

Arohata Prison

Inspection

September 2018

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Foreword

This is one of a series of public reports on scheduled inspections of New Zealand prisons.

The inspections are intended to provide a 'window into prisons', giving early warning of emerging risks and challenges, and highlighting areas of innovation and good practice that other prisons might wish to follow.

Inspections are carried out against a set of healthy prison standards, which are derived from United Nations guidelines on the treatment of people in detention.¹

Prison performance is assessed under four 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.
- » **Reintegration:** Prisoners are prepared for release into the community, and helped to reduce their likelihood of re-offending.

The purpose of the prison system is to protect society from crime, both during imprisonment and after release.² The four principles reflect that purpose, and also highlight the potentially competing demands that are often placed on prison staff and management.

In an ideal world, prisons would be able to deliver on all four principles on all occasions. In practice, safety, humane treatment, and rehabilitation and reintegration needs are sometimes balanced against one another, and short-term requirements can take precedence over longer-term needs.

I encourage prison directors, managers and staff to use these principles as a guide to decision-making, and to foster continual improvement that, as much as possible, sees their prisons deliver on all four principles.

At the time of our inspection, Arohata Prison was short-staffed and under pressure in some areas, with ensuing effects on reception, movements, escorts, inductions and security.

Despite these pressures, the prison generally provided a safe and healthy environment for prisoners, with little evidence of violence and gang activity, limited contraband and relatively little intimidation.

As well as conducting our scheduled programme of prison inspections, the Office of the Inspectorate will provide ongoing monitoring through the work of its Regional Inspectors, who, in addition to their general responsibilities, will report to me on matters specifically identified in this report.

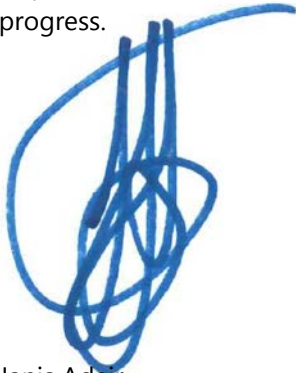
My oversight of these activities will provide a significant ongoing and critical insight into prisons.

¹ As well as considering the four principles, the healthy prison standards require inspectors to consider nine specific areas of prison life: reception and admission, first days in custody, good order, duty of care, environment, health, escorts and transfers, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

² United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, rule 4. See also Corrections Act 2004, ss 5, 6.

I am confident this will provide assurance that any shortcomings will be identified and addressed at pace, and that examples of good practice will be shared so that other prisons can follow.

I acknowledge the cooperation of Arohata Prison's management and staff, both during the inspection and since, and I look forward to working with them as I continue to monitor progress.



Janis Adair
Chief Inspector of Corrections

Overview

1. Arohata Prison is located on two sites, 32km apart. The original 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.
2. In February 2017, due to the significant increase in the female prisoner population, Corrections reopened the Rimutaka Upper Prison (formerly known as Wi Tako Prison), in Trentham, Upper Hutt, to house women prisoners.³ The travelling time between the two sites is about 30 minutes.
3. At the time of our inspection, construction was underway at both sites. A two storey high security unit was being built at the Tawa site. The new block will provide 69 beds and includes recreation yards, two programme rooms, an additional interview room and a health room. Additional work at the site includes the expansion of the staff and visitor carparks, the addition of a dental chair in the health unit, improvements to the entry point of the administration building, a new x-ray machine and a room for keys and radios. Construction was scheduled for completion by July 2019. An additional 74 FTE staff will be recruited to support the new capacity, 53 of whom will be custodial staff.
4. At the Upper Prison, renovations were being completed on the accommodation wings and general facilities.
5. A scheduled inspection involves a 12-week programme of work. The prison inspection commenced its 12 week programme on 3 September 2018. This included a site visit from 15 to 21 September 2018. The Principal Clinical Adviser conducted her site visit from 12 to 15 November 2018.

Our findings

Transport and reception

- Finding 1. Prisoners were being transported for considerable periods of time with no access to toilet facilities. Minimum security prisoners were handcuffed for transport.
- Finding 2. Prisoners in the Upper Prison did not have access to court AVL and had to be transported to the Tawa site for this, which negated many of the benefits of using AVL for court purposes.
- Finding 3. The Receiving Office was small and not fit for purpose. It was short staffed, had no dedicated strip search room, few holding cells and limited interview space. Prisoners could face a long wait if a large number arrived at any one time.

First days in custody

- Finding 4. Most prisoners received inductions soon after arriving in their units; however some prisoners told us their inductions were inadequate or did not take place.

³ The Upper Prison is a satellite site of Arohata Prison in Tawa. It is located on the grounds of Rimutaka Prison in Trentham, separated from the men's facility by a perimeter fence. The site occupies the former Rimutaka Upper Prison which closed in 2015.

Environment and basic needs

- Finding 5. Despite their age, the units at both sites were clean and well maintained, and prisoners' basic needs were generally met. Renovations were underway to repair old showers which were in poor condition.
- Finding 6. The position of mirrors in cells in Wings 1-4 means that women could be observed by staff while on the toilet. This is intrusive and creates a potential breach of prisoners' right to privacy while undertaking ablutions.
- Finding 7. Prisoners in the Upper Prison experienced lengthy delays in receiving property. We acknowledge the site has moved to address this issue.

Safety and humane treatment

- Finding 8. Prisoners generally felt safe from violence and intimidation. Some prisoners traded prescription medication.
- Finding 9. Cell checks and searches were thorough. However, rubdown searches did not always occur.
- Finding 10. Most staff were generally professional in their interactions with prisoners and there was good active management. However, staffing levels appeared stretched. There were no movement staff and custodial staff were sometimes taken from their regular duties to manage prisoner movements.
- Finding 11. The care and support provided by staff to the youth prisoner was positive and professional.

Rehabilitation

- Finding 12. Prisoners generally had a reasonable amount of time out of cell each day. Those housed in the Secure Unit received their minimum entitlements, but had limited time out of cell.
- Finding 13. Prisoners generally had good access to rehabilitation and education programmes.
- Finding 14. Prisoners had good access to the gym and library facilities at both sites.
- Finding 15. Prisoners are encouraged to maintain contact with family and friends, however the noise levels in the Upper Prison made it difficult for prisoners to have telephone conversations. We acknowledge the work being carried out to alleviate this issue.
- Finding 16. AVL facilities were not being fully utilised for the women to contact their families.

Self-Care / Mothers with Babies Unit

Finding 17. The Mothers with Babies Unit was underutilised despite the prison housing pregnant women and mothers who had given birth.

Health and other services

Finding 18. Some of the health facilities at the Upper Prison were not adequate.

Finding 19. Despite being split between two sites, health services were effective and well supported by custodial staff.

Finding 20. The health team had built positive therapeutic relationships with external health providers.

Finding 21. Prisoners found nurses friendly and professional and were confident in the care they were receiving.

Finding 22. Health promotion activities on site promoted the wellbeing of women and their whānau, especially children.

Mental health and self-harm

Finding 23. There is a high demand for beds in the ISU and, as a result, the Secure Unit is being used as an overflow for prisoners.

Finding 24. Multidisciplinary meetings are held regularly in the ISU but key people did not always attend, they were often interrupted and had little privacy.

Finding 25. The prison is well supported by forensic services, which are responsive to urgent referrals and acutely mentally unwell prisoners.

Finding 26. Custodial staff working in the ISU have had no specific training to recognise common mental health issues.

Spiritual Support

Finding 27. Prisoners had good access to chaplaincy services.

Reintegration

Finding 28. Some prisoners felt confident they were ready for release, while others had not completed required rehabilitation programmes. Some prisoners had made arrangements for accommodation, employment or benefits, and ongoing support, while others had not.

Introduction

Arohata Prison

6. Arohata Prison is one of 17 public prisons in New Zealand. Together with one prison run as a public private partnership, these prisons work under the direction of the National Commissioner Corrections Services. The prisons operate in four regions – Northern, Central, Lower North and Southern – each led by a Regional Commissioner. Arohata Prison is one of five prisons in the Lower North Region.

Prisoner and staffing numbers

7. The prison can accommodate up to 215 minimum to high security female prisoners. As at 31 July 2018, the prison housed 188 prisoners, 95 at the Tawa site and 92 at the Upper Prison.
8. Until May 2015, the prison was managed by a Prison Director, supported by a small management team.⁴ This structure was in line with other smaller prisons across the estate. In May 2015, Arohata Prison held about 80 prisoners.
9. After a restructure in May 2015, Arohata Prison came under Rimutaka Prison management.
10. In January 2018, the management team for Arohata Prison consisted of a Prison Director (based at Rimutaka Prison), a Deputy Prison Director and two Residential Managers (based at Arohata Prison). Arohata Prison and Rimutaka Prison share a Custodial Services Manager, who is based at Rimutaka Prison. Each Arohata site has a dedicated Residential Manager for day-to-day site management.
11. In March 2018, the prison appointed its own Custodial Systems Manager to support the management team, and in May 2018 it appointed its own Health Centre Manager.
12. At the time of our inspection, the prison had 104 FTE⁵ custodial staff. Another three FTE were absent on special leave and three positions were vacant. In addition, the prison had 17 FTE case managers (with an additional two vacant positions) and 16 FTE health staff.

Women's Strategy

13. The Department of Corrections launched its national Women's Strategy 2017-2021 in August 2017. The strategy sets out a new approach and aims to transform the rehabilitation and support services offered to women prisoners, helping them to overcome the effects of trauma and related mental health and addiction problems, and to shape better lives for themselves and their families.

Inspection criteria

14. We assessed Arohata Prison against a set of healthy prison standards, which are derived from United Nations principles for the treatment of people in detention:
 - » **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.

⁴ A Residential/Movements/Security Manager and a Residential/Operations Support Manager supported the Prison Director.

⁵ Full time equivalent.

- » **Reintegration:** Prisoners are prepared for release into the community, and helped to reduce their likelihood of re-offending.⁶
15. A prison's success at achieving these goals depends on a range of factors, including:
- » an environment and routines that are safe and secure without being unduly restrictive,
 - » effective supervision, management and discipline to minimise risks of violence and disorder and encourage constructive use of time,
 - » positive and respectful staff-prisoner relationships to encourage voluntary compliance with prison rules and procedures,
 - » opportunities for prisoners to take part in constructive activities that support positive change, including physical activity, treatment and rehabilitation programmes, education and training opportunities, work experience, and time to socialise with others, and
 - » a clear and consistent pathway towards rehabilitation, release, and successful reintegration.

Inspection process

16. During our inspection:
- » We interviewed 28 prisoners about prison life and readiness for release back into the community. This included 16 prisoners at the Tawa site (two in the Intervention and Support Unit, two in the Secure Unit, four in the Drug Treatment Unit, four in He Whare Awhina and four in Tizard Unit) and 12 prisoners in the Upper Prison (four prisoners each in Wings 1, 2 and 3).
 - » We interviewed senior management, custodial staff, and other staff such as health professionals, case managers and the prison chaplain.
 - » We visited the prison's residential units to assess their physical condition and observe prison operations, including staff-prisoner interactions and prisoner activities. During these visits we spoke with prisoners and staff informally.
 - » We visited industry and rehabilitation programme facilities, the prison's Health Centre and other prison facilities.
 - » We inspected the prison's perimeter and entrances.
17. In April 2019, we provided the National Commissioner with a draft of this report. The National Commissioner responded to the draft on 23 May 2019 and summaries of her responses have been incorporated into this report. We acknowledge the improvements that have been carried out at the prison in response to this inspection report.

Report structure

18. The following sections describe what we found during our inspection, with a particular focus on risks or barriers to safety, humane treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration, and on innovations that support those principles.
19. The report's structure follows the prisoner's experience – from reception into prison, through life in the prison's residential units, to health and other services, through to release and reintegration.

⁶ Prison inspectorates in the United Kingdom and Australian states, among others, use these principles, or close variations, which are consistent with the basic principles (rules 1-5) in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). These also emphasise the importance of equitable treatment, and of not taking steps that reduce prisoners' personal responsibility. They are consistent with the purpose and principles of the Corrections Act 2004.

Transport and reception

Transport

20. Prisoners are transported to and from the prison for a range of reasons, including arrival from court (either on remand or after sentencing), transfers to and from other prisons, and temporary removal for medical treatment, to assist with reintegration, and for other purposes.
21. All prisoners are first sent to the Tawa site to be processed at the Receiving Office.⁷ Once processed, prisoners who are to be housed at the Upper Prison are then required to travel an additional 30 minutes to the site in Trentham.
22. Prisoners arrived at the prison either by police escort or in a Prison Escort Vehicle, which contains individual cubicles for prisoners. Among the prisoners we interviewed, eight raised concerns about transport. These concerns included not having any scheduled stops to access toilet facilities, being handcuffed as a minimum security prisoner and being transported for considerable periods of time.
23. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that prison management would remind staff that minimum or low security prisoners travelling in a single cell vehicle should not be placed in handcuffs. The prison recognises the requirement to schedule breaks if the duration of the escort is more than four hours.

Audio visual suite

24. The Tawa site has a secure audio visual link (AVL) suite with two holding cells and two mobile AVL booths. In addition, the Upper Prison has one AVL booth and, at the time of our inspection, another booth was being built.
25. We inspected the prison's AVL booths and found them to be clean, well ventilated and sufficient in size to accommodate a prisoner comfortably during a hearing.
26. The AVL suite at Tawa had a telephone attached to the wall in each booth, which enabled the prisoner to speak to her lawyer in private. The suite can be used for court and for prisoners to brief their legal representatives. One of the booths is used for New Zealand Parole Board (NZPB) hearings.
27. The Upper Prison's suite is used mainly for communication with family. Staff advised that prisoners housed in the Upper Prison who required court AVL were taken to the Tawa site for the hearing.
28. Between 1 January 2018 and 30 June 2018, 98 AVL hearings were booked at the Tawa site, 61 of which were family visits. At the Upper Prison, between 1 May and 31 December 2018, 69 bookings were made, 54 for family visits, 13 for interviews with various agencies and two for whānau hui.
29. Of the prisoners we interviewed, most had not used the AVL suite. Of those who had, there were no concerns.
30. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that few women were transported to Tawa for a court AVL because the Upper Prison housed only sentenced prisoners. The site will explore options for ensuring that women are not moved to the Upper Prison until any scheduled AVL court matters are completed.

⁷ There is no Receiving Office at the Upper Prison.

Reception

31. When prisoners arrive at the prison, they are processed through the Receiving Office at the Tawa site. On arrival, prisoners are strip searched and issued with prison clothing, before custodial and health staff conduct an immediate needs assessment (covering matters such as health, mental health and childcare) and a risk assessment (covering risks to safety including risks of self-harm). The prisoner is then assigned to one of the prison's residential units and escorted to the unit. Prisoners who are to be housed in the Upper Prison are transported to Upper Hutt.
32. During our inspection, we observed one new prisoner undergo the Reception Health Triage process. All aspects of the process were covered well. We also reviewed the files for 11 prisoners who arrived between 1 and 31 October 2018. Of those, two were pregnant and were referred to a midwife and one had medication with her and was able to access it until she received a new prescription. All the prisoners received either an initial health assessment or an update health assessment, and all had GP notes requested and received within one to four working days.
33. If a prisoner is received into custody after a nurse's shift ends at 9.30pm, the nurse will return to conduct the Reception Health Triage. However, if the prisoner arrives after midnight, she will be placed in the Intervention and Support Unit (ISU) and the Reception Health Triage will be completed in the morning, when nurses arrive.
34. The prison's Receiving Office, at the Tawa site, is small and not fit for purpose. It consists of two holding cells, a laundry room, an office used by Receiving Office staff (which also houses the property office), an interview room and a small room used to take fingerprints and photographs. Overall, the Receiving Office was cramped, with too-few desks and chairs.
35. The maximum number of prisoners that staff can process at any one time is eight. Staff advised that they sometimes had as many as 16 prisoners arriving at the prison at the same time. When this happened, prisoners remained in the Prison Escort Vehicle until they could be processed. Staff advised that this created long delays for prisoners because they all had to be processed before they could be appropriately housed. (The National Commissioner later advised that this had happened only once).
36. Staff advised that the Receiving Office was often short staffed and needed an additional two or three staff. At the time of our inspection, there were only two senior corrections officers rostered to the Receiving Office. These officers worked alternate shifts. A third acting senior corrections officer was assisting on secondment. The Receiving Office also had a dedicated property officer and an AVL officer.
37. We observed Receiving Office staff taking telephone calls from the Upper Prison and other sites, facilitating AVL court hearings and escorting prisoners to and from their hearings. Staff were also required to load warrants into IOMS,⁸ arrange escorted transfers, process immediate releases, enter new arrivals documents and liaise with Police and the Courts. Staff explained that this was especially difficult when there was only one staff member working in the office.
38. Staff advised that the Receiving Office did not have a suitable area for strip searching prisoners. If the prison received only one prisoner, she would be strip searched in a holding cell. If several prisoners were received at the same time, they were placed in the holding cell together and taken individually to a separate cell to be strip searched. If a greater number of prisoners were received at the same time, staff would also use the laundry room to strip search prisoners.

⁸ Integrated Offender Management System.

39. Staff advised that, due to a lack of storage space, the property office was unable to be used to store all the property of prisoners. The prison had outgrown this facility and, as a result, a shipping container was being used to store excess prisoner property.
40. In addition, the Receiving Office had no dedicated interview room for the nurse. Instead, prisoners were escorted to the Health Centre one at a time, where they would be interviewed by a nurse in private.
41. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that some modifications and process improvements were underway to improve operations in the Receiving Office.

Findings

- Finding 1. Prisoners were being transported for considerable periods of time with no access to toilet facilities. Minimum security prisoners were handcuffed for transport.
- Finding 2. Prisoners in the Upper Prison did not have access to court AVL and had to be transported to the Tawa site for this, which negated many of the benefits of using AVL for court purposes
- Finding 3. The Receiving Office was small and not fit for purpose. It was short staffed, had no dedicated strip search room, few holding cells and limited interview space. Prisoners could face a long wait if a large number arrived at any one time.

Residential units

Introduction

Facilities

42. The Tawa site has three main residential units:
- » He Whare Awhina, with 25 single cells, a low medium security unit for sentenced prisoners
 - » Te Araroa Drug Treatment Unit (20 single cells), a low medium security unit for sentenced prisoners
 - » Tizard Unit, a high security unit for remand prisoners with 22 cells, 18 of which were double bunked and four of which were double cells (see Image 1)⁹
43. The Tawa site also has:
- » a Self Care Unit outside the perimeter fence for minimum security prisoners, with four villas, which can each house four prisoners
 - » an ISU with three cells and one dry cell for prisoners at risk of self-harm
 - » a Secure Unit¹⁰ with eight cells for prisoners sentenced to cell confinement after a disciplinary hearing (at the time of our inspection, being used as a multipurpose unit to house voluntary segregation prisoners, a youth prisoner and overflow from the ISU)
44. The Upper Prison has four main residential units (Wings 1-4), used to house minimum, low and low medium sentenced prisoners. Each wing has 28 cells and can house up to 39 prisoners.¹¹ At the time of our inspection, Wing 4 was closed for renovations.
45. The Upper Prison does not have an ISU or Separates area. Women who were assessed as being at risk, or who were placed on voluntary or directed segregation, were transferred to the Tawa site. Similarly, other essential support services, such as the Receiving Office, were located at the Tawa site.

First days in custody

46. When prisoners arrive in a unit they should get an induction to have unit rules and routines explained, and get access to a self-service kiosk, giving access to information and support.¹²
47. Induction interviews are important for establishing trust between staff and prisoners, and ensuring that prisoners have a good understanding of what they can expect while in the unit.
48. Of the 28 prisoners interviewed about their first days in custody, 17 said they had received inductions that provided them with a reasonable understanding of what to expect. Two

⁹ Double cells have two single beds.

¹⁰ Prison management can separate a prisoner from others either for her own safety or because she poses a risk to the safety of others or the good order of the prison. This is known as 'directed segregation'.

¹¹ Eleven cells in each wing are double-bunked.

¹² Prisoners can use the kiosks to find out about legislation, prison rules and key sentence dates. They can order food and other items from prison canteens, ask to meet their case manager or the unit's principal corrections officer, and check their Trust Account. All prisoners have a Trust Account, into which family and friends can put money. Prisoners can use the money to buy canteen items.

prisoners said that they had inadequate inductions, five said that they had no induction and four did not comment.

49. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the Upper Prison had reviewed and updated its induction package and this was introduced in October 2018. This would also be implemented at the Tawa site to ensure consistency. Staff were briefed on how to complete inductions.

Finding

Finding 4. Most prisoners received inductions soon after arriving in their units; however some prisoners told us their inductions were inadequate or did not take place.

Environment and basic needs

Physical environment

50. Although old, the units, cells and communal areas at both sites were generally clean and free from graffiti. There was some graffiti in the Secure Unit. However, this was mainly historical and had been ground into the doors and other surfaces, making it difficult to remove (see Image 2).
51. The Upper Prison was originally designed for male high security prisoners, which meant the physical environment was not always in keeping with the prison's function as a minimum and low security facility. There was limited space and the prisoners were unable to move freely between the wings and yards as they would in other minimum and low security facilities.
52. At the Upper Prison, 11 cells in each wing had double bunks installed. The double bunks are large metal structures with vertical stairs that are difficult to climb (see Image 3). At the time of our inspection, all double bunked cells were occupied by one prisoner only, due to the lower prisoner population.
53. Prisoners in Tizard Unit complained that their cells were overly warm and that the heating pipes were hot to the touch. Staff advised that the heating would be turned off at Labour weekend. During our inspection, we observed one woman having dressings to a burn she received from the pipes.
54. Cells in Tizard Unit and the Secure Unit had a standard moulded stainless steel toilet, without a toilet lid. Te Araroa Unit and He Whare Awhina Unit (at the Tawa site) and Wings 1-4 in the Upper Prison had porcelain toilets with lids. The double bunked cells in Wings 1-4 had mirrors that reflected the toilet area. Staff advised that this was to allow them to see prisoners in their cells (see Image 4).
55. Prisoners in Tizard Unit had showers in their cells. Two of the prisoners we interviewed told us that the showers smelled, the drain needed to be cleaned and ventilation was poor. However, during our inspection of the cells, we did not notice any smell.
56. Te Araroa Unit, He Whare Awhina Unit and the Secure Unit, at the Tawa site, and Wings 1-4 at the Upper Prison all had communal showers. The showers in Te Araroa Unit had recently been refurbished with stainless steel and fitted with a timer to run for five minutes. He Whare Awhina Unit had three showers, all in need of repair. The showers were old and had paint peeling off the ceiling, and the wooden door frames were rotting due to water damage. Staff advised that the showers were due to be renovated.

57. At the time of our inspection, the showers in Wings 2 and 3 at the Upper Prison were being renovated and prisoners were using 12 portable showers. When the renovations were complete, both wings would have four showers. In Wing 4, the showers were also being renovated.
58. All units across both sites have external yards which were generally well maintained. At the Tawa site, staff advised that the main courtyard was to be covered with astro turf which, they said, would create a positive environment for prisoners.
59. Prisoners across both sites (except for those housed in the Secure Unit) had access to a fridge and hot water throughout the day.
60. The cells in the Secure Unit had mattresses on concrete bases. The cells did not have desks or chairs, although staff advised that they intended to supply these. The cells all had CCTV cameras. However, the cameras in cells occupied by voluntary segregated prisoners and youth prisoners were taped over. Due to the unit being designed for prisoners on cell confinement, the unit had no communal area for prisoners to mix. Instead, each cell had a small adjoining yard.
61. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the prison agreed that the position of mirrors in cells in Wings 1-4 was inappropriate and the mirrors had been taped over to eliminate the views of toilets in cells.
62. Regarding the hot pipes, posters would be placed in the units to warn prisoners of the potential for the pipes to get hot. Additionally, the site ensured that showers were clean and ventilated. The facilities maintenance provider regularly monitored the showers to prevent any build-up that might create an unpleasant smell.

Clothing and bedding

63. All prisoners interviewed advised that access to bedding and clothing was generally adequate, and they had no concerns about the laundry facilities. Two prisoners in Tizard Unit advised they were supplied with extra mattresses because they were pregnant.
64. Staff across the site told us there was a shortage of small and medium sizes and no maternity clothing for pregnant women. We were advised that the prison ordered unisex clothing, which often did not have small sizes.
65. The units across both sites (except for Wings 2 and 3) all had washing machines and dryers for prisoners' use. Staff advised that due to the construction work underway at the Upper Prison, laundry from Wings 2 and 3 was being sent to the Tawa site. Staff and prisoners advised that laundry often came back wet and sometimes items went missing. This was confirmed by the Upper Prison's Residential Manager who advised that several meetings had taken place with the laundry instructor to resolve the issue.
66. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the Upper Prison now had a fully operational commercial laundry.

Food

67. Breakfast was provided at 8.30am and lunch at approximately 11am. The evening meal was distributed at 4pm. For prisoners in the Upper Prison, the hot meal was provided at lunch and was prepared in the kitchen at Rimutaka Prison and delivered to the site.
68. Of the prisoners interviewed, all except five were happy with the food (see Image 5), but many said they received too much bread, the food could be fatty and they had gained weight. Two pregnant prisoners received extra bread and fruit each day.

Property

69. Prisoners can request and receive property from family and friends in the community. All property is processed through the prison's property office and, if approved, is recorded on the prisoner's list of approved property.
70. Prisoners housed at the Tawa site did not raise any concerns about property. However, those housed at the Upper Prison said that there were often delays in receiving property. Staff advised that property was initially sent to the Tawa site, where the property office was located. Parcels were then processed by administration staff before being passed to the property officer in the Receiving Office. Once there, parcels were searched by the detector dog team before being sent to the Upper Prison.
71. We were advised that staff at the Upper Prison had recently received training in processing property, meaning parcels could now be delivered directly to the Upper Prison and potentially reduce the waiting time for the prisoners.
72. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that access to property had improved significantly. The dedicated property room became operational in late 2018 and a staff member had been employed for property management.

Findings

- Finding 5. Despite their age, the units at both sites were clean and well maintained, and prisoners' basic needs were generally met. Renovations were underway to repair old showers which were in poor condition.
- Finding 6. The position of mirrors in cells in Wings 1-4 means that women could be observed by staff while on the toilet. This is intrusive and creates a potential breach of prisoners' right to privacy while undertaking ablutions.
- Finding 7. Prisoners in the Upper Prison experienced lengthy delays in receiving property. We acknowledge the site has moved to address this issue.

Safety and humane treatment

Gang influence, violence, bullying and standovers

73. As at 31 July 2018, the prison had 29 prisoners who identified as gang members (14 at the Tawa site and 15 at the Upper Prison). The largest gang was the Mongrel Mob (65.5% of those who identified as gang members).
74. Between 1 February and 31 July 2018, there were two non-serious violent incidents and 62 incidents of verbal abuse/threats. No serious or sexual assaults were recorded.
75. Most prisoners we spoke to told us they felt safe and there was little gang activity. Most prisoners said there were few incidents of violence and standovers, however, two prisoners in Wing 3 said when cells were unlocked other prisoners would steal things. Similarly, three prisoners in Tizard Unit said they were aware that standovers for nicotine replacement lozenges could occur.¹³
76. Staff advised that most fights between prisoners or use of force incidents were the result of relationships between prisoners. As a result, the prison had strict rules about relationships and prisoners were not allowed to enter each other's cell. During our inspection, we observed staff enforcing this rule. Staff at the Upper Prison said the last time an incident occurred due to a relationship was about four months previously.
77. Both sites have no dedicated Site Emergency Response Team (SERT) to respond to incidents of violence and disorder. If necessary, the team from Rimutaka Prison can be used, but it can take more than 30 minutes to travel to the Tawa site.

Access contraband and searches

78. Contraband (such as drugs, alcohol or weapons) can create risks to safety and good order. Of the prisoners we interviewed, most said there was not much contraband available in the prison. The main contraband found was tobacco. However, there had been occasions where cell phones and homebrew had been found.
79. Prisoners and staff advised that prescription medication was being traded in the units across both sites. During our inspection, staff advised that an officer had witnessed an exchange of prescription medication between prisoners earlier that day. Both prisoners received disciplinary charges.¹⁴
80. Between 1 February and 31 July 2018, 152 drug tests were scheduled. Of those, only one returned a positive result. However, due to drug testers having to perform other tasks such as escort duties, 87 tests were not carried out.
81. Staff conducted daily cell checks and random cell searches to detect unauthorised items. Prisoners were also subjected to rubdown searches whenever they left or returned to the unit. These searches are designed to detect the presence of unauthorised items such as drugs, tobacco, cell phones and weapons.

¹³ Nicotine replacement lozenges are given to new prisoners who have a history of smoking, to help them adjust to the prison's smoke free rules.

¹⁴ Corrections Act 2004, ss 128-140; Corrections Regulations 2005, regulations 150-153, schedule 7; Department of Corrections Prison Operations Manual MC.01.

6 (c)

83. The rubdown searches we observed in the remaining units met the required standard although the quality was variable.
84. Prisoners entering or exiting the prison, or those returning from visits, could also be strip searched.¹⁶ Staff advised that prisoners were only strip searched after a visit if there were reasonable grounds to do so and the Prison Director had given her approval.
85. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the prison had taken steps to minimise the trading of prescription medication. Staff had worked to review the process for administering medication and nurses check that medication had been swallowed.
86. All staff had been reminded of the requirement to conduct thorough rubdown searches. Staff at the Upper Prison had received mentoring and training for rubdown searches.

Active management, supervision and staffing numbers

87. Active management of prisoners helps to build trust, maintain discipline and ensure that prisoners' needs are met and safety and security issues are identified.
88. During our inspection, we observed that staff were professional in their interactions with prisoners, respectful and set positive examples. We observed good active management of prisoners at both sites. Staff in Wing 1 at the Upper Prison advised they attended a number of courses so they could understand what the prisoners were doing and how they were thinking. These courses included Kowhiritanga, Kia Rite and Managing Trauma. Staff said they sought to establish a good rapport with the prisoners and communicate with them in a direct and honest manner.
89. At the time of our inspection, the external yard (which includes a grassed area) for Wings 1 and 2 was under construction. Prisoners were still allowed to use the yard but had to follow a set of rules, which included no communicating with the construction workers and to not take anything from the work site. Staff advised that if the rules were broken, the prisoners would be moved to another external yard that did not have a grass area. Staff said the open communication meant they had had no issues, and the women had behaved well.
90. Most prisoners told us staff were helpful and treated them fairly. Prisoners also told us there was sometimes not enough staff and this could prevent them from going to the library or the gym.
91. During informal conversations with staff, we were advised that custodial staffing numbers were stretched at both sites. Staff told us it was difficult to cover all duties with the number of staff, and the prison relied on staff working overtime. Staff were regularly reassigned to cover for others who were away, and there were a number of daily movements that required operational

¹⁵ 6 (c)

¹⁶ Strip searches are required in prisons under some circumstances (such as when a new prisoner arrives) and permitted under others (such as when prisoners return from work or unsupervised areas of a prison): Corrections Act 2004, ss 90, 98 – especially s 98(6)(c).

staff to be diverted from other duties in residential wings to provide custodial support (escorts and movements).

- 92. Staff in Wing 1 advised that when the Upper Prison first opened they had a reasonable number of staff but this was reduced. At the time of our inspection, the Upper Prison did not have a dedicated movement’s team and the site was responsible for its own movements.
- 93. No staff were rostered to work in the Secure Unit at Tawa. Instead, staff working in the ISU issued meals, carried out routine checks and unlocked prisoners for their allocated time out of cell. During the evening, there was only one staff member to undertake observations in both units. When the staff member was in one unit, the other unit was left unmonitored.
- 94. Although this made it difficult for staff to purposefully engage with the prisoners housed in the Secure Unit, we observed staff doing their best for the prisoners. This was evident with the efforts staff made with the youth prisoner housed in Secure Unit.

Case Study – Youth Prisoner

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Findings

Finding 8. Prisoners generally felt safe from violence and intimidation. Some prisoners traded prescription medication.

Finding 9. Cell checks and searches were thorough. However, rubdown searches did not always occur.

Finding 10. Most staff were generally professional in their interactions with prisoners and there was good active management. However, staffing levels appeared stretched. There were no movement staff and custodial staff were sometimes taken from their regular duties to manage prisoner movements.

Finding 11. The care and support provided by staff to the youth prisoner was positive and professional.

[REDACTED] (a)

Rehabilitation

Time out of cell

99. The prison operates an 8am-5pm staff roster regime across both sites. In practice, prisoners spend less time out of their cells due to the time taken for unlock and lock-up, staff briefings and lunch breaks, security checks and so on.
100. During our inspection, prisoners in Tizard Unit received an average unlock time of four hours a day, in Wings 1-3 (Upper Prison) and He Whare Awhina Unit prisoners received approximately five and a half hours, and in Te Araroa Unit prisoners received six and half hours a day. Prisoners in Te Araroa Unit received an additional two hours unlock every two weeks to attend the Toastmasters Programme¹⁸ in the unit.
101. In the Secure Unit, prisoners received their minimum entitlements, and were unlocked for about one hour each day.

Case management

102. As well as detaining prisoners in a safe and humane manner, prisons are expected to support prisoners to make positive changes in their lives. All New Zealand prisons offer programmes aimed at supporting prisoners to address their causes of offending, and acquire skills to help them after release. Case managers work with prisoners to create plans for rehabilitation and reintegration, and case officers work with prisoners in their units to keep track of progress.
103. At the time of our inspection, the prison had eight case managers working across both sites. Of the case managers, two were new and had only recently completed their training and one had recently transferred to the prison, and they were still building up to a full caseload.
104. Prisoners provided us with mixed feedback about their access to case managers. Some told us they had seen their case manager, but others said they had not.
105. We spoke to the Principal Case Manager about prisoner access. She advised she had started a drop-in clinic for women who had not seen a case manager to discuss their needs. This occurred every Friday, and case managers were able to speak to the women in small groups about their needs. She was also developing a feedback loop so prisoners would be able to provide feedback more regularly.
106. The time taken to allocate cases also impacted prisoners' contact with case managers. Previously, case managers would be allocated a prisoner within 10 days of their arrival. This had now changed to 20 days. The Principal Case Manager said many prisoners transferred from Auckland and it was difficult to allocate them more quickly because of the lack of case managers.
107. There was a backlog of prisoners needing to do the Kowhiritanga¹⁹ course, but this was expected to improve with changes to the staff required to run the course.
108. The Principal Case Manager said the prison's two social workers were carrying a high caseload of between 35 and 40 prisoners which was not sustainable, particularly as some prisoners had complex needs and needed two to three hours a week face to face time. She said there were no professional competencies or framework in place for the social workers.
109. Similarly, the site's counsellors had a lengthy waitlist. The Principal Case Manager said a ratio of one counsellor to 100 women was not adequate, and better resourcing was needed.

¹⁸ Toastmasters aims to build confidence by teaching public speaking and presentation skills.

¹⁹ Kowhiritanga means 'making choices'. The programme is delivered over a period of 15 weeks and consists of 56 sessions of two and a half hours, four times a week.

Treatment and Rehabilitation

110. Successful rehabilitation depends on a prisoner's motivation and access to support and opportunities to make positive changes. Eligibility for programmes depends on a range of factors, including age, security classification, health-related needs, risk of reoffending and re-imprisonment,²⁰ and the nature of the prisoner's offending and sentence. If prisoners are eligible, opportunities depend on programme availability. Priority is given to prisoners who are closest to their scheduled release date or parole eligibility date.
111. The prison provides a variety of treatment and rehabilitation programmes for prisoners including Kowhiritanga, a programme focusing on attitudes and behaviours that contribute to a prisoner's offending, a short motivational programme to improve prisoner motivation and readiness to undertake rehabilitation, a short rehabilitation programme, the Kia Rite Programme²¹ aimed at supporting new arrivals to prison, and a maintenance programme aimed at prisoners who have already completed an offence focussed rehabilitative programme.
112. In addition, Arohata is the only women's prison with a Drug Treatment Programme. Located in Te Araroa Unit (at the Tawa site), the programme runs Monday to Friday for one hour in the morning and afternoon. The programme's primary focus is on reducing and managing participants' alcohol and drug use. This includes addressing the links between alcohol and drug use and offending, as well as the impact of alcohol and drug use on whānau. Up to 20 prisoners can take part in the programme at any one time.
113. The Drug Treatment Programme is delivered by CareNZ and previously ran for six months. In early 2017, it was reduced to a three month programme.²² Prisoners and staff told us they were disappointed it had been reduced. Staff said that at the three month mark prisoners were just starting to make positive changes but now they were being moved out of the unit.²³ Similarly, a Principal Corrections Officer said the reduction in the course length meant staff were no longer able to take the time to deal with the prisoners before and after the programme.
114. The CareNZ Clinical Manager advised that the programme did not have wrap-around services to help women deal with the personal issues identified. He said the programme itself did not consider what support was required for women once they identified the underlying causes for their drug and alcohol use. Women can be referred to a counsellor, but there was a nine week waiting list.
115. Prisoners and staff also raised concerns about the post programme completion process. Women who complete the programme do not have a specific unit to move to when they graduate. As a result, prisoners typically return to mainstream units which can have a negative impact on the skills they have learnt. In addition, the Principal Case Manager said not having a maintenance programme meant transitions out of Te Araroa Unit could be difficult for the women.
116. At the time of our inspection, the Kia Rite Programme was being delivered at the Upper Prison, with six prisoners attending. Kowhiritanga was being delivered at both sites, with 27 prisoners attending.

²⁰ Risk of conviction and re-imprisonment is measured using an index known as Roc*RoI (Risk of conviction x risk of imprisonment).

²¹ The Kia Rite programme, part of the Women's Strategy, is being piloted at women's prisons. The three week programme is delivered by Corrections facilitators with support from custodial staff, the counsellor, case management and a social worker.

²² The change was a response to feedback from the women that they did not want to be separated from their families for six months – many are from Auckland and Christchurch.

²³ Towards the end of the programme the women are invited to access the Aftercare Support service where they can continue to access relapse prevention support for up to 12 months.

Prisoners were also attending ACC counselling sessions and psychologist appointments. The Short Motivational Programme and the maintenance programme were run as needed.

117. The Kowhiritanga facilitators told us the programme rooms were not suitable and did not provide a therapeutic environment.

Education

118. Every prisoner receives an education assessment to determine literacy and numeracy learning needs. This is followed by a learning pathway discussion to identify recommended programmes to help meet learning needs and goals.
119. The prison offers a range of education opportunities such as literacy and numeracy programmes, Secure Online Learning,²⁴ high school and university courses, foundation skills programme (which follows on from literacy and numeracy programmes and aims to prepare prisoners for further learning), Howard League support, Toastmasters, barista training, driver licence testing, peace education²⁵ and study groups.
120. Between 1 January and 30 June 2018, self-directed learning programmes had 269 participants.²⁶ During the same time, there were 306 participants in the intensive literacy and numeracy course, and 606 participants in Secure Online Learning.
121. The barista programme trains 30 women a year. It runs for eight weeks. Up to three prisoners take part at a time. At the end of training, the women receive certificates at a graduation ceremony.²⁷
122. The Education Tutor advised that prisoners cannot enrol in education programmes or polytechnic if they are in prison for less than six months or on remand, and shorter courses are needed to cater for these groups.
123. The Secure Online Learning suite at the Tawa site has nine computers. Staff advised that the absence of a Secure Online Learning suite at the Upper Prison restricts educational opportunities for prisoners there.
124. Some prisoners at the Upper Prison had completed a course for basic elementary computer graphics, but this had not progressed beyond the pilot course. We spoke to one prisoner who was studying with Massey University. Because she was based in the Upper Prison she was unable to access the Secure Online Learning facilities and could not always source textbooks for the course.

Work experience and training

125. Working in prison industries provides prisoners with the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications that can be useful after release.
126. At the time of our inspection, about 60 prisoners had work opportunities in the prison's main industries (see Figure 1).

²⁴ Every prison has a Secure Online Learning suite which prisoners can use to gain digital literacy skills and complete learning assignments. Prisoners have access to a limited range of pre-approved websites and apps, and can email their education tutor.

²⁵ Peace education aims to provide prisoners with effective communication skills to help them build an environment of understanding while empowering them to resolve conflicts peacefully.

²⁶ This total does not reflect the number of individual participants. Prisoners may have attended multiple programmes and may have attended a programme more than once during this period.

²⁷ <https://tradeschoolindustries.org/>

Figure 1. Prisoners working in the prison's main industries at the time of the inspection

Upper Prison		Tawa site	
Kitchen Servery	4 prisoners	Laundry	12 prisoners
Electronics	14 prisoners	Kitchen	12 prisoners
Painting	6-8 prisoners	Grounds	5 prisoners
		Painting	4 prisoners

127. Prisoners can also work in their units in roles such as cleaning, painting, laundry and kit locker.
128. During our inspection of the electronics workshop, staff advised that prisoners assemble four products for an electronics company (see Image 6). These include switches, sensors and speakers.
129. Prisoners were able to complete NZ Certificates in Distribution (Levels 1 and 2) and Manufacturing (Level 2). The Industry Manager advised that he was working with the provider to develop a pathway for Release to Work prisoners, which could possibly lead to permanent work on release.
130. In the well-equipped commercial laundry (see Image 7), prisoners did washing for Arohata Prison, Rimutaka Prison and external contracts. At the time of inspection, the laundry was being renovated.
131. The Residential Manager advised us that the painting crew works at both sites. He said the women were not paid for painting unless the instructor was present. At the time of inspection, one painting instructor worked between both sites. Staff said this rule was inconsistent as other prisoners (such as those who knit for community projects) were paid when working unsupervised.²⁸ Staff said enough painting work was required at Upper Prison to justify having a full-time painting instructor.

Other constructive activity

132. A variety of activities were available at the prison including sewing, knitting, quilting, card making, Bible studies, Toastmasters, the Mother's Project, Seasons of Growth,²⁹ AA meetings, yoga, baby bonding, meditation and craft activities.
133. Staff advised that prisoners on voluntary segregation were not able to take part in some of these activities because there were too few of them to be accommodated on their own.
134. During our inspection we visited the craft room (at the Tawa site) and observed some prisoners making quilts and soft toys. The prisoners told us they enjoyed being able to get out of their cells and keep occupied. For the quilting, volunteers assisted the prisoners.
135. Prisoners in He Whare Awhina Unit have access to the Te Mana Wahine programme. As part of this, prisoners learn basic Te Reo and take part in Kapa Haka, tāniko,³⁰ korowai sewing³¹ and pepeha.³²

²⁸ When this anomaly was pointed out by the Inspectors, the prison moved to pay the women correctly.

²⁹ Seasons of Growth is an education programme about loss, change and grief. At Arohata Prison, it is a rolling programme for prisoners participating in the Drug Treatment Programme.

³⁰ Weaving.

136. Prisoners at both sites (including those on voluntary segregation) have access to a gym (see Image 8) and library (see Image 9).
137. The gym at the Tawa site had a mixture of cardio and weights equipment that were donated in 2015. The facilities and equipment were well maintained. The Upper Prison gym did not have the same range of equipment and prisoners had access to a single stationary bike and rowing machine.
138. The prison had a full-time fitness and wellbeing instructor who works across both sites. At the time of our inspection, a corrections officer filled the position, although recruitment was underway for a qualified instructor. Since our inspection, the National Commissioner has advised that this position has been filled.
139. The fitness and wellbeing instructor has ordered more resources for both sites including balls, bibs, volley ball nets and cones.
140. Both sites have libraries, which are managed by the Rimutaka Prison librarian.
141. The Tawa site has a full-time prisoner library worker. The Rimutaka Prison librarian visits the site one day a week, and most prisoners visit the library during this time. Prisoners receive half an hour in the library to select their books. Those housed in Tizard Unit have access to library books from a trolley taken into the unit.
142. The Upper Prison has three full-time prisoner library workers and is open daily. All prisoners can visit the library three days a week (staff permitting), but staff advised that each visit lasted only between five and 10 minutes.
143. The librarian advised that the only barrier to attending the library was staffing levels. If there is reduced staffing, prisoners are unable to get to the library. However, staff advised that this did not happen often and, when it did, they tried to ensure the women had their library time.
144. The Tawa site has an outdoor swimming pool. At the time of our inspection, the pool was closed, but staff advised that once the facilities had been cleaned and checked they would like to provide the prisoners with water safety sessions.
145. Despite these activities being available to the prisoners, some women told us they were bored, particularly those housed in the Upper Prison.

Contact with family and friends

146. Contact with family and friends is important for prisoners' wellbeing and eventual reintegration into the community.
147. Most prisoners we interviewed said they had adequate access to a telephone. In Te Araroa Unit, prisoners told us there were restrictions on how often they could use the telephone and for how long. Prisoners with children told us they found this difficult. One prisoner told us she used to telephone her family every day. When she moved to Te Araroa Unit she was allowed one 10-minute telephone call every two days and a 15-minute telephone call on Sunday.
148. All prisoners said it could be difficult to have telephone conversations, as the units were noisy, with little privacy. This was particularly the case in the Upper Prison as the acoustics in the wings were poor and the corridors were noisy. At the time of our inspection, soundproofing was being

³¹ Making a cloak using feathers.

³² For the prisoners to identify where they come from and be able to introduce themselves.

- installed, with rubber mats being attached to the corridor ceiling and walls. Staff in Wing 1 advised this had helped reduce the level of noise in the wing.
149. Prisoners at both sites have the opportunity for visits (see Image 10). Visits are held on Saturday and Sunday, with no visits during the week. The Tawa site has a whānau room and an outside space for children and families and a small play house had recently been installed (made by prisoners at Rimutaka Prison).
 150. All high security prisoners wear orange overalls zipped up at the back, while low security prisoners can wear their normal prison issued clothes.
 151. Staff advised that it was not unusual to have only 10 visits during the weekend. During our inspection, only three prisoners had visitors on the Sunday afternoon.
 152. Prisoners reported that it could be difficult to keep in touch with family if they lived outside the Wellington region. Although AVL facilities were in place for prisoners to use, many had not had the opportunity to use them.
 153. We spoke with one visitor who had travelled from Hawera. She said it was her first time visiting someone in prison. Staff had treated her well and she was left feeling comfortable about the whole process.
 154. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the installation of soundproofing had significantly reduced noise levels. The two new yards at the Upper Prison had telephones available for the women to use. The prison has also invested in cordless telephones so women can take calls in their cells or other quiet spaces.
 155. Staff had created posters for the units to promote the use of AVLs for family visits. This information was also in the induction package.

Findings

- Finding 12. Prisoners generally had a reasonable amount of time out of cell each day. Those housed in the Secure Unit received their minimum entitlements, but had limited time out of cell.
- Finding 13. Prisoners generally had good access to rehabilitation and education programmes.
- Finding 14. Prisoners had good access to the gym and library facilities at both sites.
- Finding 15. Prisoners are encouraged to maintain contact with family and friends, however the noise levels in the Upper Prison made it difficult for prisoners to have telephone conversations. We acknowledge the work being carried out to alleviate this issue.
- Finding 16. AVL facilities were not being fully utilised for the women to contact their families.

Self Care / Mothers with Babies Unit

156. The prison has a minimum security Self Care Unit located outside the secure perimeter at the Tawa site. The unit has four villas and each can house four prisoners. One of the villas is designated as a Mothers with Babies Unit where mothers can live with their baby until the child is aged nine months.
157. Each villa has an open plan living area and kitchen, four bedrooms, a bathroom, a toilet and a laundry. In addition, the unit has a recreation room and an outside grassed area. Together, the Self Care and Mothers with Babies Unit has capacity for 16 prisoners. At the time of our inspection, 11 prisoners were housed in the unit. There were no mothers and babies.
158. Prisoners in the unit were unlocked from 8.30am to 8pm. They have access to the library, gym, chaplain and programmes. Most prisoners housed in the unit worked in the external grounds, laundry or kitchen. During the week nominated prisoners went with escort staff to the supermarket to buy groceries.
159. Staff advised that the location of the unit at Arohata restricted who could access it, as they needed to be minimum security and eligible for external self care. At Auckland and Christchurch women's prisons, remand prisoners can be eligible for the Mothers with Babies Unit. Staff said they had a number of pregnant women at the site and mothers who had given birth, but they were unable to get into the unit due to not meeting the criteria.
160. Further, staff advised that because the unit was located on a hill, babies could only stay at the site until the child was nine months due to health and safety concerns. At Auckland and Christchurch women's prisons, mothers can live with their baby until the child is aged two years.
161. As a result, staff advised the unit was not often used. One staff member told us she arrived at the prison in November 2016 and in that time they had not had any mothers and babies in the unit.
162. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the site would work to address health and safety concerns that preclude women with a child over the age of nine months from residing in the Mothers with Babies unit. The national Women's Strategy team had also taken the Inspectorate's findings into consideration in their development of a recommended national operating model for Mothers with Babies units.

Finding

Finding 17. The Mothers with Babies Unit was underutilised despite the prison housing pregnant women and mothers who had given birth.

Health and other services

Health

163. Prisons have a primary health care service that is required by Section 75 of the Corrections Act 2004 to provide health care that is "reasonably necessary" and the standard of that care must be "reasonably equivalent to the standard of health care available to the public."
164. At the time of our inspection, the Arohata Health Service had 10.2 FTE nurses. The health team is comprised of a Health Centre Manager, team leader, registered nurses and an administrative support officer. The service is also supported by contracted and allied health professionals including a medical officer, dentist and dental assistant, physiotherapist, optometrist, midwife, pharmacist, podiatrist, public health staff, district nurses, continence nurses, immunisation team, hepatitis nurse specialist, forensic staff, trauma counsellor, packages of care counsellor and an ACC counsellor.
165. The prison has two health units, one each at the Tawa site and the Upper Prison. The Tawa health unit is generally fit for purpose, however, the two holding cells had a large amount of graffiti on the doors and walls, which did not provide a therapeutic environment for prisoners³³ waiting for their appointments.
166. The health units at both sites had variable temperature control, with extremes of hot or cold, which was uncomfortable for staff and prisoners.
167. The health unit at the Upper Prison was relatively new. It is a repurposed space which had been renovated and, due to this, all health unit requirements were contained in an existing space. This meant:
- » the sluice room³⁴ was small and not well laid out
 - » the storage room was small
 - » one toilet was being shared by staff and prisoners (although a new staff toilet had been constructed and would be available for use soon)
 - » health staff advised that the ceilings leaked and many rooms had stains on the ceilings
 - » doors to consultation rooms did not have viewing panels, which made it difficult for custodial staff to know if a woman was showing signs of aggressive or threatening behaviour (the Health Centre Manager advised that new doors had been ordered)
168. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the sluice and storage rooms had been better organised, the staff toilet was now operational, remedial work had been carried out on ceiling leaks and new doors with viewing panels had been installed.
169. Both health units had appropriate infection control measures, including hand washing facilities, gloves and hand sanitiser. Rooms and benches were clean and tidy. Similarly, there was evidence of outbreak surveillance management at both sites, with a white board used to record various infections such as boils, scabies, head lice, flu, etc.
170. Both health units were supported by sufficient custodial staff. The Tawa site had general duties custodial staff who facilitated bringing women to and from the Health Centre as required. Health staff advised that clinics ran smoothly and they were able to see all scheduled patients. The general

³³ Health staff refer to the prisoners they work with as patients.

³⁴ A sluice room is where used disposables such as incontinence pads and bed pans are dealt with, and reusable products are cleaned and disinfected.

- duties staff were observed interacting positively with the women and engaging with them in conversation if the women had to wait a few minutes for their appointments.
171. At the Upper Prison, a permanently rostered custodial officer supported clinics by either collecting women to attend their appointments or co-ordinating with the unit staff for the women to be brought to the health unit. This custodial officer interacted very well with the women within the health clinic and also knew the running of the site well. This meant she was able to co-ordinate the day, and ensured women attended appointments and did not disrupt programmes or work.
 172. We observed custodial and health staff interacting well, with good communication and supporting the wellbeing of prisoners. At multi-disciplinary meetings, health, custody and case management met to discuss prisoner health care. Custodial staff were provided with sufficient information to be able to manage prisoners safely, but without being told private health information.
 173. There was evidence of a good relationship with the local public health service. Nursing staff advised that the Health Centre was well supported by both local district health boards³⁵, with specialist assessments that needed to take place and equipment that patients may require.
 174. A midwife from Capital & Coast DHB is available to provide care for pregnant women. We observed that the interface between health staff and the midwife was very good and the midwife advised that she provided the equivalent care that a pregnant woman in the community would receive.
 175. During our inspection, we observed that both sites were active in promoting health initiatives. There was a wide range of health information pamphlets and health promotion posters displayed on the walls. Examples of health initiatives included Junk Free June³⁶, information about asthma and the effects of smoking and second hand smoking on women and their children, Mental Health Awareness and a 30 day December challenge.³⁷ The health promotion initiatives were well thought out as they encouraged women to think how their health and wellbeing might also affect or improve the health of their whānau, particularly children.
 176. Staff advised, and on review the inspection found, that women at Arohata with a non-urgent doctor's appointment waited no more than two weeks. Women residing at the Upper Prison were seen within one week. All prisoners who put in a health request form had their health need addressed either on the same or the following day.
 177. The prison has a contracted physiotherapist who holds a weekly clinic. The waiting time to see the physiotherapist is approximately two weeks. At the Upper Prison, women referred to the physiotherapist had to be transported to the Tawa site for treatment. The Health Centre Manager had arranged for a physiotherapist to hold a clinic at the Upper Prison. This first clinic was held the week of our inspection.
 178. We observed a number of nurse consultations. It was evident these were well run as prisoners were informed, consulted and involved in the planning of their care. Nurses provided options to prisoners when this was possible and checked that they were happy with the recommended treatments. One prisoner advised that nurses often repeated information several times which made it easier to understand and remember. Similarly, others advised that the nurses were pleasant and easy to talk to.

³⁵ Each site is covered by a different DHB (Capital & Coast DHB and Hutt Valley DHB). This initially had a negative impact when women were moved between the sites, as a new referral would need to be made to the corresponding DHB. However, recent changes have meant that if a woman has been referred to a particular DHB and then moves site, her appointment would remain at the original DHB.

³⁶ Junk Free June challenges participants to give up junk food during June.

³⁷ The 30 day challenge involved setting 30 goals during the month of December - such as give a compliment to three people, write something you're thankful for each day, do an act of kindness, create a bucket list of hopes and dreams.

179. Prisoners with significant and complex health needs have a treatment plan in place, including those whom policy stipulates must have a treatment plan (for example if they were on methadone treatment).
180. We interviewed one prisoner about having a treatment plan. The prisoner had a good understanding of what was required in her treatment plan and advocated for herself when she felt her health care needs were not being met in accordance with her plan.
181. During our inspection, we also observed nurses conducting medication rounds, which we found met the guidelines of the national Medicines Policy. We observed a nurse interact with one prisoner who was starting a new medication. The nurse spoke with the woman to ensure she understood what the medication was for and checked for any allergies.
182. We spoke with staff about what risk assessments were in place for self-administration of medication. Nurses advised they were actively assessing the suitability of patients to self-medicate and completing assessments to promote patient self-responsibility and autonomy of medication management. We observed one such risk assessment which provided the prisoner with comprehensive information she could understand about her medication, including side effects.
183. During our observations we found there was no formal site governance for medication management and prescribing trends. However the site was in the process of completing a population needs assessment which showed numbers and types of prescribed medications. The Corrections' Pharmacology and Therapeutics Committee is developing a suite of reports which will be used by sites when completed and will deliver a more robust level of oversight of medication usage.

Dentist

184. Twenty-two women were on the waiting list to see the dentist, with the longest having waited four months for non-urgent treatment. Review of the dental waiting list showed a general waiting time of approximately two and a half months. Women received dental treatment at the Rimutaka Prison dental clinic. Waiting times were likely to decrease in November when Arohata opened its own dental clinic at the Tawa site.
185. Prisoners with acute or urgent dental needs were prioritised and seen within appropriate timeframes.
186. At the time of our inspection, two prisoners were triaged as requiring urgent care. One was taken to hospital for treatment and the other received dental treatment 27 days after her initial assessment. A review showed this prisoner received pain relief and had been prescribed medication for a dental infection.

Findings

- Finding 18. Some of the health facilities at the Upper Prison were not adequate.
- Finding 19. Despite being split between two sites, health services were effective and well supported by custodial staff.
- Finding 20. The health team had built positive therapeutic relationships with external health providers.
- Finding 21. Prisoners found nurses friendly and professional and were confident in the care they were receiving.
- Finding 22. Health promotion activities on site promoted the wellbeing of women and their whānau, especially children.

Mental health and self-harm

Mental health services

187. All new prisoners are screened for mental health along with physical health, alcohol and drug use and social needs. Women who screen positive on the Mental Health Screen are referred to the Forensic Service for further assessment.
188. On arrival in prison, medical and specialist information is requested from community/DHB providers if it is identified that a prisoner has any history of mental health concerns or previous contact with mental health services.
189. At the time of our inspection, there was no contracted Mental Health and Reintegration Service provided on site. The Health Centre Manager advised that the mental health clinician was moved from Arohata to assist with the high demand and waiting list at Rimutaka Prison. However, we were told mental health clinicians would soon be returning on site at Arohata.
190. The Tawa site has a therapeutic space available for the trauma counsellor to use. The room has a couch, weighted animals, canvas prints, crafts, aromatherapy oils and salt lamps. The trauma counsellors swap sites one day a week so that they can follow up with clients who may have transferred sites.
191. At the time of our inspection the trauma counsellor at the Tawa site had 30 open files with seven women on the waiting list. Referrals were triaged and prioritised, and an acknowledgement letter was sent to the woman to advise they would be seen within eight weeks.
192. The Health Centre Manager advised that the forensic team was responsive and a nurse would visit on unscheduled clinic days if a woman needed to be assessed urgently. At the time of the inspection, 30 women were on the forensic caseload.
193. Capital and Coast DHB accepts patients on referral from the Regional Forensic Service for compulsory assessment and treatment as clinically indicated. All patients on the forensic caseload and any who were waiting placement for an inpatient bed under compulsory assessment and treatment were not considered for transfer to another prison in any circumstance.
194. At the time of our inspection, one woman in the ISU was on the waiting list for an inpatient bed. She arrived in custody in late October 2018 and the forensic nurse completed an urgent assessment. Regular reviews by the forensic psychiatrist and nurse were also completed. In mid-November the woman was put on the waiting list for admission into inpatient care. The woman was transferred to inpatient care in late November 2018. Forensic staff supported the site, providing advice to both custody and the health team on how to manage the prisoner.

Intervention and Support Unit

195. The prison has one ISU located at the Tawa site. At the time of the inspection, the former At Risk cells in the Upper Prison (from when it was a men's prison) had been decommissioned. If a prisoner was considered to be at risk of harm she would be transferred to the Tawa site.
196. The ISU at Tawa has three cells which have a toilet, hand washing facilities, table and chair. They do not have televisions or radios. There is one dry cell which has a mattress on a raised platform (see Image 11). All cells have CCTV cameras and prisoners are monitored by staff in the ISU office and master control.

197. The unit has a multipurpose room which can be used for interviews and to give prisoners time out of cell. Prisoners can draw on the blackboard wall and there is an outside yard with an exercise bike, Swiss balls and bean bags (see image 12).
198. Prisoners have at least one hour out of cell each day in the yard or multipurpose room depending on their condition and needs.
199. There is no telephone or kiosk in the unit. Prisoners can use the Secure Unit kiosk and telephone depending on the number of prisoners and availability of staff.
200. Staff in the unit are proactive in their management of prisoners. They consult the Forensic Service for advice and put in place escalation and transfer plans³⁸ for prisoners. We observed an escalation plan for one prisoner in June 2018. The plan was thorough and provided a detailed outline of what steps had to be taken before the prisoner could be transferred to an external mental health unit.
201. During our inspection, staff advised they had not received the necessary assistance or support for some prisoners in the ISU.
202. Staff advised they do not receive any support to assist them with the potential mental health effects from working in this type of environment. They do not receive any specific training to recognise prisoners who have mental health problems and help them manage the prisoners within the ISU. Staff found it difficult to work in the environment.
203. The Health Centre Manager and nursing staff advised they were challenged due to the low number of beds in the ISU and pressure to move women out of the ISU and put them into the Secure Unit which acts as overflow. Health staff also mentioned there can be resistance from custody staff to admit women into the ISU due to the lack of beds.
204. The unit's Senior Corrections Officer advised that she would like more time dedicated to in-house training for the ISU staff. The staff were getting general wellness and well-being training, but there was no specific training about working in the ISU environment.
205. The prison is well supported by forensic services, which is responsive to urgent referrals and acutely mentally unwell prisoners.
206. We observed a multidisciplinary team meeting in the ISU. The Health Centre Manager, Principal Corrections Officer and unit staff were present and discussed each prisoner in turn. Case managers, forensic staff, the social worker and counsellors did not take part. Staff advised that forensic staff sometimes contributed to these meetings if the prisoner was in their caseload. Meetings are held two or three times a week, depending on individual needs, and used a supported decision-making framework.
207. The meeting was held in the main guardroom and there were continual interruptions from other staff and little privacy given the information discussed.
208. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the site was investigating better locations, times and ways in which to hold multidisciplinary team meetings. The meetings had been extended to include additional staff where relevant.

³⁸ Escalation plans are for prisoners in the unit over 30 days. Transfer plans are for prisoners transitioning out of ISU to other units.

209. Since the Inspectorate's visit, a range of training and courses have been made available to staff to increase their confidence in working with women with mental health needs. This will be reviewed to ensure that learnings from training are being embedded in everyday practice.
210. The National Commissioner also commented that only women deemed able to be moved safely were relocated to the Secure Unit. The relocated women were still managed according to ISU requirements to support their well-being.

Findings

- Finding 23. There is a high demand for beds in the ISU and, as a result, the Secure Unit is being used as an overflow for prisoners.
- Finding 24. Multidisciplinary meetings are held regularly in the ISU but key people did not always attend, they were often interrupted and had little privacy.
- Finding 25. The prison is well supported by forensic services, which are responsive to urgent referrals and acutely mentally unwell prisoners.
- Finding 26. Custodial staff working in the ISU have had no specific training to recognise common mental health issues.

Spiritual support

211. The prison has one Chaplain who works across both sites, as well as three volunteer assistant chaplains. The Catholic Chaplain for Rimutaka Prison visits the Upper Prison one day per week. We were advised an additional assistant chaplain will be required once the new unit opens at the Tawa site.
212. Church services are held every Sunday at both sites. A representative from Jehovah's Witnesses comes to the prison when requested.
213. Prisoners can request an appointment with the chaplains. Alternatively, staff can contact the Chaplain if they believe there is a prisoner in need.
214. The Chaplain is available for support when prisoners experience the loss of a loved one. The Chaplain can hold a private memorial with the prisoners if requested.
215. The Chaplain advised she had a good relationship with custodial staff. She said there were no barriers to accessing prisoners apart from the unit regimes and prisoner activities. This supports the views of the prisoners we interviewed, who all said they had no issues with their access to spiritual support.

Finding

- Finding 27. Prisoners had good access to chaplaincy services.

Reintegration

216. Case managers begin working with prisoners to develop an offender plan (including a release plan) from their initial reception into custody, and continue to develop and confirm this plan as their sentence progresses. Proposed release plans for long serving prisoners are outlined and confirmed in the Parole Assessment Report which is provided to the NZPB prior to the prisoner's scheduled hearing. Planning is based on a prisoner's risk of re-offending and the support needed to manage those risks.

Temporary release

217. Corrections offers a range of programmes aimed at helping eligible and suitable prisoners to integrate back into the community through temporary release.³⁹ Those opportunities include Release to Work and Guided Release.⁴⁰

Guided Release

218. The Guided Release programme is aimed at long-serving prisoners who need help reintegrating into the community. Guided Release coordinators work with prisoners to reintroduce them to the community and help them deal with immediate needs such as finding accommodation, opening bank accounts, looking for work and applying for benefits.
219. The programme is only available to prisoners who are eligible and suitable for temporary release. It is particularly important for prisoners who have little or no support on release.
220. In November 2018, three prisoners applied for Guided Release and two were approved.

Release to Work

221. Under the Release to Work programme, eligible and suitable prisoners can be approved for work in private industries in the community. Release to Work allows prisoners to gain valuable work skills and experience, as well as skills at managing themselves in the community. Release to Work opportunities sometimes lead to offers of ongoing employment.
222. At the time of our inspection, no prisoners were on Release to Work. However, seven prisoners had been on Release to Work during 2018 prior to our inspection. These prisoners were recently released, and two remained employed in their jobs.

Out of Gate

223. The Out of Gate programme is a reintegration service aimed at prisoners who have a sentence of less than two years and helps prisoners with accommodation, education and health services in the prisoner's release region. The service is dependent on the needs of the individual prisoner. In addition, it can provide whānau wrap-around services such as assisting a prisoner to apply for their birth certificate or driver licence.

³⁹ Temporary release purposes and criteria are set out in Corrections Act 2004, ss 62-64. Also see Corrections Regulations 2005, regulations 26-29; Department of Corrections Prison Operations Manual, M04.06.

⁴⁰ Other temporary release opportunities include external self care in which prisoners live in self-care accommodation outside the prison perimeter; and visits to children under child protection protocols.

Prisoners' readiness for parole/release

224. We spoke with a number of prisoners about their readiness for parole and subsequent release. A common theme was access to programmes. Many prisoners advised they had not been able to complete their programmes and, as a result, had been denied parole. One prisoner told us the NZPB stood her down for 10 months to complete the Kowhiritanga programme. She said it had been over a year and she still had not been on the course. When she went to the NZPB for a second time she was able to say she had good reports, a positive psychiatrist report, two jobs lined up if released and accommodation organised. However, she was still stood down because she had not completed Kowhiritanga.
225. Other prisoners reported they felt confident they were ready for release. Many had accommodation organised and were happy finishing their courses before release.
226. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the case management team, schedulers, programme providers, Release to Work brokers and other staff had re-evaluated and updated individual plans to ensure the women got the right intervention at the right time.

Finding

Finding 28. Some prisoners felt confident they were ready for release, while others had not completed required rehabilitation programmes. Some prisoners had made arrangements for accommodation, employment or benefits, and ongoing support, while others had not.

Appendix – Images



Image 1. Example of a double cell in Tizard Unit



Image 2. Example of graffiti in Secure Unit



Image 3. Upper Prison, steps to upper bunk, being used as shelf



Image 4. Example of mirrored dome above toilets in Wings 1-4 (Upper Prison)



Image 5. Example of roast beef meal served for lunch

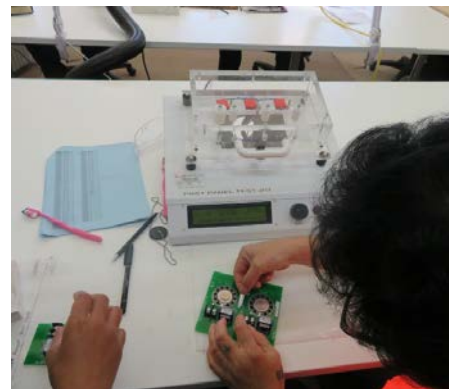


Image 6. Electronics assembly



Image 7. Commercial laundry



Image 8. Gym at the Tawa site



Image 9. Library



Image 10. Visits room at the Tawa site



Image 11. Dry cell in the ISU

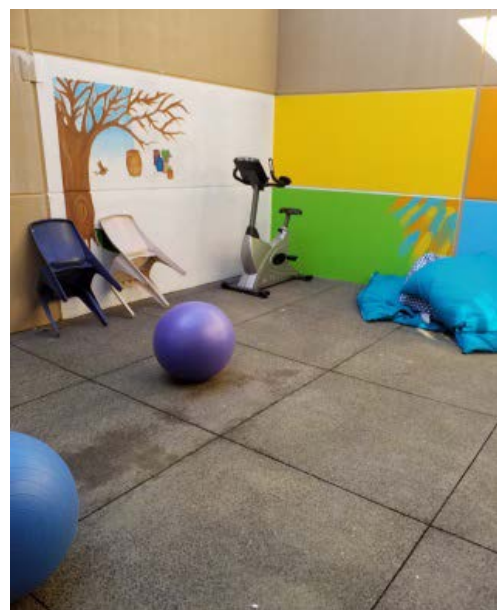


Image 12. ISU external yard