers.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ McCartan, 2020. Trauma-informed Practice: Academic Insights 2020/05.

⁸⁷ McGlue, 2016. Trauma hiding in plain view: the case for trauma informed practice in women's prisons.

⁸⁸ Miller, N. A., & Najavits, L. M. 2012. Creating trauma-informed correctional care: a balance of goals and environment. European Journal of Psychotraumatology.

Figure 4. Women and Men in Prison - Lifetime Prevalence of Substance Use and Mental Disorders⁸⁹



Trauma informed practice

Many people we talked to appreciated the need to work in a trauma-informed way

248. Across women's prisons, many staff were aware that the women they worked with had likely experienced trauma in their lives. Some staff understood that a history of trauma triggered behaviours that were challenging for staff to deal with.

"A theme that I've noticed is women have experienced a lot of trauma starting from childhood – sexual, physical and neglect. You find they have received no treatment, therapy or counselling and the trauma sticks with them so then as they grow up, they enter relationships that mirror their childhood. Family violence is huge for these women. Women need more access to counselling services especially trauma services and there is only one here. That is a big need. In my experience 95% of women have trauma and they need wraparound services. We need to have the resources that if a trauma comes up that we don't know about then we can refer them straight away. And the work we do is in groups so stuff comes up and it can trigger some women." [Kowhiritanga Programme facilitator]

249. Staff trained in trauma management said they saw little in the way of trauma-informed practice in day to day prison life.

"I don't see any trauma-informed practice demonstrated by custodial staff. It would be great if [they] did." [Trauma Counsellor]

⁸⁹ Indig, D., Gear, C., & Wilhelm, K. (2016). *Comorbid Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders Among New Zealand Prisoners*. Wellington: Department of Corrections.

Staff we talked with could not recall receiving recent trauma-informed training

250. Staff noted the value of training when it was rolled out and identified how it could help staff to understand and work with women in a trauma-informed way.

"When the Women's Strategy was rolled out in 2018 everyone working in a women's prison had to be trained in trauma-informed practice and it was run by two psychologists. But this has turned into a one off and it was never rolled out again. So, it was like this is really cool but then we don't embed it. Why? Some staff don't seem to realise that women can be affected following a session with a counsellor. They're dealing with their personal trauma in a session and yet some staff think they should behave 'normally' when they come out. So instead, when they're quiet, or upset, instead of thinking it's the result of talking about their trauma, they think it's their 'poor behaviour'. "[Principal Case Manager]

"I remember when it [trauma-informed practice] was rolled out. I think when the training was rolled out it was really good, but people forget. Every year they should be doing refresher courses ... These women are not coming from a good background; they haven't had good role models; they have been abused since they were young. Everyone knows it but they forget to implement it.... Sometimes the women feel that they're not being heard." [Social Worker]

Consistency of staff helped women toward wellbeing.

251. In health, as in many areas of the prison, many women appreciated building relationships with staff. Where staff moved roles, resigned or were redeployed to other parts of the prison, this could set back the healing process.

"Biggest thing is trust - 98% of women who come through the door don't trust other people. They think what we talk about will be used against them. Sometimes it takes a while to get them to trust me – sometimes three to four sessions. This lack of trust starts from the outside and they carry it in with them here. They don't trust staff at all." [Trauma Counsellor]

"Since I've been here, I've had four psychologists that I've had to tell my story to and it became really hard to have to tell that story over and over." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Women appreciated their time with counsellors

252. As noted above, Corrections' Women's Strategy introduced trauma counsellors to women's prisons. Trauma counsellors are available in addition to any support women might have been able to access in the community, such as counselling services provided by ACC.
253. Trauma counsellors were mostly appreciated by the women that we spoke with. The success of this intervention for women's health is limited by the time trauma counsellors are available to support women.

"You socialise and mix with a variety of people on a daily basis but you never say what you really feel or think but the counsellor is your safe person who you can off load to about anything that you have been bottling up." [Prisoner, CWP]

"There is a real good social worker and counsellor who we can see – it's not hard to get to see them, which is good." [Prisoner, Arohata]

Health care

Access to health care

254. Prisoners are entitled to health care that is reasonably equivalent to care they could access in the community.⁹⁰
255. Corrections' Health Care Pathway Policy provides guidance to staff caring for prisoners.⁹¹ Health Centre Managers (HCM) and their staff provide on-site health care for prisoners as well as liaising with services off-site.
256. At every prison, a Reception Health Screen is undertaken by nursing staff for all new arrivals or people returning to the prison. New arrivals are prioritised for any follow-up care based on their immediate health care needs. All prisoners receive a further comprehensive health assessment – the Initial Health Assessment (IHA) – within a month of entering prison.
257. In addition to standard health assessments that all prisoners receive, women are offered pregnancy tests, breast and cervical screening as would happen in the community. Sites will check details of women coming into prison with the national screening registers and offer screening to women who require it.
258. In March 2021, Corrections launched Ara Poutama Aotearoa Health Services: Guideline for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Transgender and Non-Binary Adults and Young Adults in our Care. This document aims to provide gender affirming health services for transgender prisoners. That is, health care "that affirms a person's gender and increases congruence between their body and their gender or sense of self."⁹²
259. While in their units, prisoners submit health request forms (or chits) to access health services. Chits are collected daily and triaged by nurses.

For some women, coming to prison is the first time they have accessed healthcare.

260. A history of poor access to healthcare is common among men and women in prison. In the community, more women than men experienced cost as a barrier to seeing their GP in the year to June 2020 (15.9% vs 10.6%).⁹³
261. Nurses we spoke with said women entering prison are more concerned about their families and whānau than their own health. Being in prison is an opportunity to focus on their own wellbeing.

"The initial health assessment process is good as we can do screening and find out if anything is wrong. The initial health assessment is needed as some patients are so engrossed in looking after their family, they don't look after themselves. It's a good all round check-up" [Nurse]

"In custody it's the first opportunity to put themselves first and look after themselves. Health can sometimes not be a priority in the community as

⁹⁰ See Section 75 of the Corrections Act, 2004. (Corrections Act 2004). Also Inspection Standard 41.

⁹¹ Corrections Health Care Pathway policy (2019).

⁹² Department of Corrections, 2021 Guideline for Guideline for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Transgender and Non-Binary Adults and Young Adults in our care.

⁹³ Ministry of Health. 2020. New Zealand Health Survey, 2019. 2020. Note data collection for this survey ceased because of COVID-19 in March 2020. Consequently, the findings are based on data collected over three-quarters of the year (Ministry of Health, 2020).

they are just trying to survive. Many come in with sexually transmitted diseases, or pre-existing undiagnosed mental health where they haven't seen anyone about it, they can't afford it. They have a lot of immediate health issues when they first arrive. Doing the initial health assessment is a chance to build rapport with the women, relationship building. It's their chance to talk about their health." [Nurse]

262. This means that staff providing healthcare in prisons may be managing more complex health issues when women come into their care.

"Women can be time-consuming, and as it appears, some of the women who enter custody do not know about their bodies, and what is available in the community to support them. Some women do not go to the doctor in the community due to not having the money, which then becomes a barrier to their health. Health is free in custody, therefore that is where the women may open up about their unresolved issues." [Manager]

Staff noted strong demand for health services from women

263. We note a stronger demand for health services among women in prison than men. For example, in the Northern Region up to 1.4 health requests were generated for every woman in prison each month in the first half of 2020. For men, the figure varied but was much less than one request for each man.⁹⁴
264. Staff spoke of the need to have a reception health screen and an initial health assessment for women on remand. Some staff said numbers of remand prisoners was putting pressure on health staff.⁹⁵

"The amount of remand women has impacted on health ... the reception health screen, the initial health screen is time-consuming and we have a small timeframe to conduct this at the front end of a women's journey through custody. Currently there is staff fatigue, they need to manage their workload and when a woman begins to trust the nurse, then that opens up a multitude of issues that need to be addressed." [Manager]

265. Women we spoke with appreciated the reception health process and the opportunity to have a health check.

"I think it is really important that we see a nurse when we arrive. I remember my first appointment – it was good because they went over everything with me. They were able to tell me they had all my doctor's files so knew my previous conditions. It made me feel more comfortable that they had my records and they knew what medication I was on." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

"If I hadn't come to prison I wouldn't have the medical treatment I needed. I couldn't afford it." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Women generally had positive experiences with health professionals on site

"The nurse is lovely. I had to go for a smear, and I've been sexually abused, and the nurse she took her time, she talked to me, she told me what she

⁹⁴ For example, in May 2020, women generated 132 medical requests for every 100 women in prison that month. At the same time, men at NRCF generated 59 requests per 100.

⁹⁵ In the 5 months to May 2021, CWP received 68 prisoners, ARWCF received 363 prisoners and Arohata received 123 prisoners. From COBRA6.03

was doing. The smear never hurt, and she took care of me while it happened. I've asked her to do another smear before I get released so I'm good for another few years." [Prisoner, Arohata]

266. Negative experiences of healthcare related to women not being aware of the help they could receive. Other problems arose from challenges in communication between staff within the prison, and instructions from medical staff outside the prison.

"I did not know about the medical PRN (Prisoner Requires Narcotic)⁹⁶ request." [Prisoner, CWP]

"The hospital issued me codeine (post-surgery) ... staff took it back to the prison ... I needed the medication every four hours to manage the pain ... I woke up in pain at 1am, I was not able to access anything ... (after receiving her morning dose) I went for my lunch time dose and the nurse told me I wasn't allowed codeine in prison ... I was bedridden initially ... I took three months to heal ...the nurse would not give me medication until I had been seen by the doctor" [Prisoner, CWP]

Some women said they had to wait a while to see a health professional

267. Some women found they had to wait a long time to see a medical officer, counsellor or dentist. We note that there were 38 health related complaints to the Office of the Inspectorate in 2020. These included complaints about access to external health providers and to medication (including nicotine replacement therapy).
268. Staff attributed wait times to not having enough contracted hours for health professionals. Other contributing factors, particularly at ARWCF, were health staff vacancies and absences and not having the custodial staff support available to escort women from their units to medical appointments.
269. We note that the resourcing model for medical officers in prisons is the same for men and women despite knowing that female prisoners have higher needs for health services.

Some women and staff felt women were stigmatised by uniformed external escorts.

270. Some staff expressed their frustration about the requirement to wear stab resistant vests and uniforms when escorting women to hospital, medical appointments and other outings that support women's wellbeing. Staff said this practice was humiliating for some women. They also talked about the impact of having uniformed custodial staff members present in public spaces with women prisoners. The first quote refers to uniformed staff accompanying women on day leave.

"I feel uncomfortable with this, along with the women, as it draws unnecessary attention to them in the community." [Senior Corrections Officer]

"Staff were conducting a hospital escort ... there were three prisoners in the hospital ward, all requiring two staff each, which meant that there were six staff in the ward wearing vests ... the impact that their presence would have had on visiting members of the public cannot be highlighted enough." [Manager]

⁹⁶ Request for drug substitution.

*"Last year the (community) swimming pool requested that the staff did not attend their facility with the women, due to them wearing vests."
[Manager]*

Some women said they lacked privacy at medical appointments

271. Some women also spoke about the lack of privacy when attending health appointments accompanied by custodial staff.

"I'm refusing medical treatment because the procedure is uncomfortable. I'm handcuffed with officers on both sides with my legs straddled in stirrups. Then I have to go back to prison and be strip searched even though the officers were there the whole time." [Prisoner, CWP]⁹⁷

Diet and exercise

Many women were concerned about putting on weight in prison

272. Obesity is linked to many negative health outcomes. These include increased risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer.⁹⁸ Research suggests that excess weight can also affect a person's mood by increasing the production of the stress hormone cortisol and reducing levels of feel good endorphins.
273. Obesity rates in the general New Zealand population are high with around 1 in 3 adults meeting the criteria for obesity in the last New Zealand Health Survey (2019/2021). Rates of obesity were higher among Māori and Pacific people, and people in lower socio-economic groups (after controlling for ethnicity, age and gender differences).
274. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should have a varied, healthy and balanced diet which meets their individual needs and that upon request, the prison should provide meals and food in line with religious, cultural and other special dietary requirements. Finally, the standards require that mealtimes should be reasonable and generally match those in the community, where possible.⁹⁹
275. Many women in prison were concerned about putting on weight. An inquiry into weight change by the Principal Clinical Inspector showed that 69% of women in prison between 2015 and 2020 gained weight.¹⁰⁰ Collectively, 278 women gained 3199 kgs, an average of 11.5kgs per person.
276. In the same period around a quarter of women lost weight, with only five percent of women maintaining their weight on entry.
277. The same menu is given to men and women in prison, with the possibility of vegetarian and vegan options, or medical diets where they are prescribed for certain conditions.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Following an amendment to the Corrections Act in 2019, strip searches following an escort are no longer mandatory.

⁹⁸ Heart Research Institute New Zealand.

<https://www.hri.org.nz/health/learn/risk-factors/obesity-and-overweight>

⁹⁹ *Inspection Standards* 55, 56 and 59.

¹⁰⁰ The rate for wāhine Māori was about the same, with 70% gaining weight.

¹⁰¹ POM, F.01.Res.01 Catering. We note Corrections takes advice from nutritionists on the prison menu.

"There is no difference in the national menu for male versus female ... this means 100g of meat, 100g of frozen vegetables ... we're quite generous in our servings." [Catering Instructor]

278. Some women attributed the prison diet, combined with other behaviour changes, for increases in their weight.

"I came in in an emotional state - the thought of being here for a long time was really daunting. I just ate, it was my only comfort, I had no one to talk to at the time and I put on 50kgs. When I approached them for help I was told to stop eating bread and potatoes. It was my lack of control but I had nothing else to help get me through anything. I felt really let down, it's been really hard. I asked them to do a recommendation for me to go on a salad diet instead of bread, like a special dietary need, but they told me they couldn't do that. I have other health problems and they relate to my weight." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

"We all have stopped smoking when coming to prison, and then we just eat, so we gain weight. The diet is good, but every day it's the same old thing. I love food so I'm happy with the portion sizes, and I'm not fussed about my weight. But you do put on weight." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"I wanted some help with my weight and was told there was nothing. Because I'm here and not doing anything, we can watch what we eat but we end up buying crappy food that is cheap. I want support with losing weight, we have lots of idle time, sitting around bored, so we eat." [Women's focus group, CWP]

279. We note there is there is no 'low fat' diet in prisons (like there used to be) as the national menu is considered low fat, given the food that is used and the way it is prepared. However, a reduced calorie diet is not available for those people who are actively trying to lose weight.

Conversely, some women were also concerned about restricted food access

280. Some women noted how food was wasted.

"A lot of food is wasted – there are no seconds in some units, and the surplus gets thrown out. It should be dished up for anyone who wants more. There are some women who cannot afford to buy canteen to supplement their diet if they are hungry at night. The decent thing to do is to feed someone who is hungry and not throw the food away." [Prisoner, CWP]

281. Evening meals were often served too early in the afternoon with some women reporting that they become hungry later at night. We noted dinner time varied across sites but was often between 3.30pm and 4.30 pm to fit in with staff shifts. Serving meals cold, when they are supposed to be hot, is another frustration for prisoners.

"The food is not too bad, we get what we need. There is a long time between dinner and breakfast, just about 16-17 hours with no food. I think the muffin is supposed to be supper but it's pretty small. We have lots of carbs and nowhere to burn them off. There are too many carbs. I don't want to put on weight – last time I came in around 85kgs and left at 120kgs (over 3.5yr timeframe). So this time I'm being very conscious and think I've

lost weight. I've been on a vegetarian diet. I appreciate and am grateful for the meals we get though." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

282. As noted in the quotes above, hunger from early mealtimes is particularly a problem for women without family, friends or whānau who can put money in their trust account so snacks can be purchased from the canteen, or for women who do not work in the prison.
283. Staff and many women wanted more healthy choices in the canteen offerings. They thought the large range of unhealthy snack food available for purchase from the canteen likely contributed to weight gain.

"I wish there were more options on food in the P119's ... there is limited healthy products and no access to vitamins" [Prisoner, Arohata]

284. Given the negative impacts of obesity, re-examining the national prison diet for women, alongside creating a national health promotion policy is worth considering. We note that some sites have ad hoc health promotion sessions about healthy lifestyles, including diet and exercise.

Women were keen to exercise and take part in constructive activities

285. Women had similar supports to men for keeping themselves occupied. These include access to the gym and exercise, participating in constructive activities run by volunteers as well as the availability of the prison library and chaplaincy services. At the time of our inspection, access to activities run by volunteers were still being impacted by COVID-19.
286. Our *Inspection Standards* state that women should be able to spend at least one hour a day in the open air and should have access to physical exercise and recreational activities.¹⁰²
287. Many women we spoke with liked the opportunity to exercise and would like more time in the gym. Women appreciated the programmes and activities set by gym instructors. Access to gym and fitness activities varied across the country. We note that at the time of our inspection, the gym at ARWCF was closed.

"I go to the gym every day. Staff are really supportive. They push me to go to the gym if I'm slacking off which is great. I'm on a low-fat diet anyway, but the bread and the spud I've cut out." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"We live on the schedule for gym, swim and library. The chaplain comes on a Sunday. If I'm feeling down I will go to church. That's my little place of healing. It's an option." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"I haven't trained lately because I'm lazy. I think it's because I'm bigger now. The coach is good – but if I don't have to do it, I won't do it. I wish we had more freedom to get to the gym. Walk in access." [Prisoner, CWP]

288. High security women generally received less access to gym or fitness activities than other women because they spent less time out of their cells and needed to be escorted by custodial staff to the gym. We note that CWP and Arohata were offering some activities led by the gym instructor in the units. However, the success of these opportunities depended on the unit regimes and how many women were unlocked at the time who were motivated to join in. We have observed that the motivation for activities often depends on what else is going on for the women. For example, if

¹⁰² *Inspection Standards* 77 and 78.

things outside prison are chaotic or uncertain, women may not prioritise their personal health and wellbeing.

- 289. One site had vacancies for instructors which meant reduced scheduled activities for women.
- 290. Access to exercise gear, such as gym equipment and clothing/footwear, also varied across sites and units.

Maternal care

Women reported receiving excellent care during their pregnancy

- 291. Women in prison are supported by prison health staff and midwives who come in from the community. Post birth, women are supported by community providers such as Plunket.
- 292. Women said they were well supported throughout their pregnancy. This included time with midwives and having a birth plan in place. Our review of health records supports this. We note women who were pregnant or breastfeeding received a diet consistent with their needs.
- 293. However, as previously noted, at one site, pregnant women did not have access to pregnancy clothing and made do with clothing that was several sizes too big for them. This is inconsistent with Corrections' guidance on support for pregnant women.¹⁰³
- 294. Women told us they liked to support pregnant prisoners. It made them feel happy to see someone pregnant.
- 295. Subject to security classification requirements, Corrections' guidance states the pregnant women should be supported to involve a partner or support person in decisions and activities related to pregnancy, and while giving birth.¹⁰⁴ If women wanted a staff member present, this must be approved in writing by the Prison Director before the escort. New guidance (introduced in May 2021) suggests that ideally a Corrections Officer or staff member would not be the support person for a woman throughout her pregnancy, rather women would have a friend, a member of their family and whānau or partner present for support.
- 296. Women we spoke with appreciated the support they received while giving birth.

The [trauma counsellor] was present and holding my hand throughout the birth of baby. I was so grateful. [Prisoner, CWP]

- 297. The following case study shows how the wellbeing of a mother and her child were supported by the prison social worker, health staff and the management team working together to involve the partner of the woman in the birth of her baby, and afterwards with family and whānau.

Case study A

Ms A, a young woman, entered prison when she was pregnant. At the time, her partner was being held in a youth detention facility. With the assistance of the prison's staff, arrangements were made for her partner to be brought over to the

¹⁰³ POM M.03.02.04 Prison services standards.

¹⁰⁴ POM M.03.02.05 Support Standards.

prison to join her for antenatal classes which were held in the visits room. Her partner was also able to meet the two midwives caring for her before birth and to hear the baby's heartbeat. The father was present for the baby's 28 week scan and also for the birth at the hospital.

Ms A told us that during the birth four officers were present (two from her prison and two from the youth detention facility) and that officers were very professional and respectful, caring and mindful of the significance of the birth for both parents. Her whānau were grateful to the prison for their care and treatment.

Following the birth, the baby's father was released from detention. Special visits were arranged for both the father and the mother's whānau in the baby bonding room.

Mental Health

298. The mental wellbeing of women in prison is supported both by custodial staff who work with women every day in their units, as well other professionals tasked with attending to the health, rehabilitative and reintegrative needs of women.

Consistency and certainty about routines is lacking in some areas of the prison

299. Clinical staff working in prisons spoke of the importance of routines and follow through when working with women. When other needs were not met, women appeared to present with mental health problems. Staff linked women's wellbeing with their ability to maintain or establish connections with family and whānau outside the prison.

"Women have roles and responsibilities outside the prison. Wāhine have a lot of connections outside the prison – almost all have kids they worry about. Main questions women want support with is about kids, family. Many present as mental health issues – but really, they are normal reactions to their situations, not mental health." [Clinical Manager]

Women noted how being in the sun and near a garden helped their wellbeing

300. Staff working in therapeutic roles also noted this need. Staff highlighted environments that worked well were more homely or were areas where women could have contact with the soil. Some staff felt connection with the earth was particularly important for Māori women.

Continuity of care following release can be challenging

301. Some women and staff told us that transitions between the community and prison were critical times for women. We heard positive accounts of treatment from the community being seamlessly continued while in prison (for example, methadone treatment).
302. And, as noted earlier, we also heard accounts of discontinuity of medical treatment for women coming to prison, including from escorted medical appointments.

303. We note that in New Zealand, reports of strain on the mental health system are numerous.¹⁰⁵ Both staff and women prisoners worried about what would happen to women when they left prison. Speaking of the continuity of mental health care, one senior clinician noted:

"There is no link to the community for when they get out. Some women are not looking forward to getting out. We need 'catches' in the community to help them." [Clinical Manager]

Women in distress are cared for in Intervention and Support Units

304. If prisoners are suspected of being at risk of harming themselves, they must be placed for assessment, observation and care in an Intervention and Support Unit (ISU).¹⁰⁶ This applies both to men and women in prison. Decision-making resources for staff caring for prisoners in the ISU state that:

*The care and management of prisoners in an Intervention and Support Unit will balance safety and the humane treatment of prisoners in the units.*¹⁰⁷

305. The assessment of prisoners in the ISU can involve health, custodial and clinical staff who contribute to a care plan for the prisoner.
306. Some sites, including ARWCF, have Intervention and Support Practice Teams (ISPT). These are multi-disciplinary teams tasked with collaborating and using their respective professional skills to enable the best possible outcomes for prisoners. ISPT include a clinical manager, specialist mental health nurses, psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker and cultural support staff.
307. Prisoners in ISUs may be required to wear a stitch gown¹⁰⁸ and have their underwear removed if staff determine there is a risk of self harm. Other items in cells, such as appropriate mattresses and bedding, are also provided with the safety of prisoners in mind.
308. If prisoners spend a lot of time in an ISU (more than 30 days, or have been held in the ISU at least three times within a year), decisions about their care are overseen by regional staff including a Regional High Risk Panel which can engage the help of external mental health support services.
309. ISUs are where the most vulnerable prisoners spend time. The experience of women in the ISU is significantly influenced both by the ISU design and environment and ISU processes and staff.

We found the quality of ISU spaces across women's prisons to be variable

310. We note across the women's prisons that the spaces for working with vulnerable women were limited in some way. In two prisons the living or recreational space for women in the ISU was limited, while at the third prison, access to treatment rooms constrained the way therapeutic interventions (such as counselling) could be delivered. In this prison, staff told us they sometimes had to conduct interviews in

¹⁰⁵ See for example: Tess McClure, The Guardian, 1 April 2021. New Zealand mental health crisis has worsened unless Labour, data shows. Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/01/new-zealand-mental-health-crisis-has-worsened-under-labour-data-shows>

¹⁰⁶ Corrections Act, 2004, Section 61B.

¹⁰⁷ POM M.05.01.Res.03.

¹⁰⁸ A stitch gown is a loose garment designed to reduce the risk of self-harm.

the unit which could compromise women's privacy. We note the lack of suitable space for activities such as programme delivery and treatment was commonly highlighted by staff across all the women's prisons.

Observations of some staff working with distressed women showed good practice

311. For example, during our inspection of ARWCF we observed:

"ISU staff showing professionalism and compassion when engaging with wāhine. They (used) excellent communication and de-escalation skills with a distressed wāhine who was refusing to be moved to the ISU when assessed as at risk of self-harm."¹⁰⁹

312. Clinical staff in the ISPT confirmed that the processes and composition of the team had developed well, including triaging women into the unit when required. The team had developed a single point of entry referral system for women, using a nurse as a case coordinator. Staff noted that with the high number of remand prisoners at ARWCF the bulk of their work was crisis intervention, with some psychotherapy and brief interventions.

Custodial staff wanted more support for working in the ISU

313. Similar to other custodial staff who work in ISUs around the country, custodial staff at ARWCF found working in the ISU challenging.

"When engaging with women, we can't help that women talk to us quite deeply. We have no clinical knowledge, we are left vulnerable and don't know how to respond to them in a safe way, and also how do we cope with the information they have been loading onto us? We have to debrief in our own minds from those really deep embedded trauma experiences that they have shared. Staff need to feel supported as well from this." [Custodial Staff]

314. Across the women's prisons, custodial staff working in the ISU wanted more training for dealing with the challenging behaviours presented by distressed women who came to the ISU.

"It can be mentally exhausting managing a prolific self-harmer ... staff have tried every option available to them to try and manage the women ... there appears to be a real lack of awareness of the real issues in managing these prisoners ... staff are not trained to deal with these kind of extreme behaviours." [Principal Corrections Officer]

315. Where supervision for custodial staff was offered, staff found it useful. In addition to training and supervision, some custodial staff felt it would be good to have a guidance on how to deal with common risk situations.

"We used to get some supervision on the last Friday of each month but this has fallen over – needs to be constant for the sake of the team. Once a month, considering many challenges the team face on daily basis isn't enough. When it was happening, we found it extremely helpful." [Corrections Officers, ISU]

¹⁰⁹ Office of the Inspectorate (2021). Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility Inspection. (Office of the Inspectorate | Te Tari Tirohia, 2021).

"As a team we have been thinking of all the behaviours we've encountered and what worked and what didn't for those behaviours. It would be useful to put some risk scenarios in place of how to deal with certain situations (eg. superficial, nonthreatening self harm). Would be good to have a document for guidance of how best to manage in situations. Then you get staff rotations and new staff have nothing to work from or guide them."
[Corrections Officers, ISU]

Some women shared negative experiences of being housed in the ISU

316. The quote below shows the challenges for women who are placed in the ISU. We note that concerns about having clothing removed expressed in this account were also voiced in interviews that were conducted in 2017 to inform the new model of care for the ISU.¹¹⁰

"Being in the ISU was bad enough but not having any underwear to hold your pad in place was degrading and undignified. Staff have to remember that not everyone who is in there is at risk of self-harm, people are in there for different reasons – maybe detoxing, they should not be treated like they are at risk of harming themselves. Women who go into ISU need additional support and care, often they have suffered some form of trauma and what could be more frightening than having your clothes and underwear taken from you, placed in an uncomfortable gown and left feeling vulnerable because you are wearing no underwear." [Prisoner, CWP]

"Prisoners could also understand the initial removal of underwear, whilst in the high risk anti-ligature cells. However, for female prisoners in particular, this was found to be excessively humiliating." [Wāhine views from Department of Corrections Report, 2018]

Alcohol and other drug treatment

Many women come into prison with alcohol and other drug addictions

317. A Corrections study of mental health disorders among prisoners found a little less than half of women had a lifetime prevalence of alcohol and/or drug dependence (46% alcohol and 44% drug).¹¹¹
318. Corrections uses the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) to identify the extent of alcohol and other drug (AOD) difficulties for prisoners. The ASSIST helps staff to determine which programme could be useful to women. The ASSIST assessment is usually administered by health staff with the result noted in the patient's electronic health record. Health staff also enter the results of an assessment in IOMS, if a prisoner consents to their information being shared.¹¹² If consent is withheld, then the gap between the health, custodial and case management systems could result in prisoners being assessed more than once as case managers can also complete this assessment, or alternatively not being given

¹¹⁰ Department of Corrections (2018). Intervention and Support Project.

¹¹¹ Indig, Gear, & Wilhelm, 2016. Comorbid Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders Among New Zealand Prisoners.

¹¹² If consent is not granted, custodial and case management staff may not be aware of a prisoner's difficulties. Case managers can also use the ASSIST tool if they suspect alcohol and drug issues. Corrections staff told us that not all case manager feel confident in using the tool.

the support they need to succeed in treatment from case managers and custodial staff.

319. Three Corrections-funded drug and alcohol programmes are available to eligible women in prison (See Table 6 in Appendix B). In addition, women can telephone ReCOVERing – Corrections’ free AOD support telephone line. We understand use of this support is negligible in women’s prisons.¹¹³
320. Arohata Prison hosts the only Drug Treatment Unit for women. This unit is run by contracted AOD clinicians and operates as an adapted therapeutic community, supported by custodial staff. Women housed in this unit access treatment (the Drug Treatment Programme – 3) and other therapeutic activities for three months and then have access to an AOD Aftercare Worker in each of the women’s prisons. Women we spoke with in the DTU were generally positive about their experience.

“I have found it really helpful. The clinicians offer awesome support, even the staff here. They treat you well. Some stuff we deal with it’s quite heavy. Sometimes we just want to be by yourself. All depends on the person. But the support is here if they want it. It would be good if we could get out of the unit a bit to get some mental space – just a week or something so we can have a breather.” [Prisoner, Arohata]

321. While the longer AOD programmes for men, which also start with the intensive period in a therapeutic community (the DTP-6 and DTP-12), are among the most effective programmes for reducing re-imprisonment and reoffending, the same cannot be said for the women’s DTP.¹¹⁴ We understand that Corrections is assessing the DTP-3 with a view to making the programme longer, and with the ability to accept women with higher security classifications. The impacts of these potential changes will not be observed in effectiveness ratings for some years.
322. The Intensive Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programme is available in CWP and ARWCF. This group-based programme is available in both men’s and women’s prisons, with efficacy findings positive (for men), but not reaching statistical significance.¹¹⁵ The programme is also delivered by contracted AOD clinicians and, following the treatment phase, participants also gain access to an AOD Aftercare Worker.
323. Te Ira Wāhine is a kaupapa Māori intensive AOD programme designed specifically for women accommodated in the high security area in ARWCF. An early evaluation found promising changes for women, but it was too early to see impacts on reoffending.
324. All Corrections AOD programmes had waiting lists at 30 June 2020.
325. We note Corrections is developing guidance for health and custodial staff on identifying and supporting people who are detoxing. This training should be rolled out before the end of 2021.

¹¹³ Data for the year to April 2021 shows two calls from women’s prisons.

¹¹⁴ We note also that there were some staffing difficulties for the DTP-3 provider at the time the cohort for the evaluation were participating in the programme. This is likely to have impacted the effectiveness estimate. The DTP-3 for women is shorter than the programmes for men, which is not in line with most effective practices in the literature. We note also that alcohol and drug addictions are often symptoms of trauma. Trauma may need to be addressed before starting alcohol and drug treatment. Finally, we note examples from the literature that indicate gender-responsive therapeutic communities can be effective for women.

¹¹⁵ Effectiveness ratings for women were not available at the time of this report.

Drug and alcohol treatment may not be completed before women are released.

326. Corrections has developed programmes for people serving shorter prison sentences. While not specifically designed with women in mind, the Short Rehabilitation Programme (SRP) covers many of the aspects of the gender-responsive Kowhiritanga programme, with some attention given to alcohol and drug use.

"SRP is delivered to women on a short sentence when they have insufficient time on sentence to attend Kowhiritanga. The programme modules explore the following: Violence propensity, Anti-social attitudes, Thinking and feelings, Criminal associates, Poor self-control & impulsivity, Self-management & problem-solving skills, Alcohol & drugs as both a rehabilitative need and health issue, relationships. This programme also develops an offence map and safety plan. SRP – 24 sessions, 2.5 hours, 4 days per week" [Programme Facilitator]

327. Similar to restrictions in activities for remand accused prisoners in other prison services, some women particularly noted the lack of drug and alcohol misuse support for women on remand.

"Remand accused in Tizard are not entitled to or receive any programmes ... there is no help for them at all ... Alcohol and drugs could be addressed ... no one is giving us the tools and support for release ... there is no activities for motivation" [Prisoner, Arohata]

328. AOD programmes are currently only available to prisoners who are remand convicted but not remand accused.
329. Contracted DTP and Intensive Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programme providers now receive funding from Corrections to employ peer support workers. These staff members are typically people who have lived experience with addictions and have been in recovery for extended periods of time. We understand that peer support workers will eventually work with remand accused prisoners to motivate them to access AOD treatment, either when they are released into the community or if they remain in prison upon conviction.
330. A common theme among women due for release was worry about how they would manage their AOD use in the community. We address these reintegration concerns in the Reintegration section of this document. Here we note Corrections' He Kete initiative in Christchurch. This is run in partnership with Odyssey House and Pathways Trust in the community. It is a 16 week residential programme which provides AOD treatment for women in the criminal justice system (either on bail or after prison). It has a strong tikanga focus, enabling women to reconnect with their culture and family and whānau. This is a promising initiative.¹¹⁶ We also note that the RecoveRing support line is available to people serving community sentences and their family and whānau.

Summary

331. Women appreciated the health support they received in prisons. Some women felt they waited too long for health-related appointments.

¹¹⁶ Source: communication with High Impact Innovation Programme, Corrections.

332. The current resourcing model for health services in prison does not reflect the higher health needs of women.
333. Women were concerned about gaining weight in prison. They were concerned about the lack of support for weight reduction and would like more access to gym and fitness classes. We note the same national prison diet is provided for women and men.
334. Women said they received excellent maternal health care while in prison.
335. Staff were aware of the need to work in a trauma-informed way. Custodial staff in the ISU spent the most time with vulnerable women and said they needed regular training and professional supervision to support them to do their roles well. Staff across women's prisons noted the need for more training in trauma-informed practices, including staff conducting medical escorts.
336. Corrections offers three AOD treatment programmes in women's prisons. These programmes are available to remand convicted and sentenced prisoners. Current effectiveness ratings of the DTP-3, Corrections' most intensive AOD programme for women, are not encouraging. Corrections is re-developing the DTP-3 and is developing support for remand accused women. We note the community based He Kete programme in Christchurch can support women with alcohol and drug issues while on bail, or when leaving prison.
337. Some women and staff were concerned about continuity of care between the prison and the community – particularly when women were released from prison.

Areas for consideration

18. Corrections should continue to consider whether the national menu and canteen are gender and culturally responsive and support women's health.
19. Corrections should consider reviewing the resourcing model for health (including mental health and trauma counsellors) to align the model with the demand of health needs of women.
20. Corrections should consider the wellbeing of women, alongside their actual risk and need, when determining custodial use of uniforms and restraints, for health escorts.
21. Corrections should consider providing on-going specialist gender-responsive, trauma informed training to support custodial staff working with high and complex need women in the ISU.
22. Corrections should consider providing access to alcohol and drug programmes/services for women on remand to support this identified health need.
23. Corrections should consider reviewing the impact of having only one DTP location, and its effectiveness, to support all three women's prisons.
24. Corrections should consider the availability and range of constructive activities, including a review of each site's funding to support such activities.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration

This section considers support for women to address criminal behaviour and to acquire skills and resources to help them reintegrate into the community on release.

Case Management

- 338. Within Corrections, case managers are responsible for assessing the rehabilitative and reintegrative needs of prisoners with the aim of assisting them to live offence free lives. Case managers are expected to work with prisoners from entry into prison through to release. Activities contributing to a prisoner's journey are recorded in an offender plan. Case managers work with both remand and sentenced prisoners.
- 339. Case managers are supported by case officers, custodial staff who work with women in their units. Case officers support case managers by keeping them informed of any issues of concern and by motivating and supporting women to attend rehabilitative and other activities recommended by their case manager.
- 340. Corrections' case management practice is based on the psychology of criminal conduct. At its core this model is underpinned by an assessment of a prisoner's risks, needs and responsivity (RNR).¹¹⁷ This is a common model for assessing prisoners' risk of re-offending internationally.
- 341. Case managers use the Structured Dynamic Assessment Case-management - 21 item (SDAC-21) to track and respond to changeable factors known to be associated with re-offending and risk of harm to others. This tool is based on the Dynamic Risk Assessment Offender Re-entry (DRAOR) measure used by probation staff to manage risk and reintegration of offenders. This link is important because DRAOR has

¹¹⁷ Based on the model created by Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 5th ed. Newark, N. J: LexisNexis Matthew Bender.

specifically been assessed for its gender responsiveness. Research found that it was equally good at predicting the reoffending behaviour of men and women.¹¹⁸

Case management for women

342. A study on case management conducted by Corrections in 2016 identified five lessons for working successfully with women.¹¹⁹ The authors believed the Integrated Practice Framework (IPF) used to support case managers at the time was flexible enough to incorporate the lessons for women. Below is an extract from this study:

"Women need a different approach to men which is relational, collaborative and responsive to their unique needs, and which is also sensitive to the diversity of their needs and characteristics.

Women benefit from collaborative approaches to planning where staff have sufficient contact time for trust and engagement to be built, and meaningful input sought.

In designing rehabilitation and reintegration pathways that work for women, their lynch-pin need(s) and responsivity factors such as prior exposure to trauma, need to be properly identified and targeted in the right order.

Women's management should be relational; having good relationships with staff where women felt informed and valued, and able to address issues with family/whānau helped build their engagement and put them in a better place to address their offending needs.

Staff need to be properly supported to work with women by receiving specialised training on women's unique risks, needs and responsivity factors, and by having clear bounds around their roles."

343. The *Inspection Standards* state that prisons should provide appropriate interventions to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and promote successful reintegration. Further that rehabilitation programmes, targeting the specific needs of the prisoner, should be available and accessible. And finally, that there should be good cooperation and communication between the prison and social support organisations, including those that deliver rehabilitation programmes in the prison.¹²⁰

Access to case managers and case officers varied across sites

344. Poor access to case managers or case officers is significant if women are not being encouraged to address their rehabilitation needs.
345. The Case Management Standards of Practice set baseline expectations for case managers' work with prisoners. The standards outline key events and timeframes beginning with initial contact with prisoners, risk assessment and initial offender

¹¹⁸ Serin, Mailloux, & Wilson, 2012. The Dynamic Risk Assessment of Offender Re-entry (DRAOR). Unpublished User Manual; Scanlan, J., Yesberg, J., Fortune, C., & Polaschek, D. (undated). Predicting women's recidivism using the Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Re-entry: Can a 'gender-neutral' tool generalise to women?

¹¹⁹ Bevan, 2017 Collaborative, relational and responsive: Principles for the case management of women in prison.

¹²⁰ *Inspection Standards* 89-91.

plans. Case managers are expected to make initial contact with remand or sentenced prisoners within 20 days of being received into prison. This standard was met in close to 100% of cases in the year to June 2020. Two women's prisons also met the standard for agreeing an initial offender plan for almost all women, while a third was just above the national average for meeting the standard, at 83% of the time.

346. According to the Custodial Standards of Practice, women are supposed to be assigned a case officer within three days of arriving in a unit, but this varied across prisons. In the year to June 2020, this criteria was met for 64% of women overall. One in five women were not assigned a case officer in this time.

"We have our own case officers, but they are busy. They are short staffed. Officers don't have enough time which means they don't get things done. They're rushing around. Working under pressure makes some of them short-tempered. It creates tension for us prisoners when they don't get things done." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

347. Some case managers echoed the findings of research that suggests building relationships with women and working with them could be time consuming. Ideally, staffing models in women's prisons would allow for this difference.

"I have been accused of over engagement with the women ... there is a bias around managing women, and not everyone understands that women are relational, they generally will talk longer than males." [Principal Case Manager]

348. Given the relational way women cope in prison and that women are reliant on officers for access to many aspects of prison life, the case officer relationship is crucial. We address staffing later in this report.

Rehabilitation

349. Rehabilitation programmes help women address the thoughts, attitudes and behaviour that led to their offending and supports them to develop the skills to avoid reoffending after release.
350. Rehabilitation programmes are available to all sentenced and remand convicted women. Remand accused prisoners cannot access offence-focussed treatment programmes, instead, focus is given to their education and reintegration needs.
351. Corrections' Women's Strategy aimed to review all programmes and provide women with gender-responsive interventions. Programmes fall into three types. Motivational programmes help women understand the benefits of addressing their offending, and act as stepping-stones to more intensive programmes. Medium intensity programmes support women with specific skills and exercises to reduce their offending. High intensity programmes help women with complex risk, behaviour and personality profiles to address their offending.
352. Tables 1-3 show rehabilitation programmes currently available to women, including where they are available, if they have been evaluated, how many people started the programme in the 2019/2020 financial year and the completion rate for those who began the programme.

Table 1. Motivational programmes for women at June 2020

Name	Description	Site	Evaluation	Starts	Completion rate
Kia Rite ¹²¹	A three week information and skills training programme for women in the early stages of imprisonment. It provides women with information on prison processes and services, as well as teaching emotional, communication, and relational skills. It further aims to enhance women's motivation for change.	All	Pilot showed increased knowledge of prison and coping strategies	110	78%
Tikanga Māori Motivational Programme	Motivates offenders to change their behaviour by helping them to understand their cultural identity, and encouraging and challenging them to understand and embody the kaupapa and tikanga of their tīpuna (ancestors)	All	Not available.	22	90%
Short Motivation Programme For men and women (not gender-specific)	Designed to enhance the offenders' motivation to understand their offending and assist them to learn how to make positive changes in their attitudes and behaviour. One on one brief intervention, 5 sessions, 1 hour per week	All	Not available	22	83%

353. We note three of the six rehabilitation programmes were specifically developed with women in mind (Kia Rite, Kimihia and Kowhiritanga). Kowhiritanga is the only women's programme with evidence available for its impact on later reimprisonment or reoffending. It shows a tendency to reduce reoffending and reimprisonment.¹²² Kimihia has not been running long enough to establish its impact on reoffending or reimprisonment. However, an early evaluation found it impacted positively on therapeutic outcomes.
354. The Short Rehabilitation Programme for Women (SRP-WMN) is an alternative to Kowhiritanga. It can be used where Kowhiritanga is unavailable or where there are barriers to people completing Kowhiritanga such as insufficient time remaining on their sentence, or inability to work in a large group setting.

¹²¹ Morrison, Bevan, & King, 2018. Kia Rite: Evaluation of new behaviour skills programme for women. Note It was introduced as part of the Department's Women's Strategy, Wahine – E rere ana ki te pae hou.

¹²² Because of the small number of women passing through programmes, it is difficult to use Corrections' standard impact estimates (the Rehabilitation Quotient) to measure programme effectiveness.

Table 2. Medium intensity rehabilitation programmes for women

Name	Description	Site	Evaluation	Starts	Completions	Wait-list
Kowhiritanga	Developed for women based on RNR model, trauma-informed and culturally responsive principles and practices. Available since 2004 Prison: group sessions, for 15 weeks, 56 sessions of 2.5 hours, 4 times per week	All	Rehab quotient 2019/2020 Re imprisoned -3.2 Re sentenced -6.7	63	82%	23
Short Rehabilitation Programme (SRP-WMN)	Helps women examine the cause of their offending and develop specific skills to reduce the likelihood of them re-offending. SRP is responsive to the cultural needs of Māori, and incorporates a relational approach, tailored to women. Small group of 4 or less, 24 sessions of 2.5 hours, 2-4 days a week	All	Not available	44	81%	3

Table 3. High intensity rehabilitation programmes for women

Name	Description	Site	Evaluation	Starts	Completions	Wait-list
Kimihia - Violence Prevention Programme (Available since 2018)	Focuses on violence prevention and is suitable for women whose risk, complex personality features and behaviours would prevent them from attending other established women's programmes. Group treatment facilitated by two psychologists for four months duration, then individualised treatment depending on length of sentence and women's need.	ARWCF	Pilot linked women's experience to positive therapeutic outcomes	17	33%	7

Women appreciated having access to programmes

355. Women appreciated attending Kia Rite and learning about prison life. Kia Rite facilitators were also instrumental in having the needs of women met within the first week of prison. We note this brief induction programme is available to all women entering prison, including remand accused prisoners.

"All new arrivals receive intervention work by Pou Tohunu who approach the new arrivals, usually upon their arrival or the day after ... This new arrival process ensures that the women are supported with their immediate

needs both inside the prison and addressing any needs that they have in the community ... landlords, Housing NZ, employers and family issues ... the women receive good advice and support around their initial first days"
[Principal Case Manager]

356. Women were motivated to complete programmes to learn skills and move on with their lives. Access to rehabilitation programmes is particularly a problem for those with short sentences who may have already served some of their sentence while on remand.
357. We note that Corrections is aware of the problems faced by remand prisoners and offers education and training, and alcohol and drug programmes where this is feasible. Whether women can complete their training or rehabilitation depends on the length of time they remain on remand and the numbers of people on remand. Some activities require a minimum number of people before they can be run.
358. Group format programmes like Kowhiritanga were useful to women in addressing offending and meeting parole requirements.

"Kowhiritanga programme is so good – they should teach it in school. That programme is life changing. We learnt that our behaviour is all about meeting a need. You need to figure out what that need is so you can meet it in a positive way. Staff and the two ladies who ran the programme were amazing. They were so supportive. If we could figure out why we were offending, then we could figure out how to not do that. If we had tough sessions, they would email staff and give them a heads up to let them know that we may be having a hard time. You could tell they cared and were trying to make a difference." [Prisoner, Arohata]

However group programmes left some women feeling exposed and vulnerable

359. Some women were left feeling distressed after programme sessions when they had divulged information about trauma, then were left alone, or other women talked about them in the units.

"The girls go back to the wings and talk about it. You relive your trauma having to publicly share your shame. There should be an option to have that sharing of trauma aspect one-on-one with a counsellor." [Prisoner, CWP]

360. Some women felt that they should only enter group programmes when they were ready, or that more personal trauma could be dealt with one-on-one with counsellors or psychologists rather than shared in a group. We note that there are pre-programme assessments for rehabilitation programmes to work out if women could benefit from the programme. We note also that many women have not received professional help before, so it may be difficult for them to judge how intrusive programmes might feel.

In some sites, space shortages limited treatment delivery

361. Staff at Arohata and CWP talked about space limitations, including spaces that supported a therapeutic relationship. Rooms in some areas were shared with education or health staff, including visiting counsellors.
362. Staff noted the difference between spaces that supported healing and those that did not within the prisons they worked in. The trauma counselling room and baby bonding room at Arohata were noted for their welcoming environment.

"Physical environment is really important. We need women to feel safe. The room we're in is so stark. The room echoes. They just put in a bit of carpet and that's that. There's no time out space if one of women needs some time out and have some space. The trauma counsellor room is fantastic because it feels like a safe space, and women can then feel safe to open up. The rooms we get provided with are the opposite to that."
[Programme Facilitator]

Lower numbers of women limited the frequency of programmes

363. With lower numbers of women at some sites, there was competition between industries and programmes to fill these activities.

"Up until the last 12 months the programme has always started with 10 participants, and we were running four programmes per year, however with the reducing muster this has had a significant impact on our volumes, and we reduced our schedule to two programmes per financial year."
[Programme Facilitator]

364. Sites managed the challenges of space shortages and lack of available participants through timetabling, for example, treatment in the morning, work in the afternoon and vice versa.
365. We note Corrections is currently developing Special Treatment Units (STU) for women in two prisons: CWP and ARWCF. It is anticipated that these units will be opened in 2022. Corrections is using a co-design process to develop the units, including participation from women in prison, their families and whānau, mana whenua, psychologists and other community stakeholders. To develop the rehabilitation content of the unit, Māori and Pākehā psychologists are working together. These units will run as therapeutic communities.
366. When they are up and running, these units will add treatment options for women which are currently only available to men. We note STUs for men are among the most effective interventions for reducing reoffending.

Women's prisons had varying supports for Māori women

367. Our *Inspection Standards* state that Māori women should be able to access and practise Māori culture and customs. Further, that Māori women should have access to kaupapa Māori informed and tikanga-based rehabilitation and reintegration programmes that are specifically designed to meet their needs. Further, that Māori women should be supported to access stable whānau support.

The Mana Wāhine pathway is being developed in CWP

368. CWP is developing a Mana Wāhine Pathway partnership with hapū, mana whenua, iwi and Māori service providers in Te Wai Pounamu. The project is intended to provide a coordinated and seamless end to end kaupapa Māori focused experience for women. This is a pilot project that could be rolled out to other women's prisons. This project received substantial funding in the latest budget (Budget 2021) and seems promising.
369. At time of our inspection,¹²³ some people we talked to did not know who the Mana Wāhine lead was on site. However, we note that recruitment of staff to critical positions for supporting Mana Wāhine pathways is ongoing.

¹²³ CWP was inspected in October, 2020.

"The introduction of culture has been a slow shift on site ... there is now a Cultural Staff Network... We also have a Karakia / Whakataukī at the daily morning briefing ... Kapa Haka is available to all except Remand Accused ... we have applied for an exemption to allow these women to attend with the other category women" [Senior Manager]

370. An external provider delivers a Tikanga Māori Motivational Programme at the prison. Women told us they found it beneficial and enjoyed learning their whakapapa, mihi and whakataukī. They would like more kaupapa Māori based programmes.

"I would love to access Kapa Haka, to help identify with where I have come from" [Prisoner, CWP]

371. Staff and women were frustrated by limitations on shared activities imposed by expectations that certain categories of prisoners should not be mixed. The example below was shared by a prisoner with limited access to Kapa Haka.

"I was told the reason I was no longer allowed to attend was due to being the only remand accused prisoner in the group, and that we are not allowed to mix, even though the whole time I've been in prison on remand I have been mixing with both convicted and sentenced prisoners. Maoritanga is about togetherness, support, family and identity. I feel as though this is being stripped away from me." [excerpt from a letter sent to the Howard League by one of the women on site]

Arohata Prison is developing a Kaupapa Māori focused unit

372. He Whare Awhina is a low security unit which is intended to have a kaupapa Māori focus. This unit is in need of more support as women told us there was no kaupapa Māori focus or opportunities to practise tikanga.

"We don't do karakia, kapa haka, waiata or weaving." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"HWA is a Maori focus unit in name only. There is no Mana Wāhine on site." [Senior Manager, Arohata]

373. The Prison Director confirmed this gap and said they were planning to strengthen the prison's connection to local iwi and staff hoped to implement a kaupapa Māori programme in the future.

Mirimiri Te Aroha Unit was welcomed by women

374. Mirimiri Te Aroha is located in the low security part of ARWCF. Opened in 2016, this unit is supported by Pou Tohunu,¹²⁴ an Area Advisor Māori and two women (tuakana) on a part-time basis, who together, guide the tikanga and the kawa of the whare (unit).
375. The tuakana taught the women (teina) karakia and kapa haka. Some of the women told us that when those staff and the tuakana were not in the unit, it felt like any other low security unit.
376. The women in the unit usually complete Kowhiritanga, a medium intensity¹²⁵ rehabilitation programme delivered by Corrections' facilitators.

¹²⁴ Pou Tohunu are roles within women's prisons to support women and help them maintain connections with their whānau, hapu and iwi in the community to guide future reintegration.

¹²⁵ Kowhiritanga is delivered over a 15-week period and offers 140 hours of treatment. It is delivered in a manner responsive to the cultural needs of the participants.

377. Staff at ARWCF noted they relied on volunteers quite heavily and felt that women were not being given the same opportunities and resources as men in Te Tirohanga Units. We understand Te Tirohanga Units are supported by a fulltime Māori service provider who delivers the medium intensity Mauri Tu Pae rehabilitation programme and cultural and reintegration support.

Education and training

378. People in prison often have low levels of educational qualifications and limited work experience. Education and employment programmes in prison aim to upskill people so they have a better chance of successfully integrating into their communities when they are released.
379. International literature, as well as some studies evaluating the efficacy of New Zealand based programmes, have found that education and employment programmes can reduce reoffending. Because offenders face multiple barriers to employment such as learning difficulties, mental illness and substance abuse, it is likely that addressing these barriers as well as providing education and training will best support successful reintegration.¹²⁶
380. Much of the literature of the success of programmes sourced for this Thematic Report was not gender specific. It is difficult to know how well programmes developed for men also work for women.

Women often need support in basic literacy and numeracy

381. The earliest robust study of literacy and numeracy among New Zealand prisoners, conducted in 2013, found that 67% of women (and 70% of men) had literacy levels that would not allow them to cope with the demands of everyday life in a modern society. Further, 61% of women were assessed at a level that suggests they would have difficulty with numeracy in everyday life. This study used the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT). LNAAT has become a standard part of education assessments for prisoners where there is little information available about their educational background.¹²⁷
382. Current assessments of literacy and numeracy show 67% of women had literacy levels (level 3 or below) which would limit their ability to cope in everyday life and 74% had low numeracy levels.¹²⁸ Note these figures are for prisons who completed an LNAAT, not all prisoners.¹²⁹ The majority of prisoners complete an LNAAT due to little other information about their qualifications being available.
383. Struggling to read or write, or to complete basic addition or subtraction limits women both inside and outside of prison. Low literacy impacts the ability of women to complete rehabilitation programmes. Without help, women will also struggle to access basic support in prison such as induction material, medical assessments which rely on women filling out chits for appointments, checking account balances or purchasing personal items through the prison kiosk. All of these require women to be able to read and write. Low literacy also limits women's opportunities for staying

¹²⁶ Ministry of Justice, 2016. Prisoner Education and Employment: Evidence Brief.

¹²⁷ (Bowman, 2014). Bowman, J. (2014, April). Assessing the literacy and numeracy of prisoners. *Practice - The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 2(1), 39-41.

¹²⁸ Source: COBRA 201-2020 literacy and numeracy assessment for women's prisons.

¹²⁹ Education staff suggest the majority of prisoners have an LNAAT assessment. Numbers may not be comparable to the 2013 study as that sampled all prisoners. In the 2020 year just over 550 reading and numeracy assessments were conducted for women.

in contact with their families and whānau where this relies on written communication.

384. Limited literacy and numeracy impacts women's chances outside of prison. These include gaining employment, accommodation, or social assistance.
385. For these reasons, both women and men in prison are offered support in basic literacy and numeracy where those needs are identified.
386. Our *Inspection Standards* state education and vocational training programmes should be offered in line with the needs of the learners. Further, all prisoners, where possible, should engage in work that is purposeful, benefits them and increases their employability.¹³⁰

Many women need support to gain useful skills and experience

387. Within the first month of being in prison, all women (and men) receive an educational assessment. Once all information about their education histories has been gathered by education tutors, women meet one-to-one with a tutor to co-produce an individual learning pathway.
388. Actions for the learning pathway are shared with a case manager who includes the recommended education activities into the offender plan.
389. Mechanisms for providing education and training opportunities to women are the same as those for men. However, generally speaking, men have access to a greater variety of vocational training opportunities and work in prisons.
390. Table 2 summarises learning mechanisms along with women's actual participation and completion rates for 2019/2020 year. See Figure 5 for a summary of industry opportunities across the prison network.¹³¹

Women appreciated learning opportunities available to them

391. For women who had limited success at school, education and training at prison offered them a second chance.

"I am proud that I have a few certificates from doing all these programmes. I quite like it that I have achieved something in here that I couldn't do when I was at school, even the fact that I have a job in here is awesome too, it shows that I am employable and capable of working as well. It is a boost to my morale and self-esteem." [Prisoner, CWP]

Some women wanted access to similar training opportunities as men

392. Fewer opportunities for women were seen by some staff and women as gender restrictive. Education tutors reported that women were showing more interest in male dominated industries, such as building, however this option was not available on site. Tutors also expressed frustration about enrolling enough women to fill a course, because they could not mix remand accused with remand convicted women. Women who spent a long time on remand also posed an issue for some tutors, because these women could potentially complete all available courses prior to being sentenced. Then tutors would have few alternatives to offer them.

¹³⁰ *Inspection Standards* 94 and 96.

¹³¹ Note that hairdressing qualifications are also available at CWP – but are funded under education and therefore are not included on industry and training map.

"Working opportunities are shit for women. I would have loved to have been able to learn how to be a builder. It's sexist. All you can do is laundry or kitchen. The men get given everything and we get the 'female' roles. The painting instructor works between here and Rimutaka. You can't get higher than your basic level 2s in the kitchen and laundry. You can use those certificates and get you into the hospitality industry. One girl has worked in the kitchen for five years and she can't get her level 3s signed off because the staff aren't qualified to sign it off, but over at Rimutaka they can get signed off. It's not very fair. A lot of people are dyslexic and have learning difficulties, it would be good for them as they are hands on learners. Why can't we do this for those on 3-4yr lags+. Places like WelTech or something. Auckland has a lot of stuff, Arohata doesn't." [Prisoner, Arohata]

393. Staff attributed the lack of diversity in education and training opportunities to site size and the smaller number of prisoners which made expanding the vocational offering at the prison difficult. The shorter sentence length of some women also limited what trade qualifications they could complete.

"That practical stuff like forklift driving and building that would be so good. But then we also only have 90 people here. We run a course and it's really hard work trying to find people to do it. Realistically, we couldn't do building and mechanics – there simply wouldn't be enough women [Education Tutor]

Table 4. Education and training opportunities

Learning Opportunity	Description	Participation	Completion rate
Self-directed learning (SDL)	Prisoners with the support of their Education Tutors, can enrol in certificate, diploma or degree level courses that are completed via distance learning. This is an independent activity which is generally undertaken at the prisoner's own expense or by accessing the Student Loan Scheme. Education Tutors are available to assist the learner and SDL can be completed using the SOL suites. Study needs to be accessible and achievable within the prison environment and must align with the learner's Learning Pathway.	268	33%
Secure Online Learning (SOL)	SOL provides a suite of computers to give learners the opportunity to develop their digital literacy skills. Learners have access to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher and the ability to email their Education Tutor. There is also a range of preapproved websites which the learners can access, including computer skills, Te Reo Māori and online assessments. These websites are available via the desktop of each computer.	163	47%
Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Delivery	TEC delivers trades and non-trades related qualifications by external providers (polytechnics, wānanga or private training establishments). This is different to industry qualification training, as it is funded directly by the TEC. External tutors come on to site to deliver the training which may also include some in-cell activity, directed or self directed study/ homework.	21	27%
Vocational short courses	These are one-off short courses, certifications and licences (except car) delivered by the contracted national provider, or Corrections staff, in first aid, health and safety (e.g. Grow Safe, Working at Heights, Scaffolding) and vocational vehicle licences (e.g. forklift, LUV, quadbike).	83	95%
Industry Qualification Training (IQT)	IQT is an education programme that runs alongside Offender Employment (OE). Not all prisoners engaged in OE participate in IQT. IQT is delivered and assessed by industry instructors with moderation by external Industry Training Organisations.	1	
Intensive Literacy and Numeracy (ILN)	ILN provides English literacy and numeracy support to learners assessed at Step 1, 2 or 3 on the TEC literacy and numeracy progressions. ILN is delivered by external providers and supports learners who speak English as a second language (ESOL). Step 1 and/or 2 learners must be prioritised for these programmes. Learners can access up to 100 hours of tuition.	172	31%

"The problem for women is their sentence lengths. They don't have sentence lengths long enough to get a trade qualification. Graphics is 18 weeks and they come out with level 2 and 3. If you put someone through building trade and they have to do their rehabilitation as well, they're not going to have time to do their full qualification. Some of it is around risk aversion – we don't mix different classifications, so HWA for example, they have 20 women, 10 women go to the kitchen and 10 to the laundry. There aren't enough women to do the courses. But it's also risk aversion."
[Principal Case Manager]

394. Staff noted that learning opportunities for women could also be limited for some because of difficulties in reading and writing. With the high proportion of women with these challenges, educational opportunities relying on reading and writing were a barrier for learning.

"99% of the women learn by visual / kinaesthetic engagement, most do not learn by reading and writing ... most of our resources are designed for reader/writer style learners, which makes courses difficult to facilitate on site ... we have attempted to turn the learning into a practical exercise, which then makes it a more natural learning environment" [Education Tutors]

Limited access to external websites made studying difficult for some women

395. Restrictions on access to the internet limited online learning for advanced qualifications, such as university degrees.
396. Some staff worked hard to enable women to study advanced courses. But it meant printing out online material. This took time and could only be done with the consent of education providers.

Women and staff were frustrated at limited opportunities for women on remand

397. This problem stemmed from small numbers, and remand and convicted prisoners not being able to be mixed together on a programme. Some women we talked to thought that being on remand precluded them from accessing any rehabilitative and reintegrative programmes, though this is not consistent with Corrections' policy.

"While on remand I am not entitled to anything ... counselling, education or release planning ... they sell you the dream but give you the nightmare."
[Prisoner, Arohata]

"I absolutely agree that women should have the opportunities, but when you think of the mechanics of that, and the number of people here, it would be very hard to achieve. DTU wāhine aren't available for courses, Remand Accused can't mix so they're not available. Very small numbers."
[Education tutor]

398. As with other activities requiring dedicated programme space, education and vocational training could be limited by available space on site.

"In the education area, space is at a premium and it can be quite hard to get a room ... the rooms are not currently positive learning environments ... poor quality furniture, too small and the setup of the rooms leave us feeling like a sterile learning environment" [Education Tutors]

399. We note Corrections ran a trial allowing women to use Chromebooks in their cells to access a selected range of websites. Thirty websites were included in the trial

categorised into wellbeing, family and whānau, language, culture and identity, education and games. Conducted in the remand and high security wing of CWP, the pilot showed promising results. These included allowing women to support themselves by, for example, accessing external family support sites (including WINZ) or looking up medical symptoms they might be concerned about. Women also used the Chromebooks to access information about their whakapapa, tikanga and Te Reo Māori. Women reported feeling less bored and felt more informed about the world. Chromebooks were treated with respect and having activities to do after lock-up contributed to a sense of calm in the unit. The project team is aiming to produce a tested working model that could be scaled site-wide at CWP by the end of 2021.

400. If this trial was rolled out nationally, women would have significantly better access to education, training and learning opportunities. Crucially, women would also have another avenue for developing and maintaining a sense of identity and being active contributors to the lives of their family and whānau outside the prison.

Work

Women appreciated working at the prison

401. Women may have work opportunities in their accommodation units and/or in other areas of the prison.
402. Women worked in laundries, grounds, kitchens, painting, hairdressing, sewing and cleaning (and carpentry at ARWCF). Work within the prison is paid according to the Prisoner Incentive Allowance, which has a variable hourly rate, ranging from 20 cents to 60 cents per hour.¹³²

Women on remand had fewer opportunities for work

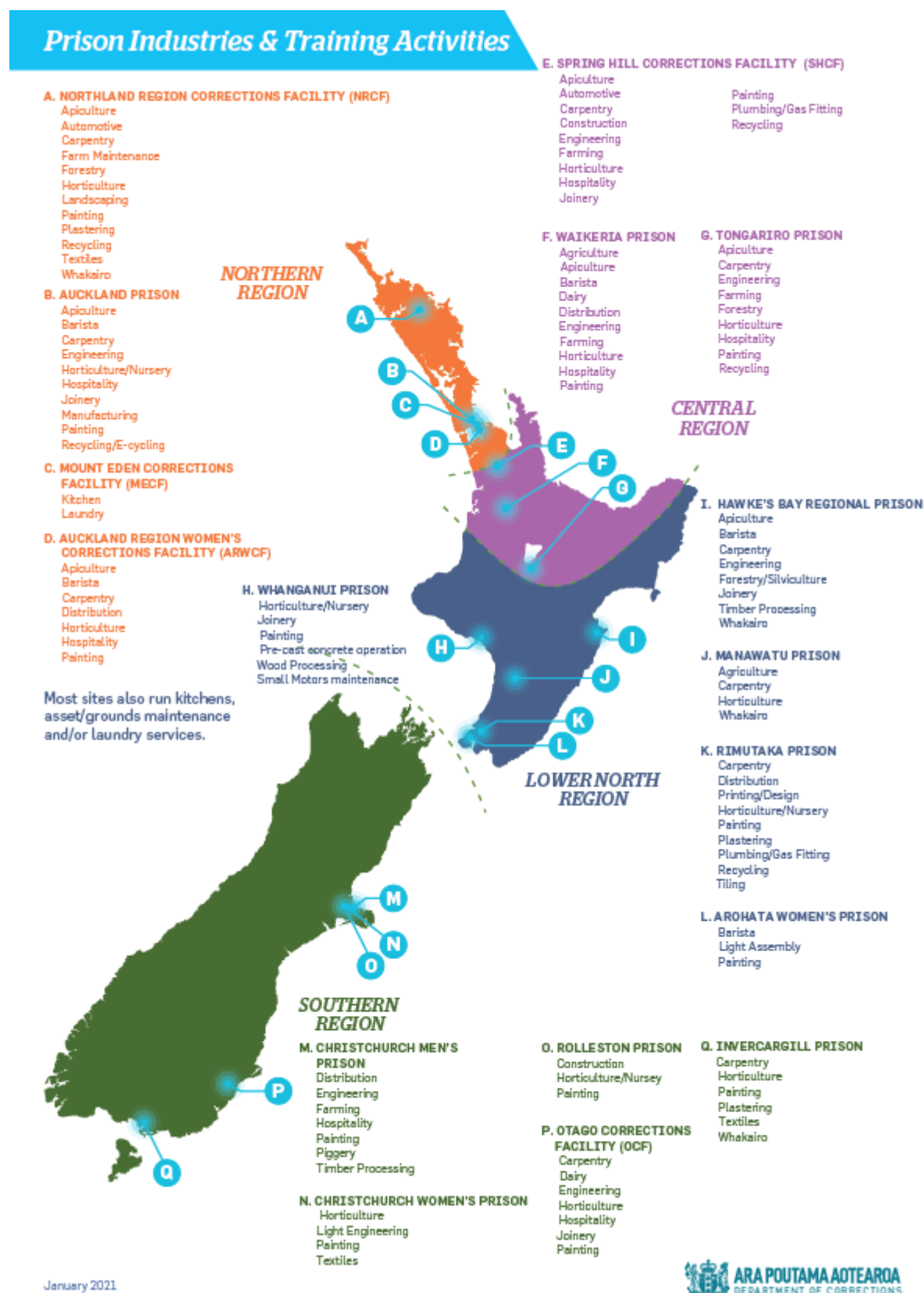
403. We note that remand prisoners and people detained under the Immigration Act 2009 can only be employed if they ask to be. Women who are sick or unemployed can receive an unemployment rate of \$2.70 per week. This unemployment rate is only available after seven weeks to women who are on remand and remain unemployed.
404. Some women and staff we talked to thought there should be more work opportunities for women on remand.

"Remand prisoners need more work to do. We only do the garbage run and that is not an all day job. When an officer is available they will be taken outside to empty the bins. Because we can't mix there are only a few jobs they can do." [Prisoner, CWP]

"There is nothing happening for the prisoners in the unit. Everyone just walks or makes a noise – everyone is bored." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

¹³² Prisoner Incentive Allowance is also paid for rehabilitation and training activities.

Figure 5. Prison Industries and Training Activities January 2021



Working enabled women to purchase personal items

405. Women can use their income to purchase items from the prison canteen including telephone cards. Without this income, some women would have no means to call their families and whānau.

"Work is our only income – can be depressing to see others get buy ups and you are getting nothing. I have given others buy ups because I know how it feels. Small things have a huge impact." [Prisoner, CWP]

406. We note that prisoners wanting to make international calls can apply for a hardship allocation which gives them a \$10.00 telephone card. This must be reapplied for every month.¹³³ Prisoners can also make a hardship application for TV rental inside the prison.¹³⁴
407. Overall, women's accounts highlight the fact that their experience in prison is also influenced by the support they receive from their families and whānau outside the prison. Economic inequality outside of prison is mirrored inside prison.
408. Women with better resourced networks may be less reliant on prison-based opportunities for work and have greater access to other necessities such as underwear, or funds to purchase food top-ups from the prison canteen.

Reintegration

409. Reintegration is a critical part of a prisoner's journey. It aims to provide people with appropriate support to identify and overcome any barriers to successfully transitioning back into the community.¹³⁵
410. The international literature identifies several common obstacles to reintegration. These include accommodation, employment, education, physical and mental health, life-skills and attitudes, money problems and family networks. Note, family networks can be helpful when they offer positive support or unhelpful if they link a prisoner to criminal activities.¹³⁶
411. Corrections is active in supporting prisoners' transition back into society with a range of in-house and contracted services addressing the challenges prisoners face. Both women and men prisoners have access to many of these services. Corrections uses a Six Pillar Model of Reintegration with interventions focused on:
- » Accommodation
 - » Oranga/Wellbeing
 - » Family/Whānau/Community Support
 - » Education and Training
 - » Employment
 - » Skills for Life

¹³³ POM C.02.Res.03 Hardship assessment - prisoners requesting international telephone calls to family.

¹³⁴ POM P.11.05 Request for financial hardship assistance / exceptional circumstance.

¹³⁵ United Nations, 2018. Introductory Handbook on The Prevention of Recidivism and the Social Reintegration of Offenders. Criminal Justice Handbook Series.

¹³⁶ Tissera, 2019. New Zealand's six pillar model of reintegration and international reintegrative models: A review of the literature.

412. In the financial year to June 2020, 738 women were released from prison. Table 5 shows why and how many women were released from prison during this period.

Table 5. Circumstances of women released from prison in the year to June 2020

Type of release	Description	Number
On conditions	For sentences of one year or less, a judge can set conditions for release. For sentences of one to two years, people are automatically released with standard conditions.	329
On parole	For sentences longer than two years, the Parole Board sets standard or special conditions for release.	232
Without restrictions	For sentences of one year or less, a judge may impose no conditions.	130
Sentence cancellation	Occurs when a prisoner applies for and is granted the ability to serve their sentence on home detention instead of in prison.	36
Sentence exceeded	Occurs when time spent on remand exceeds the length of the sentence imposed by the court.	5
Recall denied	Occurs when an application by Corrections to have prisoner on parole recalled to prison is denied.	3
On appeal (bail)	Released on bail.	2

413. Prisoners serving sentences of less than two years are automatically released after serving half of their sentence. They are not seen by the Parole Board but may be subject to release conditions imposed by the judge who sentenced them.
414. Prisoners serving over two years become eligible for parole after serving one-third of their sentence, unless the court has imposed a longer minimum non-parole period. If granted parole, the Parole Board must impose standard release conditions and may also impose special conditions on the offender.¹³⁷

Case Management for reintegration

415. For Corrections Case Managers, supporting women towards successful reintegration begins as soon as they have assessed their needs at the start of their time in prison. While some activities, such as Release to Work and Out of Gate,¹³⁸ activate towards the end of a prison term, all rehabilitative, education and training, and work opportunities accessed by prisoners during their time in prison contribute to successful reintegration.
416. Each woman should have a release plan recorded within their offender plan. A release plan should include activities for each of the six pillars of reintegration, spanning the prison and Community Corrections. We note that activities within the pillars provide more or less assurance for prisoners on release. For example, in

¹³⁷ Standard conditions can include: reporting regularly to Community Probation, restrictions on living and working arrangements, restrictions on associating with certain people, limitations on the offender's ability to move to a new residential address.

¹³⁸ Release to Work allows prisoners to undertake supervised work outside a prison. Out of Gate is reintegrative support tailored to prisoners on short sentences or who leave prison while on remand.

accommodation, an activity could be 'I have accommodation' or 'I will work with [a provider] to get a suitable place to live.' The second of these statements is much less certain, though both meet the standard for a release plan.

417. Case Management standards of practice show that between 75% and 85% of release plans from women's prisons met the standard in year to June 2020.

418. The quote below is from a woman who had started planning for her release.

"I came in here like a jealous angry ex, knowing I am just fresh out of a relationship, hurting, sad and angry, totally pissed off, reminiscing in that relationship all those mistakes, all those things that could change. I want to leave all that in here, leave all that jealousy, problem issues in here. I want to walk out of here without that. I want to walk out of here knowing, I have done what I have done but I am leaving that in jail." [Prisoner, CWP]

419. She further commented that she had taken advantage of all of the programmes in prison.

New Zealand Parole Board

420. Meeting with the Parole Board is a critical step toward successful reintegration for many women.

421. The Parole Board is an independent statutory body which considers offenders serving a sentence of more than two years in prison for release on parole.

422. Members of the Parole Board are appointed by the Governor-General. One quarter of the members are current or former judges who act as panel convenors, and the rest are community members. The Parole Board considers cases at each of the 18 prisons around New Zealand.¹³⁹ Just over one third of Parole Board members are women.

423. The Parole Act 2002 requires the Parole Board to consider cases where offenders are eligible for release on parole, Compassionate Release, and release at their statutory or final release date. It also considers cases where an offender released on parole needs to be recalled to prison.

424. Parole hearing panels are informed by assessments provided by Principal Case Managers, among others. Panel members may ask questions about several areas including: progress in prison; courses undertaken; what has been learned; behaviour; the offences that brought the offender to prison; and plans if released including employment, accommodation, and high-risk situations.

425. Some staff and women noted that women could not finish their programmes before release which prevented them from meeting their Parole Board's conditions.

"Watching women come back from parole you see them crying because they haven't been able to do their programmes. I was willing to move prisons to do programmes in order to get them done. I know from experience if you haven't done programmes by parole you may as well not show up. If I haven't done it, I'm not getting parole. This is the part where your life is in someone's hand." [Prisoner, Arohata]

426. Many women felt very anxious about Parole Board hearings and wanted more support to understand the process and how they could prepare for it. Some women

¹³⁹This information is sourced from the New Zealand Parole Board website: <https://www.paroleboard.govt.nz/>. Currently there are about 40 members on the board.

said some staff were unaware of the information available to hand on to them – like a booklet about the Parole Board – while other staff would sit down with them to explain the process.

427. Women suggested providing more information about the hearing on the kiosk or having a 'mock' board hearing. We noted examples where women managed well despite their nerves.

"I was so nervous during my parole hearing; They asked me a challenging question about my partner which unsettled me. I was pinching myself under the table the whole time to stay calm. I responded OK and the Parole Board noted that. I knew I had to remain calm and not react aggressively. Kowhiritanga taught me to stop, think and do." [Prisoner, CWP]

Staff and many women felt leaving prison was a daunting milestone.

428. The challenges of leaving prison arise because women move from being well-supported with food, shelter, and access to services like social workers and counsellors, to having variable or no access to these services in the community.

"A lot of people in jail have abandonment problems and it's really hard then to have an awesome relationship with someone and then not being able to talk to them again. For me, I had a good relationship with a male staff member and that was the first time I felt that I could trust a male ... When we get released, we're going to be on our own. There won't be that support at our fingertips again." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"Women are not allowed to contact me when they leave. When they are released, if they have historical abuse then they go with an ACC Counsellor. However, women that don't have sexual abuse in their history, they go into the community with no help. That's something I often wonder about as well. I make it very clear that I don't want dependency here because I am not outside with them. I try to give them strategies for them to cope when they're out." [Trauma Counsellor]

429. Some staff suggested that the support women received in prison needed to be replicated in the Community Probation space to help women transition successfully. We note that Corrections does not control when prisoners are released.

"Our supported accommodation hasn't really been full – but they're not specific to women by nature. They don't do anything different with women. They pick them up from court and get them a bank account but there are no specialist services for women. When women are in the prison, they get so much support from people while they're here – social workers, trauma counsellors etc and they have quick access to things. But then they're released, and they're on waitlists. Like six months to see a psychologist. They have housing for three months and then have to find something else. They have children. We need to replicate social workers and trauma counsellors in the probation space – they can't meet some of their conditions (some are to receive counselling). In the community they don't have someone to navigate calling [Oranga Tamariki] for them – at least here they have social workers help them. I don't think we're doing everything we should be doing, but we're doing a fair bit for them. And we get women who have no help outside. We need to offer transition through care." [Principal Case Manager]

Self Care Units stood relatively empty in two sites

430. Self Care Units are intended to ease the transition between prison and the community by providing an opportunity for more independent living. Women can run their unit like a shared flat, creating menu plans together, shopping, cooking and cleaning.
431. There are two types of Self Care Units, internal and external. Internal Self Care Units are located within the secure perimeter of the prison. ARWCF and CWP have internal Self Care Units.
432. External Self Care Units are fenced in but are located separately from the primary secure perimeter of the prison. These units remain close enough to receive support from prison staff. Of the women's prisons, only Arohata Prison has an external Self Care unit.
433. At the time of our inspections, the Self Care Units in two prisons had few women residing there due to a lack of suitable women. Women must be both eligible for placement in a Self Care Unit and considered suitable for this placement. Suitability is assessed by case managers who consider recent behaviour, how close a woman is to release, the benefits to the woman, and whether the Parole Board has indicated a Self Care Unit in the woman's offender plan. The final decision for placement in external Self Care rests with the Prison Director.¹⁴⁰
434. Some staff and women noted that some groups of prisoners were automatically excluded from Self Care Units such as those with offences against children.¹⁴¹ Women understood this was because Mothers with Babies Units were located in Self Care units. This is consistent with staff accounts about the Child Protection Policy. This policy does not allow review of prisoners at risk to children on a case by case basis; rather, when an alert is placed it is never revoked.

"The Child Protection Policy (CPP) alert identifies prisoners who have offended against a child. Where an offender faces active charges or has been convicted of a relevant offence against a child under the age of 16, a CPP alert needs to be activated....The CPP alert indicates where we need to ensure that safety is maintained where children are potentially involved with these prisoners" [Corrections, CCP]¹⁴²

435. On the issue of reviewing the policy, POM states:

"Once an alert has been applied it should never be deactivated (including on release), unless there is a change in the prisoner's active charges or conviction history which means they no longer have any relevant offences against children."

436. The application of the CPP precludes women who were subject to that policy from residing in the Self Care Units, even if their security classification and behaviour allowed it.
437. As noted earlier, deportees were excluded from Self Care at ARWCF.

¹⁴⁰ POM M.03.04 Self-care units for women.

¹⁴¹ POM M.03.04.02f and M.03.04.04 (5) precludes women with a conviction or a past or present sexual or violent offence against children from Self Care Units.

¹⁴² POM Child Protection Policy.

Some of the benefits of Self Care units are constrained by management decisions

438. We note that the benefits of Self Care units are constrained by the decisions about how they can be run. This is site specific.
439. Women in the Self Care units in CWP and ARWCF were unable to leave the prison on an escorted outing to go shopping.
440. Staff said they offered a form of online shopping – where staff purchased items for women – but women said there was limited choice and substitutions were made without consent.

"Staff provide a catalogue. While we budget and make a list of items – every week we find out that the items cost more than what was in the catalogue because the catalogue that is provided by staff is only for online shopping. It is so frustrating to find every week we are over budget. Because of the way we do the shopping there aren't any lessons to be learnt about budgeting." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

441. At Arohata, access to Self Care was limited to those who had already been to their first parole hearing. However, this policy has recently changed. Women with their first parole hearing coming up within six months are now eligible for Self Care. This assists them to be parole-ready at the time of their parole hearing.
442. Moving to the Self Care unit could initially have unintended negative impacts for women as the quote below shows.

"I have come up to Self Care before Parole – I'm the first person that has been allowed to do that. My job – I was on external grounds, so I get to keep my job. But then I lost all the girls I had made friends with. For the first month I was here, I wanted to go back. It takes like six weeks to finally settle in. I've now accepted that I can't go back to the jail. When I go down to study I ask if I can "come home". It's really lonely up here. There's only six people up here." [Prisoner, Arohata]

443. For a few women we spoke with, the Self Care units beyond the wire were viewed as a punishment. This is because they were not able to access the same programmes, work opportunities or friends.

"Self Care is a barrier – you don't get to mix with anyone anymore. It's kind of a punishment. I broke down in tears when I found out. When I came, my whole support network was gone. The officers and girls I were in a unit with were suddenly gone, the programmes that I was doing I suddenly couldn't do it anymore. I was doing the Graphics Design course and I got pulled out. I had different jobs as well. I had three more assignments on the graphics course to do to finish it, but I'm not allowed to finish it anymore because we're not allowed into the main jail again. This unit feels like punishment. We're not allowed to talk to the women when we go into the unit. My closest friend in the jail – she's still in the jail – I'm not allowed to talk to her." [Prisoner, Arohata]

444. For others, moving to Self Care remained a goal.

"My goal is to get into Self Care. I'm confident I will get my parole in June, but if I get into Self Care and can do RtW [Release to Work] then I want to stay. When I get released, I can go to my mum's, but I want to do a residential rehab. I don't want to get out and fail. I want to make sure I don't come back. The counsellors here and my case manager have given

me some ideas, but it's hard to make a plan while I'm waiting for my next programme.' [Prisoner, Arohata]

Release to Work opportunities were limited at some sites

445. Prisons used Guided Release and Release to Work programmes to facilitate reintegration. Guided Release is a temporary release from prison, initially accompanied by a case manager, so prisoners can prepare for their re-entry to the community. Typically, this might be to open a bank account, view accommodation or participate in a job interview.
446. Women and staff we spoke with said Guided Release could be daunting for women who had been in prison for a long time. While this is the case, it shows the need for reintegration pathways for women to slowly become used to a world that may have changed considerably since they were imprisoned. The following quote is from a prisoner who entered prison as a young woman and had been there for more than 11 years.

"They're trialling me with a new type of Guided Release. It was kind of overwhelming. It's about getting me used to the outside world. The world is really busy and fast, and they're all in a rush to get somewhere."
[Prisoner, Arohata]

447. We note that both Arohata and CWP were trialling new Guided Release protocols allowing women to have a broader range of experiences in the community. These included attending parent-teacher conferences, taking children to the park, or riding the train to a café.
448. All prisons used Release to Work (RtW). This allows prisoners temporary release to participate in employment in the community. Women are paid for work at the same rate as other employees with similar skills and experience.
449. At the time of our inspections, a handful of women had been approved for RtW across the women's prisons.
450. Staff at CWP said the RtW function was shared with the two men's prisons in the region. Their impressions were the RtW broker was less comfortable working with women and was also overworked. Where parole hearing panels had recommended RtW, the lack of this opportunity could be a source of stress for women.

"Within the last 18 months, we have only had two women on RTW, which is not helpful for the Parole Board, if they are wanting the women to experience that trusted position transitioning back into the community prior to release. The low RtW opportunities leave the women feeling scared that they will not be released." *[Principal Case Manager]*

In the community

451. As noted earlier, 738 women left prison in the year to June 2020. In that same time, Corrections recorded 370 referrals (for 297 offenders) to contracted community service providers supporting women to reintegrate back into the community. Women may have more than one referral if they require help from more than one service. Of these referrals, 36 women had been rejected by a provider, and 61 referrals were recorded as completed.
452. Out of Gate (157 women) and Supported Accommodation for Women (199 women) were the services women were most often referred to. Out of Gate provides a navigator for up to six months to help women plan their reintegration. It is available

to people on remand or on short sentences. Supported Accommodation for Women provides housing and wraparound support for women who do not have a release address.

453. Nationwide, Supported Accommodation for Women offers 26 beds in six locations: Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.¹⁴³ Corrections guidance says accommodation accessed through these providers should be able to house children living with their mothers, or at the very least be suitable for children to visit their mother. Women intending to live on the East Coast/Hawkes Bay who identify as Māori can also apply to stay in Te Waireka Residential Therapeutic Community. This community gives preference to women with an identified housing need and with children.
454. One case manager we talked to provided several possible reasons for the apparently low number of referrals to reintegration providers (compared with releases) and the low number of completions. We understand some women present with complex behaviours (such as arson charges) or family circumstances that make it difficult for some providers to accommodate them.
455. Reflecting specifically on accommodation, women themselves may reject housing options if they feel they are unsafe. For example, in Wellington, one of the supported accommodation houses is well-known to gangs. Further, supported accommodation may not be available in the locations where women want to be released.
456. The apparently low numbers of referrals to reintegration providers warrants further investigation.

Planning reintegration back into the community can be more difficult for women

457. Case managers found it challenging to plan for women's release because they had to be aware of the reintegration services across the country, including available accommodation. Due to the geographical spread of prisons, staff could be stretched thin in their efforts to support reintegration into the communities women chose for release.

Some women were well supported by external agencies on release

458. Sometimes reintegration services worked well. Having a release address is one of the conditions for parole, and where services provided accommodation this allowed women to be released

"The last time I was released I had PARS help. Without them I would not have been able to get home. PARS picked me up on the day I was released and took me home. They gave me a cellphone so I could contact my Parole office. I had a bank account, they helped me with WINZ. Some girls don't know what agencies are out there to help them." [Prisoner, CWP]

459. However, this was not always the case. The following case study shows the difficulty of finding appropriate accommodation post-release that matches the sometimes changing circumstances of women.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ For women on remand, Corrections has developed the Women's Bail and EM Bail Service - a wraparound supported accommodation service which aims to reduce instances where women who are eligible for Bail or EM Bail are held in custody because they lack a suitable bail address. This service provides safe and secure accommodation in the community, opportunities to access support and services and works with the women towards a long-term plan to remain in the community.

¹⁴⁴ We note Supported Accommodation for Women does allow visits from family.

Case study B

Ms B was in prison for the first time and is dyslexic. She was released from prison on parole. Due to the nature of her offending, she was given accommodation in an area she was not familiar with. Her accommodation was 40 minutes from town. Ms B told us the accommodation provider said she could stay in the accommodation for three months – but she didn't know she couldn't have family to stay. She notes she also didn't ask about this condition. While in her supported accommodation, her son was having a hard time at home and wanted to stay with her. She approached her probation officer for help and was sent to WINZ. WINZ advised her to find new accommodation. With the help of her partner, who travelled to town to help her (Ms B needs someone to help her read), she eventually found emergency accommodation for her and her son. When she rang WINZ they told her that she did not qualify for a house because she still had eight weeks of supported accommodation left to use. Upset and disappointed, she kept her son for the night and was then arrested for breach of conditions.

Many women were worried about where they would live on release

460. Women often spoke of concerns about housing. The common understanding was that Kāinga Ora (formerly Housing NZ) would not accept applications from women while they were still in prison (and under the care of the state). Women had to wait until they were released to apply.

"Most of us have been provided with the skills in prison to help us reduce our reoffending, but when we walk through those gates there is no one there to pick us up. There is no home for us to go to where we will feel safe. Instead we are alone and have little option but to return to our former lives where we fall back into our old habits. It takes a lot of guts to change and go somewhere different to start afresh. My release is coming up. I am frightened. I don't know where I will live. I can't go home. Will I be able to get a job? I think about my victim's family. I hope I can cope and stay away from the drugs and alcohol." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Some women felt the chances of successful reintegration were low

461. Some women spoke of why some people stayed out of prison, while others cycled back through. These related to factors that women felt they could not change, feelings of hopelessness, or lack of opportunity.

"There are some women who come in and say OMG I don't ever want to come back here and they don't come back – the prison shocks them, they see people they are afraid of becoming if they stay on the wrong path and they don't want to be that person. There are the others who will keep coming back for the rest of their lives they don't think much of life, they are not interested in living, they don't want to give up the drugs, they will just keep taking them and maybe they will die." [Prisoner, CWP]

"The jail thing is never going to leave us. In my mind I'll need to start my own business to earn money which is why I did business studies... We need something to be self employed. We need to do something where we can be at home with our kids. Barista is good, but someone with a record it's

going to be hard to get a job. It's crazy that the men get to do all the trades – they get building, roofing, painting. These are hard working jobs that will guarantee them a job on the outside. But what do we get? Coffee making. And we have to look after the kids. It's always that way. It's always the mother who has to keep the kids fed and clothed. Having a better job will give us something to not come back. The young girls always come back. We're their family. They only have their Steps to Freedom to live on.¹⁴⁵ And that hasn't changed in years. We can't live on that." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"Wahine always end up back in here one way or another. Like me, I don't come back to prison unless it is six years later or something. I am the one who stays out of jail, stays out of trouble. I don't just look after my children, I look after other kids too though I don't get support for them and that is why we do what we do. We steal to feed them, we steal to feed our cousins' kids because they all smoke P and then when we get sick of it and we get in trouble ourselves, we all end up back here. It is sad, we are victims to the system." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

462. We note that the support offered to women by Corrections attempts to address many of these factors. Further, many factors, such as housing demand, employment opportunities, poverty, and drug and alcohol addiction, require a wider societal response.

Summary

463. Case managers largely worked well with women. This could be time-intensive because women were more willing to engage with case managers, than men. A range of rehabilitation programmes are available to women, some of which have been designed specifically for women and are culturally responsive. Women generally spoke highly of their programme experiences. Some women felt exposed by sharing past trauma, which was expected of them in group programmes like Kowhiritanga.
464. Prisons are developing their support for Māori women. Women and staff said more work was needed to provide kaupapa Māori pathways and care for Māori women.
465. Women and staff said the education and work opportunities for women were limited, particularly when compared with those for men. We acknowledge several practical difficulties in diversifying and offering opportunities for women. These include small numbers of women at some sites, the need to keep remand accused women separated from the others, and the shorter sentence lengths of women. All these factors impact on the numbers of women who are available to participate in activities, at the time they need them, and in the spaces the prison has available.
466. Many women were anxious about appearing before the Parole Board. Women suggested that the prison could provide more information about how the board worked.
467. Leaving prison was a source of worry for many women, who believed they would not find the resources to succeed in the community. We note apparently low numbers of referrals to reintegration providers, compared to the number of releases. Conditions laid down by some accommodation providers made it difficult for women to support their families.

¹⁴⁵ Steps to Freedom is a one off payment of \$350 made by the Ministry of Social Development to assist prisoners on release.

Areas for consideration

25. Corrections should consider reviewing its current suite of programmes and interventions to ensure gender specificity and cultural responsiveness is included within contract design and implementation.
26. Corrections should consider implementing IT solutions that support better access to education, training and employment opportunities.
27. Corrections should consider reviewing prison industries, particularly where opportunities are limited due to the size of women prisons and the need to deliver essential industry services.
28. Corrections should consider undertaking a review of the availability and demand for rooms to ensure all visits, programmes, interventions and interviews are available when required and are conducted in a suitable environment.
29. Corrections should consider reviewing the reintegration function of prison kitchens to support teaching women about budgeting, meal planning etc.
30. Corrections should consider how to better inform and support staff and women to identify opportunities for accessing temporary removals and releases that support reintegrative needs (including Release to Work and guided release).
31. Corrections should consider the review and implementation of services in Community Corrections to support women in their transition from prison to the community.
32. Corrections should consider conducting a review of the eligibility and suitability criteria for Self Care units based on an individual's actual risk and need, to ensure consistency across the women's sites.
33. Corrections should consider working with the NZ Parole Board to incorporate gender-responsive processes for women appearing before the Parole Board.

Relationships and Family and Whānau

This section considers the role of family and whānau in the lives of women in prison. Family and whānau can both offer support and need support from women in prison.

Maintaining contact with family and whānau

Social support in prison is linked to reduced reoffending

- 468. Being removed from their social supports is among the most difficult challenges faced by prisoners. A large body of evidence suggests that maintaining social connections helps prisoners cope with their experience and successfully transition back into society.¹⁴⁶
- 469. Receiving visits from family and whānau has been linked to reduced long-term offending.^{147,148}
- 470. Prison sentences have impacts beyond the individual prisoner. In New Zealand, many prisoners are also parents. As noted earlier, based on research conducted in 2013, Corrections estimates that 29% of women in prison have a direct parenting role prior to imprisonment.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ See for example, Cochran, J., 2014. Breaches in the wall: Imprisonment, social support and recidivism Declaire & Dixon, 2017. The effects of prison visits from family members on prisoners' wellbeing, prison rule breaking, and recidivism: A review of research since 1991; Lord Farmer, 2017. The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime.

¹⁴⁷ See for example, Walker et al., 2020. The role of family support in the explanation patterns of desistance among individuals convicted of a sexual offence.

¹⁴⁸ We note research suggesting prisoner re-entry into the family can be a stressful time for the family, who themselves need to be supported through this period. See Grieb, et al., 2014.

¹⁴⁹ Direct parenting role was defined as: a child under 18 living with a parent prior to imprisonment.

471. Estimates of the number of children with parents in prison vary widely. Pillars¹⁵⁰ estimates up to 23,000 children currently have a parent in prison. Corrections estimates are more conservative, at around 3000 children.¹⁵¹

Having a parent in prison negatively impacts child wellbeing

472. An overview of the research on the impacts on children of having a parent in prison identified many negative outcomes.¹⁵² These range from social stigmatisation and poor health and educational outcomes to a greater likelihood of imprisonment than other children.
473. We note that having a parent in prison does not mean a child will inevitably have poor life outcomes. Researchers point to great resilience among some children and warn against holding low expectations of children with parents in prison.
474. A significant body of evidence shows that keeping families together improves the outcomes for *all* members of the family, and reduces recidivism. Some reports caution that better outcomes for children lay in the *quality* of the relationship with their parents as well as the nature of the visitation experience.¹⁵³ Concerns about negative prison visits experienced by children have led to the development of 'child-friendly' visiting areas in prisons.
475. Providing child-friendly visiting areas supports prisoner-child relationships. In New Zealand, women are supported to stay connected with their children in Mothers with Babies units and family bonding rooms. These are in addition to the conventional supports of telephone, email, AVL and visits.

Communication with family and whānau

476. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prisoners should be located as close as possible to their family and whānau and the community they have a strong attachment to.¹⁵⁴ If prisoners are placed in prisons outside their home region, it should be for the minimum time necessary and for an identified reason. Further, prisoners should be able to promptly inform their family or whānau or designated contact person about their imprisonment, transfers, illness or injury.
477. For women in prison, these aspirations are difficult to achieve because of the small number of prisons housing them, and prison locations.
478. Staff across the prison estate appreciated the importance of women having contact with their whānau.
479. The following quote from a staff member highlights many of the challenges facing Corrections and women while in prison, especially for those on remand.

"I take a more compassionate approach when I speak with the women compared with the men. They [men] don't care about their kids. They're selfish they just want their p119 [canteen order] sorted – Whereas the

¹⁵⁰ Pillars is an NGO working with children and whānau of prisoners.

¹⁵¹ See Gordon, Pillars Family Start Plus Dunedin (Pilot) Model and Evaluation, 2019. Corrections estimates are based on proportion of prisoners with children at 2013 using linked data, applied to the prison population as at 9 March 2021.

¹⁵² Gordon, L. (2018). Contemporary Research and Analysis of the Children of Prisoners.

¹⁵³ This is a point also made by Wakefield, 2016, who notes the 'burdensome' effect of some prisoners on their families and conversely the positive social support received by families from prisoners.

¹⁵⁴ *Inspection Standards* 31 and 33.

women get more emotional because they have an outside connection, they have kids to think about. You have to be more compassionate. Give them more help to encourage that contact. And I feel that connection is really important because that could be the thing that helps them change. [Informal discussion, Corrections Officer]"

480. As well as court processes related to offending, women may also be running their households from prison, including working with Oranga Tamariki.

"The biggest problem for the women in my care is around family. The women have lost control of the household, paying the bills, providing for their families, they have been separated from their children and partners, and they are often considered the head of the family. This in turn causes extra stress on the women, as they worry about what is occurring in the community" [Senior Corrections Officer]

"We need access to agency forms, and the ability to complete them, have them sworn. It all takes time and when officers are too busy to help, things get tense. The process should be on kiosk. We learn how to do things from talking to other women who have been through the process. We need access to the Ministry of Justice website on kiosk, other agencies should be on website so we can read information for ourselves. No mixed messages or bad information." [Prisoner, CWP]

"We all know women are the caregivers for children, and they continue to run their homes from prison, but some lose touch with their kids in prison. Social workers are conduits between women, Oranga Tamariki (OT) and children. We have had some huge success with women who thought they have lost their children and through the social workers we have re-established relationships with their kids." [Principal Case Manager]

481. The case study below was provided by a social worker from Pillars. The case study shows that some women are also supporting their parents and wider family and whānau. Pillars suggests that women being of service to their family and whānau is an opportunity to exercise their leadership and to be treated with dignity and respect. Practically, this means women needing time and resources to continue the care.

Case study D

"One wahine Māori I worked with was the eldest of four daughters, whose mother had a terminal illness. Not only did she request that I meet with her so she could understand, kanohi ki te kanohi, who was working with her whānau, but she needed means of being able to regularly contact her mother's medical specialists and her sisters to ensure their mother was receiving the care she needed in her absence. Being able to continue to manage her whānau's affairs, just as she had done prior to incarceration, was extremely important for her wellbeing."

Contact supports the children and family and whānau of women prisoners

482. Discussions with Pillars reveal that contact with women in prison supports the wellbeing of their children. Contact reassures children and family and whānau that their mother is OK, which lessens the burden of worry on them.

"Regular engagement fosters connections that minimise stress for both incarcerated wāhine and their whānau. If Mum is strong in her wairua and given opportunities to reassure whānau she is doing OK, this is a huge weight off the shoulders of whānau as they adjust to the changes and upheaval that incarceration brings to their lives" [Pillars Social Worker]

Contacts occurs with the consent of all parties

483. Staff oversee any contacts with women from people outside the prison. Telephone calls, emails, AVL and contact visits need to be consented to by women in prison, by the potential contact and checked by staff.¹⁵⁵ Before any contact happens, staff are charged with ensuring all parties are happy for the contact to proceed, and in the case of contact with children, checking with guardians, including Oranga Tamariki.¹⁵⁶

Access to telephones was constrained in some sites

484. For women, who did not want or could not have visits, telephone was a good alternative. However, some staff and women noted constraints on accessing telephones. Women at some sites experienced long delays in having telephone numbers approved. This meant they were not able to contact their families and whānau, except by letter or email. For women with literacy challenges, this is a poor alternative.
485. Time for contacting family and whānau was limited to when women returned to their residential units from work or programmes and before they were locked up. Lock up times varied between prisons, but could be as early as 4pm.
486. The number of women wanting to use the telephone was high. When their children were arriving home from school late in the afternoon and their partners were working, women could not always reach their families. Women told us there were many arguments over the telephones.
487. Many women wanted more telephones in the units and better privacy.

"The telephone system is outrageous, we only have two pay phones available in the unit for 55 women ... there are no phones in the yards and the only fights in the unit are over phones." [Prisoner, CWP]

488. Another potential barrier to telephone calls is cost. At all sites, women must purchase telephone cards to make private calls. As noted earlier, women without external financial support need to work in the prison to buy telephone cards. This is a particular issue for foreign nationals for whom calls are expensive. Women appreciated staff efforts to facilitate their connection with their international family.

"The prison management allows for me to use the prison phone [to call] my mum in [Europe] – once a month. To my sister who is in Denmark, I call via payphone which is extremely expensive." [Prisoner, CWP]

489. Women at Arohata noted innovations at Auckland Prison that they wanted implemented in all prisons to manage the costs of calls to frequent contacts.

"Auckland Prison have the ability to spend \$2 per week on a phone number, that they can ring up to 15 times a week. We want this kind of

¹⁵⁵ POM C.02 Prisoner Telephone. Prisoners are allowed at least one private call of up to 5 minutes duration a week in addition to calls to external agencies and legal representation. Up to 10 numbers can be approved. Also Corrections Act, 2004, section 77.

¹⁵⁶ POM V.01 Visitors application and prohibition.

initiative here too, as it would enable us to maintain more regular and affordable contact with our loved ones.” [Prisoner, Arohata]

Women appreciated access to AVL, noting the differences with contact via telephone

490. One long serving prisoner talked about the difference using AVL made to her connection with her mother.

“I cried when I saw my mother, even though I speak to her every day, seeing her for the first time in five years and how much she had aged. Her hair was white and she kept trying to reach out and touch me through the screen. It made me realise how much time had passed. Because of illness my mother has not been able to travel to visit me, but this is amazing.” [Prisoner, ARWCF]

491. We note, AVL use was limited among the women we spoke with. However, access to AVL or other technologies, such as video calls, may improve with new Corrections’ guidance on eligibility for these calls.¹⁵⁷

Visits

492. Just over a quarter of women received at least one visit per month to June 2019 with this number dropping in 2020, probably because of COVID-19. The year to date shows around 20% of women were receiving one or more visits a month.¹⁵⁸

493. For many women, negotiating visits was a complex process as they considered their own needs alongside the needs of their family and whānau. For some, the visit itself could be stressful.

“It’s the children who suffer the most. Sure, punish me, but the way prisons work just punishes the children. Visits are horrible. There’s not enough seats (only four to a table) and everyone’s so stressed that you end up just dreading visits – and that’s the only time you get with your kids.” [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Not all women wanted visits from family and whānau because of shame or cost

494. Some women said they do not like to have visits with their families as they do not want their children to see them in prison. Many also spoke of the financial burden placed on their families to visit. Women also expressed concerns about the pressure their families were under out in the community compared to the relative ease they experienced while in prison.

“Family are all far away and it costs so much to come down and visit. And they travel here and back – because they don’t want to stay in town because they then have to pay for accommodation. It’s very hard for people to see their families. They’ve tried to bridge that gap with video links and Skype.” [Prisoner, Arohata]

“The jail sentence is my sentence, it’s not my family’s. In Self Care it’s easy for us. We have food, rent paid, and nice accommodation. Yet my family

¹⁵⁷ POM C.05 Prisoner Video Calling updated in July 2021.

¹⁵⁸ The Corrections Act, 2005, section 73 says a prisoner is entitled to receive at least one private visit a week for a minimum duration of 30 minutes. This is addition to visits from legal advisors and external agencies.

on the outside is struggling. I'm going through EMERGE.¹⁵⁹ They help get prisoners into housing when they are released. We have it so easy here. I'm grateful that I'm here. The outside it's so much harder." [Prisoner, Arohata]

495. Staff were also aware of these issues.

"One woman came here and told me that she refused to tell her children what she had for her Christmas lunch because her children didn't have much at all. She spoke to her children and cried because they didn't have a Christmas lunch." [Trauma Counsellor]

496. For long serving or older prisoners, or prisoners with older family and friends, long distances and health issues meant visits became harder to achieve.

"My family lives up north, I am getting older and so are my siblings, friends and family which means it is harder for them to travel here to visit. Some are living on pensions, others on benefits and the older ones have to rely on other family members to drive them the distance to Auckland." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Some women and staff felt restrictions about visits were too harsh in some prisons

497. Women at Arohata did not like wearing orange overalls to visits.

"I have visits every weekend with my son. One thing that sucks is the orange overalls. They're really dehumanizing. A lot are ripped and broken anyway. It took a long time for my kids to not realise that I didn't wear those jumpsuits every day." [Prisoner, Arohata]

498. Limits on contact with family and surveillance by staff were also disliked by women and stopped them from having natural interactions with their family and whānau.

"There is an officer and four chairs ... we are two meters apart from our visitor and we are not able to hug our family ... the staff stare at us during the visit." [Prisoner, Arohata]

"I couldn't hold my grandson (under three) during visits. Staff told me that this wasn't allowed. My grandchild was less than a meter away but I wasn't allowed to hold the baby. I've been in Self Care for a while. They know I'm not a high security prisoner. It was heart-breaking for me." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

499. Conversely, women appreciated where different rules for visits with children had been negotiated. This account is from a mother who sees her child in the baby bonding area of CWP.

"My mum brings my baby to visit every six weeks. She can run around and play with her, there are toys for her and baby to play with. Can't do that at any other prison site." [Prisoner, CWP]

Whānau days offered by the prison are a highlight for women

500. Whānau days are often extended visits with family and whānau spending more time with women in prison doing activities and relaxing. They may be offered around times of celebration such as Christmas or Mothers Day. We note also the support of

¹⁵⁹ EMERGE Aotearoa provides a Mental Health and Supported Living Service for prisoners with a mental health need or cognitive impairment.

external agencies like Pillars which assist family and whānau and children of prisoners.

"We did a successful Christmas celebration. We got sponsors who supplied gifts for the kids over Christmas. Mothers Project¹⁶⁰ provided activities packs. 'Given for You' supplied the children's gifts Held two weeks prior to Christmas. They had face painting, cookie decorations, photos, colouring station. The visits were two hours." [Social Worker]

Some women spoke of difficulty with having contact with their children under the care of Oranga Tamariki

501. Difficulties stemmed from custody orders which precluded visits and AVL. Women were grateful to social workers who helped them to link with their children in other ways (by, for example, being in contact with family and whānau members who could provide assurance that children were well and happy).

Mothers with babies in prisons

502. Reviews of international evidence on the impact of separating mothers from their babies in prison agree that separation leads to poorer outcomes for mothers. Supporting mothers to keep babies with them in prison in an appropriate environment is linked to better mental health for mothers and reduced re-offending.¹⁶¹ Interventions directly supporting attachment between mothers and babies in prison have shown benefits for the mother-child relationship.¹⁶²
503. In New Zealand, women are able to keep their children with them up until the age of two years if that is in the best interests of the child. All women's prisons have Mothers with Babies (MwB) Units that are specifically set up for this purpose, located in the Self Care part of the prison.¹⁶³
504. Women may also spend time with the children who are not living in prison with them on a daily basis in mothers with baby bonding rooms. Mothers can spend up to 12 hours a day in these spaces.
505. *Inspection Standards* for women with children in prison state that women should be provided with a safe, supportive and comfortable environment which prioritises the care and development of the child.¹⁶⁴ And further that their children should be cared for and assessed for any negative impacts on their wellbeing.
506. Pregnant women, and women who enter the prison with babies in their care, are able to apply for a place in the MwB Unit.
507. During our inspections, women told us they had not received information about the MwB Units when entering prison. Instead they found out from other women or social workers. This was confirmed by staff.
508. Women and their babies were present in the MwB Units in CWP and ARWCF.

¹⁶⁰ The Mother Project is a group of independent women lawyers who help mothers in prison try to connect with their children. <https://www.mothersproject.org/>

¹⁶¹ See Powell et al, 2017, Mother-Infant Separations in Prison and Elliot-Hohepa and Hungerford, 2013 Formative Evaluation of the Mothers with Babies Unit.

¹⁶² See Sleed et al, 2013. New Beginnings for mother and babies in prisons.

¹⁶³ Corrections Act, 2004, Section 81(a) and 81(b).

¹⁶⁴ *Inspection Standards* 149-157.

509. Arohata Prison's MwB Unit has been unoccupied for the past five years.¹⁶⁵ At the time of our inspection, staff understood that the MwB Unit was restricted to women who had a minimum security classification and who were eligible for external Self Care placement, and was limited to children under nine months of age because the unit is located on a rise. Staff told us that additional fencing could resolve the safety concerns.
510. The entry criteria, however, is that mothers must be drug free, pass a risk assessment to ensure a Self Care environment is suitable, have received no serious misconducts, and be motivated to live in the unit and care for their child. The long-held beliefs of staff about the MwB Unit may help explain why the unit was under-utilised.

Applying for the MwB Unit can be stressful

511. Women told us that the main source of stress for pregnant women is how they will look after their baby. Women are supported to make an application to live in a MwB Unit by the prison social worker.¹⁶⁶ Both staff and women told us this could be a stressful process. For some women this is because of the requirement to name an alternative caregiver in the community.

"I had to find an approved person to look after baby to get into the unit. If I didn't, baby would go to Oranga Tamariki. It was hard trying to ring round to talk to someone I trusted to take baby. It took time and if you don't have some support or phone cards it's so difficult." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

"This [alternative caregiver requirement] is proving very problematic as many of our mothers do not come from supportive families and have no one that they would trust to care for the child if it became necessary. I don't believe the women and the babies should be penalised because they lack community support. I have had some discussion with an agency called Open Home foundation who provide respite care for children, they do this by way of a temporary care agreement. I would ideally love to see an arrangement in place where this agency could be the backup option for women who are unable to nominate an alternative caregiver for their baby. It is of note that we very rarely need to call on the alternative caregiver, so declining an application for this reason, thus preventing a baby forming an attachment with its mother, goes against everything we know about the best interest of a child." [Social Worker]

512. The following case study, provided by a Social Worker, shows some of the factors taken into account when deciding whether a woman is eligible for the MwB Unit.

¹⁶⁵ Prison regulations previously prevented women from having children with them in prison. (source: Te Ara, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/prisons/page-6>) This changed in 2002 when mothers could have babies with them to six months old. The Corrections (Mother with Babies) Amendment Act of 2008, came into effect in 2011, allowing eligible mothers to keep their babies with them until the age of two.

¹⁶⁶ POM M.03.02.Res.06 Suitability assessment for placement of a child with its mother in prison.

Case study E

Ms E was remanded in custody when her daughter was 16 months old and had been in her full time care since birth. The Social Worker requested that an Emergency Reception¹⁶⁷ be considered to minimise the distress on the child. However, the Prison Director advised that this would not be considered as there was not enough information to know whether the baby would be safe. The Social Worker noted Oranga Tamariki had no history with Ms E and her child. The child's GP also reported no concerns with her care of the child.

The child was left with her maternal grandmother who reported that the child would carry around a photo of her mother, became upset whenever her grandmother was out of sight and had become wakeful at night - all signs of separation anxiety. Ms E telephoned her family daily.

Ms E applied for a placement in the MwB Unit as soon as she came into prison and an assessment was completed. However, the PD stated as her next court hearing was only two months away, the site would wait until the outcome of this prior to considering her application.

Ms E became upset when talking about the impact her imprisonment was having on her child.

Ms E's lawyer gave her a sentence indication of Home Detention. She was released on EM-Bail.¹⁶⁸

513. Staff and women we spoke with suggested how the experiences of MwB Units could be improved, both for women and staff. These suggestions included the introduction of national guidance to support the removal of babies from the units, standardised unit rules and procedures and unit staffing.

A national policy for MwB Units?

514. Some senior staff we spoke with wanted a national policy for MwB Units to affirm their purpose and improve consistency across the network. One site had developed its own policies and processes for managing the unit.

"There is no national policy in place to manage this (MwB) ... that means that there is a lack of national consistency ... on site we have created a new entry process for mothers with babies ... POM is quiet around the impact of the decision making around mothers with babies." [Senior Staff Member]

¹⁶⁷ POM 03.02.08 The prison director may approve the emergency reception of a baby into prison following a check by the statutory child protection agency and pending the consideration of the formal application.

¹⁶⁸ Electronic Monitoring on Bail (EM Bail) is available for suitable defendants and young people (12-17 years of age) who have been declined normal Court bail and are currently held in custody. EM bail requires a person to remain at an approved address at all times and be monitored by Corrections for up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Other conditions attached to their bail may allow a defendant or young person permission to leave for approved purposes, such as to attend court, medical appointments or in some cases employment and education.

"There is no evidence of research to decide on the purpose of mothers with babies, no timeframes on how long baby can stay in their mother's care ... there is no clear transition from custody to the community, to maintain the safety of the baby and mother ... after lock up the mother and baby are on their own without any specialist support, which is of concern to me ... we can do harm while doing good." [Senior Staff Member]

515. One staff member considered that any guidance for MwB Units should be based on local experience.

"Best practice from other countries does not work for New Zealand. They do not take into account the cultural aspects of managing our women ... we should be the leaders in how to effectively manage women in prisons, taking in to account their cultural needs." [Senior Staff Member]

Staff wanted practice improvements and training to support staff on MwB Units

516. Practice improvements for MwB Units touched on attire in the units, staff training and allocation to the unit and how movements of mothers and babies in and out of the prison were conducted.

"The staff working in the Mothers with Babies unit would rather not be wearing a [stab resistant] vest. It is hard to have physical contact with the prisoner, when it is required; especially at births ... the staff are there to assist, where the vest becomes a barrier." [Manager]

517. Mothers in one prison told us that custodial staff who work in the MwB Unit constantly change and that it was difficult to build a rapport with any of staff members. One women said:

"It depends which staff member is on duty in order to get assistance" [Prisoner, CWP]

518. We found it was not always clear who was in charge of making decisions about babies in the MwB Units. Some staff said that they did not receive any specific training for working in the unit and they would like it. This was evident from some of the experiences women spoke about. The following quote is from a woman who had two babies in the MwB Unit, one of whom was just over two months old.

"I asked in the unit if I could get two babies in. That's when the social worker came and saw me. I am grateful for having approval for babies to be here -but if the process was faster it will be better – I think that baby may have been traumatised from being apart."

I can't read properly so the Social Worker read all the papers to sign. My first two weeks in the MwB unit was embarrassing. I came here with nothing and struggled. The girls (other mums) helped me to buy stuff for babies, milk powder, nappies, wipes. The staff didn't help. If it was not for the girls I won't have known how to get the benefit. The Social Worker gave me the number to call IRD. Another mum rang IRD and got them to help me. When IRD did send in money I didn't know who I should give the money to buy baby's shoes. I was told that Officers are not able to do any buying." [Prisoner]

519. In addition, staff said that documents relating to the MwB unit including forms for children were sometimes confusing or outdated. This needs attention. The following case study shows how poor communication between women and custodial staff and

an apparent lack of understanding of the reasons behind some requirements resulted in a less than ideal outcome.

Case study F

"I feel that baby and I are being treated differently especially as a remand prisoner. I am constantly reminded by staff that I must remember that I am a remand prisoner. Baby is not a prisoner."

With assistance of a staff member, arrangements were made for Ms F's baby to spend time with the father outside of prison. Ms F was very grateful for this opportunity. However, on baby leaving the prison, staff informed Ms F that if baby took any toys out of the prison the toys were not allowed back in. Staff were not able to provide a reason for this requirement. Ms F said that she had pleaded with staff to allow her baby to take one toy out as it could help to occupy and to settle baby, but was refused.

On returning the next day, a family member had forgotten baby's hat in the car. When the family member asked staff to allow him to fetch baby's hat from the car, the family member was refused and was told that the hat couldn't come back into prison.

Ms F further explained that she was embarrassed upon returning to the MwB Unit. In the communal area (outside the staff base), a staff member had asked her to remove baby's nappy to check that there was nothing illegal in it. Ms F stated that this was done in the presence of several other prisoners who were watching. Ms F said that she understands that staff needed to do this for security reasons, but couldn't understand why this could not be done in private. When she asked for an explanation, staff told her they were following management orders.

Keeping mothers informed allays anxiety

520. In one prison, women told us there was supposed to be monthly meeting between women in the MwB Unit with staff, including the Unit Principal Corrections Officer. The purpose of this meeting was to raise any matters or concerns individually or as a group. However, these were not occurring. Staff told us meetings had been cancelled due to staff shortages.
521. Raising women's expectations and then having to renege on them is a source of frustration and anxiety. This is a concern in many areas of the prison. The following quote notes improving collaboration with Oranga Tamariki, which contributes to women's wellbeing, but more is needed.¹⁶⁹

"It is getting better working with OT. Now they respond, but in some cases the women feel so left out because OT don't understand the mother's feelings/point of view. For example, if they see the children, OT doesn't give us an update on what's been happening. Work needs to be done on collaboration. A few weeks ago, with one of the wāhine, the children had

¹⁶⁹ Corrections has a relationship agreement with Oranga Tamariki intended to "to establish and promote a collaborative relationship between the Department of Corrections (Corrections) and Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) (the agencies)."

been transferred to a new caregiver, but the mother expected the previous caregivers to have packed up the kids' stuff. But they didn't and the kids were on the phone to their mum in tears saying their stuff hadn't been packed. So, the mum was very frustrated and upset. Then we had to contact OT. The mum then thinks OT are against her and her children. It doesn't help the situation. [Social Worker]

Whānau Ora providers support family and whānau in MwB Units

- 522. We note that two prisons now have a Whānau Ora provider. This is a contracted service provider tasked with supporting family and whānau in the MwB Unit to care for their children. We observed this person is working well to meet the needs of women. In one case, the Whānau Ora provider supported a mother to obtain a copy of a birth certificate for her baby and ensure that baby's vaccinations were up to date so baby could participate in activities like child-care and swimming.
- 523. Corrections guidance says that where necessary the prison should provide a layette for a child born to a female prisoner including a night-gown, a singlet, a pair of booties, a helmet / bonnet, two nappies, safety pins where necessary, and a shawl or blanket.
- 524. We were pleased to see that at one prison (Arohata), pregnant women are presented with a 'baby box.' This includes an organic quality wrap, baby clothes, nappies, wipes and bibs. This box goes to every woman who is pregnant, even those who leave.
- 525. Finally, we note that women appreciated the opportunity to care for their babies while in prison.

"MwB Unit is a good thing, I am serving a short term of imprisonment and I will get to leave with my baby. It will be much harder for women serving long terms of imprisonment having baby for two years and then having to give them up."

Mother and child bonding room

- 526. Women who are not able to keep their babies with them in prison, can spend time with their baby in a mother and child bonding room. This is a room set out like a living area. At one site, staff were positive about how the room supported women to remain connected to their babies. The following quote shows how functions across a prison can coordinate to support women and their babies.

"The bonding was really great. The baby really loved her. Every fortnight the partner brought the baby in. The baby was responding to the mother really nicely and positively. The mother was keeping her breast milk in the freezer. They did it for about seven months until she was released. She was pumping in the unit. Staff were really good. This was the first-time pumping had happened here. Health had purchased bottles to help her. Kitchen were happy to keep her breast milk in the freezer. Staff were supportive and everyone worked together. That was a really successful case of the women being able to feed her baby the entire time." [Social Worker].

Maintaining relationships when babies are removed from the care of their mother

- 527. Both inside and outside prison, where there are concerns for safety, a child can be removed from the care of their family and whānau by Oranga Tamariki.

528. The need to remove a baby from her mother when in custody is a stressful process for staff and for women. One mother we spoke with told us about her experience of her baby being uplifted. In this case, prison staff told us a separation plan was not possible due to the need to quickly remove the baby for her safety.

"My memory is seeing my baby being taken away from me - I didn't get to say goodbye. I was then taken straight to the ISU. Eight months after the incident, I only got to see baby. It felt like it's a different baby - all grown up. Baby is in [city] with OT caregiver. That was the first time I met the caregiver and baby. Feels the way they did it was wrong." [Prisoner, CWP]

529. Our observation of two incident reports leading up to the removal of the baby indicate that the woman was in a very distressed state prior to the removal.
530. Staff involved with baby removals suggested how the process for removals could be improved.

"Over the years this has happened a few times during a weekend. This is of concern as there is limited support for the woman with the social worker and counsellor not on site or able to be involved. The most recent uplift occurred on a Sunday, reportedly the mother was distracted by being given a phone call to her mother, while the baby was taken to another area of the prison to await the arrival of Oranga Tamariki. I believe that wherever possible a mother should be involved in the decision. This may mean a social worker or counsellor who has an existing relationship with the mother, spending several hours with her with the intent of gaining her acceptance of the immediate need for baby to be removed, and explaining her rights, options and making a plan for her to continue to be involved in her baby's life. In the recent case the mother had a good relationship with the trauma counsellor, the prison social worker and the baby's Oranga Tamariki social worker. Because the uplift decision was made during a weekend, none of these people had the opportunity to support her to be part of the process and the decision. If we genuinely want to act in the best interest of the mother and baby, surely staff could provide oversight in the baby bonding unit until relevant support are available. Alternately support staff could be consulted and given the opportunity to come on site." [Staff member]

Summary

531. Support from family and whānau are a critical element in helping many women through their sentences. Many women are running their households from inside the prison, making regular connection to family and whānau and other supports outside the prison crucial.
532. Access to types of communication (telephone, AVL, email, visits) varied across prisons. Common problems included lock up times preventing women from contacting their family and whānau, expenses for whānau in visiting women, expenses for women of staying connected, and frustration about the rules for contact visits.
533. Women appreciated social workers' assistance in facilitating family and whānau connections, particularly in supporting them through Oranga Tamariki processes. This is a crucial role. The Whānau Ora provider role seems to be a promising initiative.

- 534. Mothers appreciated being able to care for their babies in the MwB Unit. Women need to be informed about this option early on in their prison stay. This was not always happening.
- 535. Staff wanted training in supporting women in MwB units.
- 536. Some staff called for a national policy for working in MwB units to address inconsistencies across prisons.

Areas for consideration

- 34. Corrections should consider implementing a data collection method to gather more reliable information from prisoners regarding their parenting status, number of children and the type of relationship with their children.
- 35. Corrections should consider a review of training and offer ongoing support for staff in the area of eligibility, suitability and working with women in the Mothers with Babies units.
- 36. Corrections should consider a review of telephone and other communication technologies to support women's ability to maintain contact with their children, family and whānau.
- 37. Corrections should consider a review of visits procedures and processes to create a more consistent humanising, healing and gendered approach/experience.
- 38. Corrections should consider exploring means to mitigate the barriers for family and whānau visiting women in prison due to geographical and financial challenges.

Staffing

This section examines the working relationships between women and staff, recognising the need for staff to have the right training, skills and attitude for working with women.

Importance of staff in women's prisons

537. Prison staff are one of the important determinants of women's experiences in prison.
538. Our *Inspection Standards* state that prison staff should have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude for the job and should be trained to work in line with professional and human rights standards. Further, that staff should be good role models for prisoners and that relationships between staff and prisoners should be professional, positive and courteous. We expect there to be an adequate number of custodial staff, as well as sufficient numbers of specialists, which could include social workers, teachers, trade instructors, counsellors and psychologists, to meet the needs of prisoners. Also, that prisoners have a dedicated member of staff who supports them to make positive changes in their lives.
539. In addition, we expect that women's prisons should be staffed predominantly by female staff, including in senior roles, and staff working in women's prisons should have completed training in the gender-specific needs of women and gender sensitivity.¹⁷⁰

Custodial staff noted differences between men and women's prisons.

540. Staff we spoke with observed that women prisoners wanted to engage with them more than male prisoners. Women wanted to understand the reasons for decisions rather than accepting what they were told to do. For some, this was a change in their practice.

*"It is totally different – a different world in fact – big time – big difference."
[Custodial staff]*

¹⁷⁰ *Inspection Standards* 108-112 and 163, 164.

541. Staff suggested that not everyone was cut out for working in a women's prison and that the 'right' people had to be employed. Further, online training was not enough for new staff.

'Prison management do not consider when realigning staff to unit – about which staff are sent to the unit – sometimes staff are realigned to the unit who end up creating more work, only because they are not familiar with how the unit operates.' [Custodial staff]

'There is problem and challenge with training staff via the online way.¹⁷¹ Some of the new recruits struggle to understand the practical application of what was learnt online when they are on the floor. New staff who learnt online have to be trained by seasoned staff on the floor which also takes up time and compromises safety to some degree for all.' [Custodial staff]

542. Some staff spoke about the trauma they are exposed to when escorting women to medical appointments, for example, taking a woman for the termination of her pregnancy. Staff were upset about being handcuffed to women during these and other procedures and said their training did not equip them to be part of a medical procedure, or support women in distress resulting from such procedures.

Men working in women's prisons noted challenges for women and for themselves

543. Staff we spoke with understood that many women had faced trauma in their lives at the hands of men, which meant they had to work hard to build trust with the women they worked with.

"For males to get rapport with women on site is a big thing. A lot are treated badly by men on the outside so when they come back here and see us, they feel comfortable and safe talking to us. That's a big thing for us." [Custodial staff]

"As a man working with women is challenging. Some men don't survive here, they think women are too needy, men's prisons are tough, but women are mentally needy, and it is draining." [Custodial staff]

Women reported both positive and negative experiences of staff

544. Women we spoke with recounted both positive and negative accounts of their interactions with staff. For some women, it was not the gender of the staff member that mattered, but their attitude. Women noted how their treatment by staff in the unit helped or hindered what they were learning in their programmes.

"There are some male officers here that the women really like – one is called Tony¹⁷² – he's turned into a fantastic role model. And it helps women realise that not all men are bad. Wouldn't it be nice that the men could raise the women's expectations of how men should behave? The amount of trauma these women have faced at the hands of men – they've been beaten by multiple men, and then to come here and they see men in charge and being in control of their lives again. It's good having men like Tony who demonstrate the 'not all men' attitude" [Trauma Counsellor]

¹⁷¹ Training moved online with the advent of COVID-19. This is reverting back to conventional learning pathways. Some specific programmes will remain available online.

¹⁷² Name changed to protect identity.

"Upbringing for Māori is not easy. I haven't trusted anyone. But then there's been one officer here that has been so good, who has supported me through everything. And because of her, I am in Self Care. I have five months left on my sentence – I was determined to go to the end of my sentence because I didn't want to leave her. This staff member left Self Care and went to the RO and because I haven't been seeing her, I've tried to detach from everyone. She's a safety net. It's going to be hard when I have to leave and not be able to communicate with her. [Prisoner, Arohata]

545. Women said some officers were genuine and approachable and were honest when asked a question. We note all prisoners are supposed to be allocated a case officer to help them. It is not clear whether case officers become a 'preferred' staff member or whether women connect with whichever officer they feel they can trust. Women told us they often waited for their preferred staff member to be on duty to ask a question.

546. Some staff were not always so engaging.

"We can find it traumatic when officers yell or slam doors. It's that feeling that you get growing up and that is growing up being traumatised and abused. I grew up with my papa doing that all my life and so have some of the other women in here. We are trying to complete rehabilitation programmes, learning the lessons and applying the skills to help us heal and reconcile with our families. We are working hard, learning how to be better people by applying the Whare Tapa Wha tools, but when I return to the unit all those learnings are undone." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

"Some staff don't give a shit about us - Some ask – how are your kids or how are you? While there are ones who only say – lock-up time. Some staff uses their stripes to their advantage. I have seen how it affects other prisoners and me. We are too proud to ask for help - that is why so many come back." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

Staffing numbers impacted women's experience of prison

547. At the time of our inspection, across each women's prison, we heard various concerns among staff and women about the availability of staff. ARWCF had many staff vacancies, both custodial and health related, which they have since sought to fill. In CWP, because of staff shortages, custodial staff were sometimes moved between different roles. Staff ended up working in parts of the prison where they did not feel confident (like the Receiving Office or MwB Unit). Programme staff at Arohata said there were occasions when custodial staff shortages impacted women's movements to and from programmes.¹⁷³

548. As noted previously, having staff moving around units and between men's and women's prisons limited women from developing trusting relationships with staff.

"I'm used to staff changing but it is very disruptive. You have your core staff and to get anything done you have to go to them... But then if they go to another unit, you then need to repeat that same story the next time."

¹⁷³ For example, staff working in the Receiving Office at weekends when they had not been trained how to fingerprint. This meant women having to return to the RO during the week to complete the process. This delay, in turn, delayed access to some activities which required identity checks – like purchasing food from the canteen using the kiosk.

It really affects trust and you have to keep explaining yourself. Having the same staff makes a big difference.' [Prisoner, Arohata]

Custodial staff were often seen as they key to 'getting things done'

549. Prisoners have very little control over what they do on a day to day basis. Everything is controlled by prison routines and staff. For women, having to submit to authoritative staff can trigger past trauma, as the power dynamics in their relationships within the prison may be similar to the controlling relationships they experienced in their communities.

550. For women, consistency, clear communication and follow-through by staff are important to helping them feel safe and maintain a state of reduced anxiety.

"If someone says they are going to do something then do it, if you can't then say so." [Prisoner, ARWCF]

551. Consistency and follow-through can be difficult to achieve when staff are managing competing priorities and have a limited amount of time. Staff may have less time to talk things through with women at these times, which we heard can result in a negative experience for women.

552. Staff shortages can also result in women being locked up when they are expecting to be unlocked. This in turn results in women missing out on opportunities to work, make telephone calls and exercise.

"Women for some reason, need information, we need to be told why, if you are someone who is very angry, (as many in here are) just tell us – ladies you are going to remain locked today because we have no staff – but when you don't get told, these women lose it, all you can hear is bang, bang, smash, bang, bang, bang on the window, then the buzzer is pressed and they are yelling and swearing at the officers" [Prisoner, ARWCF]

553. Staff told us that staff shortages may be impacted by Corrections' new roster system: *Making Shifts Work*.

Corrections' new roster system is expected to deliver benefits to staff and prisoners

554. Corrections is currently rolling out *Making Shifts Work* across the country. This is a new roster system that moves custodial staff from eight hour shifts, to a mix of eight, ten and twelve hour shifts. A centrally developed model is tailored to each site's requirements with some capacity for modification at the site level, in the first instance by Prison Directors.

555. *Making Shifts Work* is expected to give more flexibility to staff on the ground including time for learning and development and improved work-life balance. For prisoners:

"Flexible work practices will enable greater unlock hours, providing more opportunities for meaningful activity and supporting more effective rehabilitation. The extended hours will provide staff with more time to build relationships and engage with the people in our care. I'm looking forward to seeing these changes come to life." [Jeremy Lightfoot, Foreword to the Workforce Planning Guidebook]¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Department of Correction, Workforce Planning Guidebook, 16 April 2021 (unpublished).

556. Some staff we talked to had reservations about the new system that were specifically linked to working with women. Reservations coalesced around three concerns: staff stress, potential staff shortages and impacts on staff caring for family and whānau.
557. As noted elsewhere, some staff find working with women challenging. For these staff the prospect of longer shifts was daunting.

"There is potential for burn out, we feel that there is no appropriate support and no recognition for the difficult work we do every day ... I want to leave ... I have had enough ... Management are aware of the issues but it works so leave it ... we do try to make things work with what we have, to our own detriment... Management just expect good staff to do so much extra ... sometimes the really important things get missed." [ISU staff]

558. Related to women's health issues, staff noted that escorts for the high number of medical appointments removed custodial staff from their substantive responsibilities on the unit. This put remaining staff under additional pressure often resulting in all the negative flow-on effects for women mentioned above.

"The site has not been staffed for, nor consideration given to, the number of external and internal escorts that occur daily ... when a mother is with her baby, there is an increased requirement for doctor's visits." [Prison Director]

559. Finally, many staff who work in prisons are women with family and whānau responsibilities. Some women wondered how they would manage their jobs and their children with new rosters.

"We have our go live date for Making Shifts Work ... the impact of this process has not been considered for women's prisons ... some female staff are sole caregivers for their children and I've heard 'what do we do with our children' expressed often ... there has been no visible analysis of the model." [Prison Director]

"12-hour shifts are going to kill us. We're all mothers. I'll be leaving." [Corrections Officer]

Training in trauma and working with women

560. Following the launch of the Women's Strategy, Corrections developed training for staff in trauma-informed practices. A one-day pilot was initially run in one prison, with roll out to other prisons. In 2018, 203 staff across the women's prisons completed this course. In 2019, no staff completed the course. In 2020, 32 staff completed the course. Staff we talked to spoke favourably of the training and thought it should be repeated. Given that there are about 500 full-time equivalent staff in the women's prisons (at the time of our inspection), this suggests a little less than half of staff may have received this training.¹⁷⁵
561. Subsequently Corrections developed another learning programme about trauma. The self-paced 'Understanding and Responding to Trauma' is for staff who work with people affected by trauma. This course consists of an introductory leader-led discussion (not compulsory) and an individual learner programme. According to information about the course, the individual learner programme uses a workbook and reflection exercise to provide the learner with the experience of 'effectively

¹⁷⁵ This is an optimistic number given that staff turnover is not accounted for in the estimate nor is the fact that FTE may be made up by people working part-time.

working with people affected by trauma.’¹⁷⁶ In 2019, 184 staff in women’s prisons completed this training with a further 94 staff completing it in 2020. This suggests more than half of the staff working in women’s prisons have completed this training.

562. As noted earlier, staff wanted more training to work effectively with women. This includes training in trauma informed practices, working with women with challenging and complex behaviours (for example, women placed in the ISU) and working with women in general. Staff noted the limited opportunities available.

“New staff, who attend the National Learning Centre for their initial training, do not receive more than half a day focused on working in a women’s prison. This is not enough to train staff effectively for that environment.” [Prison Director]

563. Some of the male staff we spoke with in the women’s prisons did not recall receiving any training to help them work well with women, so they drew on their life experiences.

“Male custody [staff] get standard training, can’t remember any specific training with working with women. New recruits get to work on the floor during their training. It all comes from ‘home’ life experience.” [Staff member]

“It’s important to be a good male role model but there is no training specifically for dealing with women prisoners. There is also no training specifically for male officers in dealing with female prisoners. There used to be general training for working with women, years ago, but we don’t have that now. Then the Women’s Strategy came in, in 2018, and since then we haven’t seen any dedicated training come through.” [Corrections Officer]

564. Staff at the National Learning Centre confirmed that up until recently gender specific training for new staff focused on searches. The half day training currently offered is an interim measure until new learning pathways are developed. This training covers:

- » Moving from core to specialist contexts (how might a day be approached working in a male prison and working in a female prison)
- » Motivational Interviewing - focusing on the importance of empathy and understanding a person may be both a victim and a perpetrator
- » An introduction to trauma-informed practice – how trauma impacts our ability to process experiences and can retrigger at any point - what this means for how we engage with the people in our care
- » Overlay of the principles of Hōkai Rangi - the different ways in which females and males may experience humanising and healing.

565. We note that Corrections is working on designing and developing more comprehensive training for new staff to help them work effectively with women in prison.

¹⁷⁶ Department of Corrections. Understanding and Responding to Trauma. Site date 2 Dec 2019.

Staff support and oversight could be improved

566. At CWP there is a network for male staff on site that is well supported by the management team. The network meets at least twice times a year, once off site, to expand their confidence and knowledge around working in a women's prison.
567. Staff at other sites expressed a desire to have a similar support network.

Summary

568. Custodial staff noted differences between men and women's prisons, particularly that women prisoners wanted to engage with them more.
569. Working with women can pose particular challenges for male custodial staff. Male staff we talked to were aware of the trauma experienced by many women and tried to work in ways that were respectful and engendered trust.
570. Women reported both positive and negative interactions with staff members, with some saying they would ask preferred staff members for help.
571. Custodial staff, particularly those working in ISUs, said they would like more training in trauma-informed practices. Staff working with the most vulnerable women said they would like mentoring support.
572. We note that Corrections is currently re-designing training for new recruits to increase content related to working with women.
573. Corrections is implementing a new roster system designed to address staffing issues and improve prison life. Some staff had reservations about the new system.

Areas for consideration

39. Corrections should recognise that working with women in prison is a specialist role and tailor its staff recruitment accordingly.
40. Corrections should consider reviewing the resourcing model for all staff to ensure it is gender specific and responsive.
41. Corrections should continue designing and implementing an introductory and on-going training package that provides staff with the skills to work in a trauma informed, gender specific and culturally responsive way.
42. Corrections should consider reviewing policies and procedures to enable staff to work effectively with women based on their actual risk and need.
43. Corrections should consider monitoring the impact of Making Shifts Work on staff working in women's prisons and make changes to the approach as necessary.

Conclusion

574. Worldwide, recognition of the challenges in the lives of women in prison and their ways of coping with imprisonment has led to gender responsiveness in the criminal justice system. Both men and women in prison are likely to have experienced trauma in their lives. Yet for women, the complexity and duration of trauma is often more extreme. In response, experts have called for gender-responsive and trauma-informed practices in prisons. This has been a central pillar of Corrections' Women's Strategy.
575. Women prisoners spoke of mixed experiences in their interactions with staff. To embed trauma-informed and gender-responsive practices into prisons, frontline staff need further training and support. Staff spoke of the need for more training, particularly for those working with women whose behaviour was challenging (such as in the ISU and Management Units). Staff also suggested training for those working with women in MwB Units. We acknowledge the contribution that counsellors and social workers have already made in supporting women.
576. Staff working in women's prisons may have more calls on their time. We note that the rate of medical escorts for women is twice that of men, and women generate more medical requests than men. Women also spend more time engaging with staff.
577. Women coming into prison have often experienced high levels of alcohol and drug addiction in the community. Corrections offers three AOD programmes for women (excluding women who are remand accused). We note that the DTP-3 at Arohata Prison appears to have limited success in reducing reoffending. We understand that Corrections is assessing the DTP-3 with a view to making the programme longer, and with the ability to accept women with higher security classifications. The impacts of these potential changes will not be observed in reoffending rates for some years.
578. Prison environments can influence women's experiences. Women's prisons reflect their histories and the purposes for which they were built. They are not necessarily spaces that support rehabilitation for women or comfort for visitors. We noted some modifications to make prisons friendlier for visiting families, and supportive for women. There is a wealth literature on prison design aimed at improving wellbeing and contributing to reduced reoffending.
579. Maintaining a sense of identity and connection for Māori women through access to kaupapa Māori-based units and activities is critical to addressing offending. We observed varied progress in delivering this in women's prisons. The Mana Wāhine Pathway being developed at CWP is a promising initiative.
580. Women and staff told us that prison diets were often increasing women's weight and that clothing provided by prisons did not always fit. Many women traded for items like bras and underwear that were not always available at prisons, and could not be bought from the canteen. Women told us that access to sanitary supplies was sometimes limited. We also noted that prison property regulations and prison canteen do not offer enough products to help women maintain their appearance.
581. Inequalities outside the prison are reflected inside the prison. We note that women without external support or who were not able to work in prison were limited in what they could purchase to support themselves. This meant going without snacks from the canteen, or going without additional items of clothing if the prison could not provide it. We note also that many women have low levels of literacy (and numeracy).

However, the prison system relies on being able to read to access many services (induction information, visitor approval and telephone number approval forms, health information, complaints, offender and release plans). Coupled with the observation that some women are not assigned a case officer to support them (for example, who could read forms to women), this would tend to indicate that some women are disadvantaged while in prison.

582. Women told us they learned from and supported each other in prison. We also heard some accounts of bullying and sexual harassment from other prisoners, and often women with the most challenging behaviour received the most attention. Some women felt that good behaviour went unrewarded. In an environment where women have limited choices, consistency and follow-through are essential. This is the case for undertakings made by staff to women and for the processes that manage poor behaviour such as misconducts.
583. Women enter prison on remand or as sentenced prisoners. The remand population has been steadily growing. The literature suggests that time spent on remand has a criminogenic effect on those remanded. While on remand, women may lose jobs, homes and relationships, and build more offender-based social networks. This in itself is of concern.¹⁷⁷ Particularly so if prisoners have families that they are responsible for, and this is more likely to be the case for women prisoners. We note also that women on remand, are housed in high security units which have the most restricted regimes with potentially less time out of cells and less opportunities for other activities. It also means that people who may not be convicted of a crime are spending time in highly restrictive prison regimes.¹⁷⁸
584. Further, people who are remand accused do not have access to rehabilitation programmes aimed at treating factors linked to offending. However, if women are held for a long time on remand and are subsequently convicted and/or sentenced, their time already spent in prison counts towards their sentence. The time for accessing programmes is therefore reduced, not because there is no need, but because of the time spent awaiting trial or sentencing. We note the conviction rate for all prisoners is around 70% and is expected to remain stable over the next ten years.¹⁷⁹
585. The requirement to separate remand accused women from other prisoners adds to the challenges of delivering programmes. Where the availability of rooms to host programmes within prisons is limited, and numbers of potential participants is small – the requirement to further segregate prisoners makes running a programme even less feasible.¹⁸⁰
586. Women typically have shorter sentences than men. Shorter prison sentences make it more difficult for women to access or complete rehabilitation, education and employment programmes that may be useful to them upon release. We note Corrections has developed shorter rehabilitation programmes, with some designed especially for women. These are generally well received. Further, Corrections is in the process of developing two Special Treatment Units at CWP and ARWCF.

¹⁷⁷ Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, 2018. Using evidence to build a better justice system: The challenge of rising prison costs.

¹⁷⁸ This concern has been noted by the Ombudsman. See Annual Report, 2019/2020 (The Ombudsman, 2020).

¹⁷⁹ Ministry of Justice, 2020. Justice Sector Projections 2020-2030.

¹⁸⁰ Note, Section 186 of the Corrections Regulations, 2005, required remand accused prisoners to remain separated from other prisoners, except for exceptional circumstances and with the approved of the CE of corrections. *Inspection Standard 20* mirrors this requirement.

587. Completing education and training activities is linked to reduced offending. Many women and staff commented on the disparity of choices for training and industry between men and women in prison. In our index year only one woman received a trade qualification. Few women participated in Release to Work opportunities.
588. Women told us that appearing before the Parole Board can be very stressful and some had difficulty accessing information about the Parole Board.
589. Many women worried about leaving prison. They worried about finding a job and somewhere to live. We note some conditions attached to supported housing for women meant they could not have overnight stays with their family and whānau. We note also the lower than expected number of referrals to reintegration providers (compared with the number of releases).
590. We note also that having women located in geographically spread prisons can make it challenging for staff tasked with helping them to reintegrate into their communities on release. Local staff and providers need to maintain links with reintegrative services, such as housing providers, throughout the country to make sure women are supported to return to the community.
591. Similarly, having only three women's prisons in the country means women are more likely to be housed away from their families and whānau. Even when housed within the same Corrections' region as their family and whānau, the journey to the prison can take a long time and be expensive. Women often have caring responsibilities for children or for others in their family and whānau and need good access to communication technologies. In some sites access to telephones and visiting hours limited women's contact with their family and whānau. Women need to contact whānau when they are available and not at school or work. We note social workers appear to be doing a good job in helping women stay connected with and support their family and whānau, including through Oranga Tamariki processes.
592. The small number of women's prisons leads to some women needing to travel and stay in police cells to attend court.
593. Searches, particularly strip searches, can be distressing for women and sometimes for staff conducting them. Searches can trigger a trauma response.
594. Women's prisons appear to have some inconsistent policies and practices. For women who moved prisons, these inconsistencies were a source of frustration and complaints. These include which items of property women were allowed to keep or move between sites, the activities they have access to and even their treatment by staff.
595. Some staff felt sharing resources with other prisons resulted in a poorer service for women, suggesting women's prisons should be self-contained. We note an interest in women's prisons working together as a network under the leadership of a dedicated senior manager.
596. We would like to finish by acknowledging the changes Corrections has made in creating and implementing its Women's Strategy. Women now have access to social workers, trauma counsellors, Whānau Ora providers, Pou Tohunu and a wider range of rehabilitative, educational and training opportunities. Corrections has also recently updated its policy on restraining women who are pregnant, giving birth and staying in hospital with their babies. These are positive changes.

Works Cited

- Barnes, G. (2021, March 1). *A rare and significant win for prisoners — new limits around drug tests and strip searches*. Retrieved April 21, 2021, from The Conversation: <https://theconversation.com/a-rare-and-significant-win-for-prisoners-new-limits-around-drug-tests-and-strip-searches-155737>
- Bevan, M. (2017). Collaborative, relational and responsive: Principles for the case management of women in prison. *Practice - The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 5(2).
- Bevan, M. (2017). *New Zealand Prisoners' Prior Exposure to Trauma*. Wellington: Department of Corrections.
- Bowman, J. (2014, April). Assessing the literacy and numeracy of prisoners. *Practice - The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 2(1), 39-41.
- Christian, J., Mellow, J., & Thomas, S. (2006). Social and economic implications of family connections to prisoners. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 34, 443-452.
- Cochran, J. (2014). Breaches in the wall: Imprisonment, social support and recidivism. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 51(2).
- Corrections Act 2004. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2004/0050/latest/DLM296004.html?search=sw_096be8ed8167de75_health_25_se&p=1&sr=12
- De Claire, K., & Dixon, L. (2017). The effects of prison visits from family members on prisoners' wellbeing, prison rule breaking, and recidivism: A review of research since 1991. *Trauma, violence, & abuse*, 18(2), 185-199. doi:10.1177/1524838015603209
- Department of Corrections. (2017). *Women's Strategy 2017-201: Wahine - E rere ana ki te Pae Hou*. Department of Corrections. Retrieved February 21, 2021, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/newsletters_and_brochures/corrections_works/2017/corrections_works_sept_2018/wahine_e_rere_ana_ki_te_pae_hou_womens_strategy_2017-2021
- Department of Corrections. (2018, July). Intervention and Support Project. *Practice: The New Zealand Corrections Journal*. Retrieved from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/newsletters_and_brochures/journal/volume_6_issue_1_july_2018/intervention_and_support_project
- Department of Corrections. (2019, April). Health Care Policy Pathway. Department of Corrections.
- Department of Corrections. (2019). *Response to the Report of Special Investigation into the circumstances surrounding the prisoner escort between Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility and Arohata Prison on 6 July 2018*. Unpublished.
- Department of Corrections. (2020). *Annual Report 2019-2020*. Wellington: Department of Corrections. Retrieved March 22, 2021, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/42273/Annual_Report_2019_2020.pdf
- Department of Corrections. (2020). *Prison Facts and Statistics - June 2020*. Department of Corrections. Retrieved February 21, 2020, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/quarterly_prison_statistics/prison_stats_june_2020
- Department of Corrections. (2020). *Prisoner Transfer Request Guide*. Unpublished.

- Department of Corrections. (2021). *Ara Poutama Aotearoa Health Services: Guideline for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Transgender and Non-Binary Adults and Young Adults in our care*. f
- Department of Corrections. (n.d.). *Prison Operations Manual*. Retrieved from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual
- Edge, C., Stockley, R., Swabey, L., King, E., Decodts, F., Hard, J., & Black, G. (2020). Secondary care clinicians and staff have a key role in delivering equivalence of care for prisoners: A qualitative study of prisoners' experiences. *Eclinical Medicine*, 24. Retrieved from EClinicalMedicine 24(2020)100416
- Eliason, J. (2006). Are therapeutic communities therapeutic for women? *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention and Policy*. doi:doi:10.1186/1747-597X-1-3
- Elliott-Hohepa, A., & Hungerford, R. (2013). *Report on Phase Three of the Formative Evaluation of the Mothers with Babies Units*. Wellington: Department of Corrections. Retrieved April 22, 2021, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/11800/Evaluation_of_the_implementation_of_the_Mothers_with_Babies_Policy_final_.pdf
- Fair, H. (2009). International review of women's prisons. *Prison Service Journal*, 3-8.
- Farmer, L. (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London: Ministry of Justice.
- Fazel, S., & Seewald, K. (2012). Severe mental illness in 33,588 prisoners worldwide: a systematic review and meta-regression analysis. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 200(5), 364-373.
- Friedmann, A. (2014). Lowering recidivism through family communication. *Prison Legal News*, 24.
- Gordon, L. (2018). *Contemporary Research and Analysis of the Children of Prisoners*. (L. Gordon, Ed.) Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Gordon, L. (2019). *Pillars Family Start Plus Dunedin (Pilot) Model and Evaluation*. Christchurch: Pillars. Retrieved March 10, 2021, from <https://www.pillars.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-Pillars-Family-Start-Plus-Dunedin.pdf>
- Grieb, S., Crawford, A., Fields, J., Smith, H., Harris, R., & Matson, P. (2014). "The stress will kill you": Prisoner reentry as experienced by family members and the urgent need for support services. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 25, 1183-1200.
- HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. (1997). *Women in Prisons*. London: The Home Office.
- HM Inspectorate of Prisons. (2014). *Transfers and Escorts within the Criminal Justice System*. London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons.
- Indig, D., Gear, C., & Wilhelm, K. (2016). *Comorbid Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders Among New Zealand Prisoners*. Wellington: Department of Corrections.
- Jewkes, Y., Jordon, M., Wright, S., & Bendelow, G. (2019). Designing 'healthy' prisons for women: Incorporating trauma-informed care and practice (TICP) into prison planning and design. *International Journal of Environmental Research in Public Health*, 16(20). Published 2019 Oct 10. doi:10.3390/
- McCartan, K. F. (2020). *Trauma-informed Practice: Academic Insights 2020/05*. Bristol: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. Retrieved March 22, 2021
- McGlue, H. (2016). Trauma hiding in plain view: the case for trauma informed practice in women's prisons. *Practice: The New Zealand Corrections Journal*. Retrieved March 22, 2021, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/newsletters_and_brochures/journal/volume_4_issue_2_december_2016/trauma_hiding_in_plain_view_the_case_for_trauma_informed_practice_in_womens_prisons
- McGlue, H. (2017). Addressing the imbalance: Enhancing women's opportunities to build offence free lives through gender responsiveness. *The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 5(2).

- Ministry of Health. (2020). *New Zealand Health Survey [Data File]*. Wellington: Ministry of Health. Retrieved from <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/annual-update-key-results-2019-20-new-zealand-health-survey>
- Ministry of Justice. (2016). *Prisoner Education and Employment: Evidence Brief*. New Zealand Government. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Prisoner-Education-and-Employment.pdf>
- Ministry of Justice. (2020). *Justice Sector Projections 2020-2030*. Ministry of Justice. Retrieved June 7, 2021, from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/imGcg9-2020-Justice-sector-projection-report-v2.1.pdf>
- Minogue vs Thomson, VSC 56 (16 February 2021) (Victorian Supreme Court February 16, 2021). Retrieved April 21, 2021, from <https://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC//2021/56.html>
- Morrison, B., & Hamilton, K. (2020). *Te Ira Wahine: Final Report*. Department of Corrections. unpublished.
- Morrison, B., Bevan, M., & King, L. (2018). Kia Rite: Evaluation of a new behavioural skills programme for women. *Practice - The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 6(2), 37-42. https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/research/journal/volume_6_issue_2_november_2018/kia_rite_evaluation_of_a_new_behavioural_skills_programme_for_women
- Muhammad, B. M. (2018). Against all odds: Resilient children of incarcerated parents. In L. Gordon, & L. Gordon (Ed.), *Contemporary Research and Analysis of the Children of Prisoners* (pp. 141-154). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Miller, N. A., & Najavits, L. M. 2012. Creating trauma-informed correctional care: a balance of goals and environment. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 3, 10.3402/ejpt.v3i0.17246. <https://doi.org/10.3402/ejpt.v3i0.17246>
- Naser, R. I., & La Vigne, N. G. (2006). Family support in the prisoner reentry process: expectations and realities. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 43(1), 93-106. doi:10.1300/J076v43n01_05
- Office of the Inspectorate | Te Tari Tirohia. (2019). *Inspection Standards: Criteria for Assessing the Treatment of and Conditions for Prisoners*. Wellington: Department of Corrections. Retrieved from https://inspectorate.corrections.govt.nz/about_us/what_we_do
- Office of the Inspectorate | Te Tari Tirohia. (2021). *Auckland Region Women's Correction Facility Inspection 2020*. Department of Corrections. Retrieved from https://inspectorate.corrections.govt.nz/reports/prison_inspection_reports/arwcf_inspection_report_released
- Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor. (2018). *Using evidence to build a better justice system: The challenge of rising prison costs*. Auckland. Retrieved May 9, 2021, from <https://www.pmcsc.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Using-evidence-to-build-a-better-justice-system.pdf>
- Penal Reform International. (2013). *Instruments of Restraint: Addressing risk factors to prevent torture and ill-treatment*. London: Author. Retrieved April 21, 2021, from <https://cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Factsheet-5-restraints-v6-web.pdf>
- Powell, C., Ciclitira, K., & Marzano, L. (2017). Mother-Infant separations in prison. A systematic attachment-focused review of the academic and grey literature. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology*, 28(6), 790-710. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14789949.2017.1324580>
- Riggs, R. (2015). A network approach to social reintegration: Network inequality among men in transition from prison to the community. *American Sociological Association*. Chicago.
- Sacks, J., Sacks, S., McKendrick, K., Banks, S., Schoeneberger, M., Hamilton, Z., Shoemaker, J. (2008). Prison Therapeutic Treatment for Female Offenders: Profiles and Preliminary Findings for

- Mental Health and Other Variables (Crime, Substance Use and HIV Risk). *Probation and Parole: Current Issues*, 233-261. doi:doi:10.1080/10509670802143680
- Scanlan, J., Yesberg, J., Fortune, C., & Polaschek, D. (undated). *Predicting women's recidivism using the Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Re-entry: Can a 'gender-neutral' tool generalise to women?*
- Serin, R. C., Mailloux, D. L., & Wilson, N. J. (2012). *The Dynamic Risk Assessment of Offender Re-entry (DRAOR). Unpublished User Manual*. Wellington: Department of Corrections.
- Sleed, M., Baradon, T., & Fonagy, P. (2013). New beginnings for mother and babies in prison: A cluster randomized controlled trial. *Attachment and Human Development*, 15(4), 349-367. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2013.782651
- Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit. (2015). *Improving Outcomes for Children with a Parent In Prison*. The Families Commission | Komihana a Whanau. Wellington: Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit.
- The Correctional Investigator Canada. (2007). *Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator 2006-2007*. Ottawa: Office of the Correctional Investigator.
- The Ombudsman. (2020). *Annual Report 2019/2020*. Wellington: The Ombudsman. Retrieved May 9, 2021, from <https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources/annual-report-201920>
- Tissera, N. (2019). New Zealand's six pillar model of reintegration and international reintegrative models: A review of the literature. *Practice: The New Zealand Corrections Journal*. Retrieved March 30, 2021, from https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/newsletters_and_brochures/journal/volume_7_issue_1_july_2019/new_zealands_six_pillar_model_of_reintegration_and_international_reintegrative_models_a_review_of_the_literature
- United Nations. (2015). *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*. United Nations. Retrieved March 31, 2021, from https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/GA-RESOLUTION/E_ebook.pdf
- United Nations. (2018). *Introductory Handbook on The Prevention of Recidivism and the Social Reintegration of Offenders. Criminal Justice Handbook Series*. Vienna. Retrieved from https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/18-02303_ebook.pdf
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2008). *Handbook for Prison Managers and Policy Makers on Women and Imprisonment*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2010). *The Bangkok Rules: United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders with their Commentary*. Retrieved March 15, 2021, from https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Bangkok_Rules_ENG_22032015.pdf
- Wakefield, S. (2016). Incarceration and family relationships. *Criminology & Public Policy*.
- Walker, A., Kazemian, L., Lussier, P., & Na, C. (2020). The role of family support in the explanation patterns of desistance among individuals convicted of a sexual offence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 3653-3665. doi:10.1177/0886260517712273
- Women in Prison Advocacy Network (WIPAN). (2015). *Ceremonies of Degradation: Strip-searching in Women's Prisons. A policy paper regarding the impacts of strip-search procedures on women in correctional facilities*. Broadway, New South Wales. Retrieved April 21, 2021, from <https://www.womensjusticenetwork.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Strip-Searching-in-Womens-Prisons-paper.pdf>
- Woolhouse, R., McKinlay, A., & Randolph, G. (2017). Women in Prison With Traumatic Brain Injury: Prevalence, Mechanism, and Impact on Mental Health. *International Journal Of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X17726519

- Wright, E., Van Voorhis, P., Salisbury, E., & Bauman, A. (2012). Gender responsiveness lessons learned and policy implications for women in prison: A review. *Criminal Justice and Behaviour*, 39(12), 1612-1632.
- Yesberg, J. A., & Polaschek, D. L. (2014). What can DRAOR tell us about high-risk offenders? A preliminary examination. *Practice: The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 2(1), 13-19.
- Yesberg, J. A., Scanlan, J. A., & Polaschek, D. L. (2014, April). Women on parole: Do they need their own DRAOR. *Practice - The New Zealand Corrections Journal*, 2(1), 20-25.

Appendix A: Women's Prisons Summary

Arohata Prison

Arohata prison is in the Wellington suburb of Tawa, approximately 16 kilometres from Wellington CBD. Originally opened in 1944 as a women's borstal, in 1981 the prison became a dedicated youth prison. In 1987, Arohata became a women's prison.

In February 2017, due to the significant increase in the female prisoner population, the Rimutaka Upper Prison (formerly known as Wi Tako Prison), in Trentham, Upper Hutt, was opened as a satellite site of Arohata Prison. The Upper Prison was refurbished to ensure it was suitable to house prisoners again. By mid-December 2020, all the women had been relocated back to the Tawa site and the Upper Prison was closed. In 2019, work started on a new high security unit at Arohata. This unit, Ahuru Mowai, opened mid-2021 and provides an additional 60 beds.

Arohata Prison accommodates up to 164 remand and sentenced women. Sentenced women are classified from minimum to high security. The site hosts seven units including a Drug Treatment Unit, a Self Care Unit, an Intervention and Support Unit and a Secure Unit. Note, beds in the ISU and Secure Unit are used on a temporary basis and are therefore not counted as part of overall capacity.

Unit name	Category of prisoner	Available beds (Operational capacity)
Self Care Unit (4 houses)	Minimum security sentenced prisoners.	16
Te Araroa (Drug Treatment Unit)	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners.	20
Tizard Unit	High security sentenced prisoners and remand prisoners.	43
He Whare Āwhina	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners. Includes a Kaupapa Māori house.	25
Āhuru Mōwai	High security sentenced prisoners.	60
Intervention and support unit (ISU)*	Prisoners at risk of self-harm.	4
Secure unit*	High security sentenced prisoners.	4
	Total	164

* beds in these units are used on a temporary basis and therefore are not counted as part of overall capacity.

Christchurch Women's Prison

Christchurch Women's Prison is located on the western outskirts of Christchurch, near the suburb of Templeton. Established in 1974, the prison is the only women's prison in the South Island.

The prison is currently undergoing expansion including the installation of a 122-bed modular accommodation unit which is opened in 2021.

A range of additional works are also being undertaken by the Modular Build Programme, which aims to ensure the appropriate staff, facilities, equipment and resources are in place to manage the additional capacity, and that the new facilities are fit for purpose.¹⁸¹

Christchurch Women's Prison accommodates remand and sentenced women. Sentenced women are classified from minimum to high security.

Unit name	Category of prisoner	Available Beds (Operational capacity)
Self Care Unit (9 houses (including two houses for Mothers with Babies) (Waimakariri)	Minimum security sentenced prisoners.	32
Wing 1 (Avon)	Low medium security sentenced prisoners and remand prisoners. The wing has two separated areas to ensure remand and sentenced prisoners remain separate.	54
Wing 2 (Selwyn)	High security sentenced prisoners and remand prisoners	24
Wing 3 (Rakaia)	Low medium to high security sentenced prisoners and remand prisoners.	20
Intervention and Support Unit (ISU)* (Kaitiaki)	Prisoners at risk of self-harm	4
Separates Unit (Manaaki)*	Women who require temporary separation.	4
	Total	130

* beds in these units are used on a temporary basis and therefore are not counted as part of overall capacity.

¹⁸¹ Modular accommodation units are used to increase capacity in New Zealand's prisons. The units are manufactured off-site and are positioned onto foundations and completed with roofing, cladding and connections to utility services. Eight units are being installed at five sites, adding 976 beds to the network by the end of 2021.

Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility

Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility is located in Wiri, South Auckland. The prison opened in 2006 as New Zealand's first purpose-built women's prison in the North Island. The prison is designed as a campus-style facility that accommodates both remand and sentenced women. Sentenced women are classified from minimum to maximum security.

The prison has five residential units on the high security side of the prison, including the Intervention and Support Unit (ISU) and the Management Unit. There are five low-medium security units on the low security side of the prison. The high and low security parts of the prison are separated by a long central row of buildings comprising classrooms, the gym and other support service areas. The low security side of the prison also includes eight minimum security Self Care houses and two Mothers with Babies houses.

The prison's Special Focus Units include Mirimiri Te Aroha, a kaupapa Māori support unit, and the Mothers with Babies Unit, which enables mothers to keep children aged two years and under with them to support bonding and continuity of care.

The prison is continuing to develop its relationship with local iwi.

Unit name	Category of prisoner	Available beds (operational capacity)
Self Care Unit (8 houses)	Minimum and low security sentenced prisoners. A small number of low medium prisoners.	32
Mothers with Babies Unit (2 houses)	Minimum and low security prisoners.	6
Employment Hub	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners. A small number of remand convicted prisoners.	118
Training Unit (includes Mirimiri Te Aroha Unit)	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners. A small number of remand convicted prisoners.	79
Remand Unit	Unclassified (but managed as high security).	84
Programmes and Assessment Unit	High security.	90
Motivation and Support Unit	High security.	32
Management Unit	High to maximum security sentenced prisoners.	15
Separates Unit	High security	6*
Intervention and Support Unit (ISU)	High security	14*
	Total	456

* Note, these beds are used on a temporary basis and therefore are not counted as part of overall capacity.

Appendix B: Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Treatment Programmes

Table 6. Alcohol and Drug treatment for women in prison to June 2020

Name	Description	Location	Effective ness	Comple- tions ¹⁸²	Wait- list
Drug Treatment Programme (DTP-3)¹⁸³ Women can access Phase 1 of the DTP – intensive treatment. Phase 2 – Unit Maintenance is unavailable. However, Aftercare Support is provided.	<p>Provides intensive alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment in a therapeutic community environment. DTPs are for people who have used alcohol and/or other drugs regularly over an extended period of time and/or appear to have a problematic drug dependency issue.</p> <p>Delivered by experienced AOD counsellors employed by providers contracted by Corrections.</p> <p>Focussed on reducing and managing participants' AOD use. This includes addressing the links between participant AOD use and offending as well as the impact of AOD use on their whānau. DTPs provide participants with the opportunity to build social support and improve their communication and relationship skills. Before they graduate, participants will develop a plan with their counsellor to manage their AOD use.</p>	Arohata	RQ 2.0	72%	11
Intensive Treatment Programme (ITP) For men or women	<p>An eight week recovery focused intensive group programme which includes a comprehensive assessment process and aftercare.</p> <p>Provides participants with the knowledge, attitudes and skills required to address their substance use. As part of the AOD Aftercare Worker service, graduates of the ITP will receive ongoing support for six to twelve months from an AOD Aftercare Worker</p> <p>Prioritises people who can't complete a DTP due to sentence length.</p>	ARWCF CWP	Overall effectiveness (for men) for RQ – 0.3 reimprisonment, -1.7 re sentenced (NS) 2020 AR	66%	35
Te Ira Wāhine¹⁸⁴	<p>A kaupapa Māori intensive alcohol and other drug (AOD) programme designed specifically for women in prison.</p> <p>Delivered by experienced AOD practitioners employed by a contracted kaupapa Māori provider Te Ha Oranga.</p> <p>Follows a trauma-informed approach and is responsive to mental health.</p> <p>Group therapy, plus participants engage in other activities such as 1:1 counselling and waiata.</p> <p>Runs for eight weeks with a minimum of six participants and maximum of eight.</p>	ARWCF	An early evaluation found the programme was having positive impacts on women ¹⁸⁵	73%	9

¹⁸² Completion data sourced from COBRA, 2.30 for year ending June 2020.

¹⁸³ Drug Treatment Programmes sourced from Corrections Rehabilitation and Reintegration Practice Centre.

¹⁸⁴ Te Ira Wāhine sourced from Corrections Rehabilitation and Reintegration Practice Centre.

¹⁸⁵ Morrison, B., Hamilton, K. (2020) Te Ira Wāhine: Final Report.

Appendix C – National Commissioner’s response



20 October 2021

Janis Adair
Chief Inspector
Department of Corrections

By email: janis.adair@corrections.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Janis

Re: Draft Thematic Report - The Lived Experience of Women in Prison

On behalf of Corrections, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft thematic report on women in prison. This report follows the earlier individual inspections undertaken by your office, of the three women's prisons within New Zealand in 2020.

We acknowledge the opportunity that all of these reports provide to support those women who have been or are in custody by identifying interventions and services that meet their unique risks and needs, managing women in ways that are trauma-informed and empowering, and strengthening the capability of the women's prisons and the development of staff who manage these women.

The report recognises the gains made under our current women's strategy and the positive impact this has had for women in prison, including access to social workers, trauma counsellors and a wider range of rehabilitative, education and training opportunities.

Your report made one overarching recommendation that Corrections must review the strategic and operational leadership, resourcing, operating model and service delivery across the women's prison network (including health services) to enable, and deliver, better outcomes for women, which are critically gender specific, culturally responsive and trauma informed. This recommendation is accepted. The broader work programme being undertaken for the women's prison network will address how we will respond to this, and how we continue to address the findings from the three individual prison inspections.

As your report notes, work is already underway to transform the way Corrections manages and cares for women following the letter of expectation from the Minister of Corrections to the Department in March 2021.

To support the three women's prisons to address the expectations set out by the Minister, the Chief Executive established the Women's Prison Network Improvement Programme. As well as the expectations of the Minister, the programme is

NATIONAL OFFICE, WELLINGTON
Mayfair House, 44 – 52 The Terrace, Wellington, 6011, Private Box 1206, Wellington 6140, Phone +64 4 460 3000
www.corrections.govt.nz

responsible for implementing other positive initiatives that will contribute to women's wellbeing and help reduce re-offending.

There is wide recognition of the unique needs of women within the prison system, and that our current system has been unable to address this to date. The longer-term initiatives to improve prison systems and processes require further investment and potentially legislative changes.

Corrections is considering ways to address the capability and service delivery gaps across the three women's prisons, aligned to the findings of your office, while ensuring the right foundations are put in place for the transformational change. We are committed to making changes to the network.

Two key pieces of work that will assist in underpinning these changes are:

- **Wahine – E rere ana ki te Pae Hou: Women's Strategy 2017 – 2021:** while we are currently refreshing our women's strategy, our existing strategy lays out our vision and the underlying principles for the way we manage women in prison and in the community. Our new strategy will build upon the existing work and achievements we have made to date and ensure alignment to our departmental strategy *Hōkai Rangi*.
- **Te Mana Wahine:** a Māori Pathway underway at Christchurch Women's Prison. Te Mana Wahine is focusing on co-designing an end-to-end kaupapa Māori pathway for women we manage and their whānau. It is looking to transform the way Christchurch Women's Prison operates over four years, to then inform the transformation of the other two women's prisons.

We also acknowledge the Waitangi Tribunal Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry, whose outcomes could further inform work in this area.

While the improvement programme is ongoing, a number of changes have already occurred/are in-train including:

- Addressing immediate staffing pressures at Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF) including the appointment of a permanent Prison Director
- Appointing a mental health Clinical Nurse Specialist at Arohata Prison and Christchurch Women's Prison to focus specifically on supporting women with moderate to severe mental health needs. A similar, but more comprehensive, service is being delivered at ARWCF by the Intervention and Support Practice Team. We have increased funding for the Drug Treatment Programme at Arohata Prison to create peer support and cultural support roles for women undertaking this programme
- Establishing He Kete, a community residential AOD treatment programme in Christchurch, through funding from the Proceeds of Crime Fund. He Kete is for women who are in the justice system, meaning that women on bail and community-based sentences are able to be referred

- Approving a \$12 million work programme at ARWCF to establish additional recreation yards, for more recreation time in the fresh air
- Increasing prioritisation of monitoring and responding to the complaints of people in our care in a timely manner
- Introducing site-based implementation leads for each of the three women's prisons
- Upgrading the visitors' centre at Arohata Prison, and upgrade of the playground and refurbishment of the bonding room at ARWCF.
- Changing our policies to ensure mechanical restraints will not be used for women who are 30 weeks or more pregnant, during labour, and while they are in hospital after giving birth.
- Will be setting up wāhine panels at each of the three sites, giving women another way to suggest changes.
- Commissioning Associate Professor of Psychology Dr Julia Ioane to develop a 'trauma informed approach' training package for our leaders at ARWCF as women in prison are more likely to have experienced trauma and victimisation than men.
- Reviewing self-care unit occupancy rates to ensure as many women benefit from living in these as possible, as evidence shows self-care is a positive part of transitioning to the community
- Reviewing of our current Maximum-Security operating model, including personalised management plans
- Co designing Kaupapa Māori Health Services – this is set to transform all of Corrections health services to design an end to end Kaupapa Māori foundation for how health services will be developed, designed, and delivered across all sites including the women's sites.

In your report you provided Corrections with areas for consideration, which we have acknowledged below.

Entering Prison – Reception, Induction and Escorts

We acknowledge good induction processes and demonstrating manaaki during reception to prison are key to ensuring wāhine feel settled and prepared. This includes maintaining connections with whānau and tamariki in the community. We acknowledge the importance of providing sufficient supplies of gender appropriate personal items including hygiene products, underwear, clothing and bedding to meet women's immediate needs. There is also recognition that while a small cohort, our women's sites have greater medical escort requirements and the potential impact of supporting these at a site level.

Safe and Humanising Treatment

Early engagement and timely access to gender and culturally responsive interventions and meaningful activities across each site, including in remand, is vital to managing behaviour and supporting wellbeing. We recognise women's journeys to oranga are varied and that these, alongside the importance of safety, are impacted

by relationships and the relational nature of women in our care and management. Humanising treatment includes holistic approaches to understanding and supporting women's connections, and for wāhine Māori, nurturing a sense of identity and belonging through whānau, whakapapa and tikanga practices.

Environment

We recognise creating spaces that are nurturing and support the wellbeing and healing for everyone living and working within them is central to succeeding for the women in our care and management. Providing gender appropriate specific items and schedules for managing property is important to maintaining wellbeing and being responsive to women's needs.

Health and Wellbeing

The demand for health services in women's prisons is higher than for men and our resourcing model must reflect this difference. Whether it is primary health care needs, specialist interventions at hospitals, mental health support within our Intervention Support Units, or AOD programmes in remand units, providing individualised care for women's physical and mental health is critical for wellness and healing. Ensuring women receive holistic care must also be supported by consistent policies and practices that are gender and culturally responsive. In addition, physical and mental wellbeing is impacted by the accessibility of constructive activities and exercise programmes. We are committed to providing a wide range of opportunities to all women, regardless of location within the prison.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration

We understand access to gender and culturally responsive rehabilitation programmes and reintegration opportunities and services, including education and training, is critical for women to succeed. We acknowledge that interventions must be delivered in appropriate spaces and that some programme delivery may benefit from the use of technology, supporting women to successfully re-enter an increasingly digital world. However, we must also ensure women are confident and capable to meet the basic needs for themselves and their tamariki, including through having established and accessible support networks to tautoko their transition into the community.

Relationships and Family and Whānau

Ensuring women remain connected with positive supports and can bring their whānau along on their journey despite the physical separation is vital to maintaining oranga when released to the community. We are committed to enabling whānau contact, through in person visits and increased use of technology, that meet the needs of wāhine, whānau and tamariki, and is humanising and healing while maintaining safety.

Staffing

We recognise it is a special skill working with women in prison. It is important that staff feel supported and have the time to build relationships and effect change in women's wellbeing. We want to make sure we have the right staff available at all levels of our organisation, who understand of the unique needs of women, have completed appropriate training, and will tautoko them on their journey to oranga.

I look forward to further implementation of work to align with our Hōkai Rangi strategy, and to provide positive outcomes for women in prison and those staff that manage them.

We trust that you are satisfied with our response to the draft report. Please let me know in the first instance if you have any concerns.

Ngā mihi nui



Rachel Leota
National Commissioner