

Arohata Prison

Announced Inspection

September 2020



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Office of Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia*

Our whakatauki

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

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

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

Released under the Official Information Act 1982





Foreword

The Office of the Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia* is a critical part of the independent oversight of the Corrections system and operates under the Corrections Act 2004 and the Corrections Regulations 2005. The Inspectorate, while part of the Department of Corrections, is operationally independent, which is necessary to ensure objectivity and integrity.

This report is part of the programme of prison inspections carried out by the Office of the Inspectorate. The inspection process provides an ongoing invaluable insight into prisons and provides assurance that shortcomings are identified and addressed in a timely way, and examples of good practice are shared across the prison network.

At the time of our inspection, Arohata Prison was located across two sites – at the Wellington suburb of Tawa and at Trentham, Upper Hutt (adjacent to Rimutaka Prison). Wāhine and staff based in the Upper Prison were being relocated back to the Tawa site. By mid-December 2020, all the wāhine had been relocated and the Upper Prison was closed.

Our inspection took place three months after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and prisons resumed their standard operations. Some COVID-19 protocols were still taking place.

I am pleased to note that the inspection found that, overall, the prison environment was clean and in a good state of repair. The Drug Treatment Unit was welcoming and therapeutic. The prison offers a range of rehabilitation and education programmes, but access is limited by a shortage of programme rooms. Many of the wāhine worked, but there were few opportunities to gain skills and qualifications for meaningful employment on release.

The prison's health centres were well equipped and health staff were professional and compassionate. It was disappointing there was no primary mental health support and limited trauma counselling available.

Most prisoners at the Tawa site reported feeling safe, but some at the Upper Prison said they were bullied by other prisoners.

I note there were few opportunities for Wāhine Māori to practise their culture and customs. Pregnant wāhine could access appropriate midwifery support and care, but it was disappointing that the Mothers with Babies Unit was not used and improvements had not been carried out.

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

Our findings

1. This report sets out observations from our inspection. The *Inspection Standards* for each section are also noted. Our commentary from the 2020 inspection follows and our findings are listed.

Reception and induction

Escorts and transfers

- Finding 1. The needs of wāhine being transferred between prisons and courts were generally well met.
- Finding 2. The process for transferring prisoners did not always consider reintegration activities.

Reception and induction

- Finding 3. Receiving Office staff treated wāhine with respect and the reception processes in place generally ensured their safety and immediate needs were met, although they were not always asked about care arrangements for their children.
- Finding 4. Although the Receiving Office was clean and well organised, it was small and there was no dedicated area for wāhine to be strip searched.
- Finding 5. Receiving Office staff were under significant pressure given the demands of their role. Despite this, staff were observed to be working calmly and effectively.
- Finding 6. Most wāhine received an induction from unit staff, but these were sometimes rushed and not always comprehensive.
- Finding 7. One wāhine demonstrated good initiative by creating a poster of induction information, and this was later displayed by staff in the unit.
- Finding 8. The Receiving Office did not provide wāhine, who had children under the age of two, information about the Mothers with Babies Unit on arrival into prison.

Gender responsive health assessment on entry

- Finding 9. While observed interactions were brief due to COVID restrictions, reception triaging assessments appeared thorough and well documented.
- Finding 10. Wāhine were offered gender specific screening and immunisations when arriving into custody.

Placement

- Finding 11. Most wāhine in the prison are from Wellington or nearby regions. Some wāhine are placed at Arohata temporarily to complete their rehabilitation requirements.
- Finding 12. It was pleasing to note that trans prisoners had well developed support plans in place.

Duty of care

Access to legal advisers and attendance at court hearings

Finding 13. The prison is making good use of the AVL facilities.

Finding 14. While some units provided good access to telephone calls with lawyers, some wāhine placed their lawyer's telephone number on their approved list which would lead to the calls being recorded.

Bullying and violence reduction

Finding 15. Most wāhine we spoke with at the Tawa site reported feeling safe and incidents of bullying, abuse and violence were recorded as non-serious.

Finding 16. At the Upper Prison, some wāhine said they were bullied by other prisoners.

Finding 17. During our inspection a serious prisoner on prisoner assault occurred. Staff did not respond appropriately and no action (to ensure the victim's safety or to punish the perpetrators) was taken until the Inspectorate intervened.

Finding 18. Rimutaka Prison's SERT team was unlikely to be able to respond to serious incidents of violence and disorder at the Tawa site in a timely way.

Prisoner files

Finding 19. The information contained in the documents stored in electronic and paper prisoner files was of a good standard overall.

Finding 20. The 'Getting Basics Great' training supported and encouraged staff to improve the quality of prisoner records.

Accommodation (cell sharing)

Finding 21. Prison staff consistently assessed wāhine for eligibility and suitability prior to being considered for sharing a cell.

Finding 22. The complaints process was well understood by the wāhine, and well managed by staff.

Wāhine Māori

Finding 23. Wāhine Māori receive few opportunities to practise their culture and customs.

Finding 24. He Whare Āwhina Unit has no programmes, providers or volunteers in place to support the wāhine and kaupapa of the unit. The site plans to engage local iwi and hopes to implement a kaupapa Māori programme specific to the Wellington region.

Foreign national wāhine

Finding 25. Staff supported foreign national wāhine to maintain contact with their family overseas and access support from their consulate.

Property

Finding 26. Despite processes in place to manage prisoner property, distribution could be delayed by the availability of detector dogs and their handlers.

Health

Provision of health care

- Finding 27. The health centres at both sites were clean, and well equipped with medical equipment and health promotion material.
- Finding 28. Health staff demonstrated professionalism and compassion in their interactions with the wāhine.
- Finding 29. Health staff consistently documented high-quality assessments with the use of best practice assessment tools.
- Finding 30. There is limited access to consultation rooms at the Tawa site to meet the demands of the health service.
- Finding 31. The budgeted hours for the Medical Officer and Dentist were not adequate for the prison population.
- Finding 32. Custodial staff work collaboratively with health staff to ensure patient privacy is maintained.

Substance abuse

- Finding 33. Wāhine experiencing withdrawal upon arrival at the prison were well managed, with best practice tools being used by health staff.

Mental health care

- Finding 34. The Intervention and Support Unit does not provide a suitable environment for prisoners who are at risk of self-harm or mentally unwell. The unit is small, has no interview room, has an exercise yard that is only usable on dry days and there is little natural light.
- Finding 35. There is limited primary mental health and trauma counselling available for the wāhine.
- Finding 36. When the ISU cells were full, staff place wāhine at risk of self-harm in the Separates Unit, although these cells do not appear to be designated for at risk prisoners.

Environment

Residential units

- Finding 37. Overall, the prison was clean and in a good state of repair.
- Finding 38. The Drug Treatment Unit offers a therapeutic environment.
- Finding 39. Despite the efforts of staff, the temperature in Tizard Unit continues to be uncomfortable for the wāhine.

Hygiene

- Finding 40. Sanitary and toiletry items are readily available to wāhine.

Clothing

Finding 41. The prison had a good supply of clothing. Some wāhine were unaware they could access additional bras and underwear and some staff were unaware of shortages of supply.

Finding 42. Wāhine in the Tizard Unit did not always have access to a washing machine and dryer in the unit.

Finding 43. The quality and condition of pillows varied across the prison.

Food

Finding 44. Overall, wāhine were satisfied with the food available from the national menu.

Finding 45. Some wāhine were unhappy with the timing of meals, which left them feeling hungry in the evening.

Prisoners and children

Pregnant prisoners and post-natal support

Finding 46. Wāhine who were pregnant could access appropriate midwifery support and care.

Finding 47. Misunderstandings about the entry criteria for the Mothers with Babies Unit may have led to a long-term situation where the unit is not utilised.

Finding 48. The Mothers with Babies Unit continues to require improvements to address health and safety concerns in order to accommodate children over the age of nine months.

Good order

Classification and placement

Finding 49. While wāhine generally received at least one hour out of their cell each day, this time was often used for cleaning and making telephone calls rather than exercise. Time out of cell for other activities should be in addition to any hour allocated for exercise.

Finding 50. Staff maintained the separation of different categories of wāhine. This led to multiple unlock regimes and wāhine having limited time out of cell.

Segregation and cell confinement

Finding 51. During our inspection, appropriate segregation processes were not followed after a serious incident occurred.

Incentives

Finding 52. The site offers no incentives to encourage pro-social behaviour among the wāhine.

Discipline

Finding 53. The administration of the misconduct process is not working effectively at the site.

Use of force

Finding 54. Staff and wāhine we spoke with raised no concerns about the use of force.

Searches

Finding 55. Wāhine were strip searched in areas where their privacy and dignity were maintained and staff treated them with respect.

Finding 56. The quality of the rubdown searches we observed was inconsistent.

Finding 57. While the number of wāhine who tested positive for illicit drug use in the six months prior to our inspection was low, there is insufficient resource to effectively deliver the prison's drug testing regime.

Purposeful activity

Exercise

Finding 58. Wāhine receive daily opportunities to spend time in the open air and undertake exercise and other recreational activities, but this time was often limited by unlock regimes.

Finding 59. Despite the site having a swimming pool, it was disappointing that it was not utilised to support health and well-being and teach water safety.

Finding 60. The gym instructor is supporting wāhine to take responsibility for their own health, well-being and exercise routines.

Communication with family and whānau

Finding 61. Wāhine were provided with opportunities to maintain contact with family and whānau by telephone and video calls, however these opportunities were limited.

Finding 62. Some wāhine experienced delays getting telephone numbers approved.

Finding 63. Telephones were often situated in high traffic areas in units which made it difficult for wāhine to hear calls.

Visits

Finding 64. Wāhine could have visits with their family and whānau, and the opportunity for video or AVL visits, although many chose not to have these visits for a variety of reasons.

Finding 65. Visiting areas were inviting for families and children. Staff managed wāhine and their visitors professionally and respectfully.

Library

Finding 66. Prisoners generally have good access to books, other reading material and recreational activities from the library. While there is no catalogue, it is positive to note that a spreadsheet is being developed to list the books available for the wāhine.

Religious or spiritual support

Finding 67. Wāhine receive good access to chaplains and other faith-based support.

Supporting prisoner well-being

Finding 68. The prison has a number of volunteers who provide support and constructive activities for the wāhine.

Offender plans

Finding 69. Some wāhine were not allocated a case officer in the required timeframe.

Finding 70. Wāhine had good access to case managers, however some wāhine felt unsupported or unprepared for their release.

Education

Finding 71. Wāhine can access a range of education programmes. However, self-directed learning opportunities are limited due to the extent of online learning required.

Finding 72. The prison has a limited number of suitable classrooms and interview spaces for educational activities.

Rehabilitation

Finding 73. The prison offers a range of rehabilitation programmes, but access is limited by the availability of programme rooms and occasional custodial staff shortages to support prisoner movements.

Finding 74. Some wāhine were unable to complete their rehabilitation programmes prior to their appearance before the Parole Board.

Work

Finding 75. While many wāhine worked, the prison offered limited work opportunities that would provide skills and qualifications leading to meaningful employment on release.

Finding 76. Work opportunities for remand accused wāhine were limited to domestic roles in their units.

Reintegration

Finding 77. Wāhine can access a good range of reintegration opportunities including Guided Release outings.

Finding 78. Suitable accommodation, particularly in and around smaller regions, was difficult for case managers to find in advance.

Finding 79. Case management staff wanted to work more closely with probation officers to provide support in preparation for wāhine being released.

**Prison staff**

- Finding 80. The prison is staffed predominantly by women, including a recently appointed female Prison Director.
- Finding 81. Corrections' Women's Strategy is not yet fully integrated into staff practice and culture.
- Finding 82. Specialist training for staff, including trauma informed practice, is not currently provided on a regular basis.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Introduction

2. The Office of the Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia* is authorised under section 29(1)(b) of the Corrections Act 2004 to undertake inspections and visits to prisons. Section 157 of the Act provides that when undertaking an inspection, inspectors have the power to access any prisoners, personnel, records, information, Corrections' vehicles or property.
3. The purpose of a prison inspection is to ensure a safe, secure and humane environment by gaining insight into all relevant parts of prison life, including any emerging risks, issues or problems. Inspectors assess prison conditions, management procedures and operational practices against relevant legislation and our *Inspection Standards*.
4. The *Inspection Standards* were developed by the Inspectorate and reflect the prison environment and procedures applicable in New Zealand prisons. The *Inspection Standards* are informed by:
 - » the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners ('the Nelson Mandela Rules')
 - » HM Inspectorate of Prisons *Expectations* (England's equivalent criteria for assessing the treatment and conditions of prisoners)
 - » the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders ('the Bangkok Rules')
 - » the Yogyakarta Principles, which guide the application of human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.
5. The Inspectorate visited Arohata Prison between 15-18 September and on 21 September 2020 to carry out this inspection. This is the second inspection of a prison by the Inspectorate since the first COVID-19 movement restrictions were lifted on 8 June 2020 and prisons resumed their standard operations.
6. The fieldwork for the inspection was completed by three Inspectors, including a Clinical Inspector for health-related matters. The inspection was overseen by a Principal Inspector.
7. Inspectors assessed the treatment and conditions of wāhine¹ at Arohata Prison against the *Inspection Standards* which consider 10 areas of prison life: reception and admission, first days in custody, escorts and transfers, duty of care, health, environment, good order, purposeful activity, reintegration and prison staff. Inspectors accessed all parts of the prison to complete their assessment.
8. Inspectors may also evaluate how the site is applying the Corrections Act 2004 and the Corrections Regulations 2005, together with relevant Corrections' policies and procedures.
9. Inspectors make their assessments with four key principles in mind, to ensure that prisoners are treated in a fair, safe, secure and humane way. The principles are:
 - » **Safety:** Prisoners are held safely.
 - » **Respect:** Prisoners are treated with respect for human dignity.

¹ For this inspection, the Inspectorate will refer to female prisoners as 'wāhine' (defined by the online Māori Dictionary as "female, women, feminine").



- » **Purposeful activity:** 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 reoffending.
10. This report includes those gender-responsive standards relevant to the current inspection.
11. Inspectors carried out:
- » formal and informal interviews with wāhine and staff²
 - » direct observation of unit procedures, staff duties and relevant staff meetings throughout the inspection
 - » a physical inspection of the prison environment, including the Health Centre
 - » a review and analysis of relevant information and data from the prison, Corrections databases and performance reports.
12. We were informed by the Hōkai Rangi Strategy 2019-2024 and the Women's Strategy 2017-2021. The Hōkai Rangi Strategy sets out a new strategic direction, aimed at achieving transformative and intergenerational change for prisoners and their whānau. The Women's Strategy aims to transform the rehabilitation and support services offered to wāhine and to shape better lives for themselves and their families and whānau.
13. On 24 March 2021, we provided the National Commissioner and Deputy Chief Executive Health with a draft of this report. They responded to the draft on 27 May 2021 and the response is attached as Appendix B.

² Including contracted service providers and volunteers where appropriate.

Arohata Prison

14. At the time of our inspection, Arohata Prison was located across 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 and is one of three women's prisons in New Zealand.
15. 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,³ was opened as a satellite site of Arohata Prison. The Upper Prison was refurbished to ensure it was suitable to house prisoners again. The travelling time between the two sites is about 30 minutes.
16. At the time of our inspection, wāhine and staff based in the Upper Prison were systematically being relocated back to the Tawa site. This move was always intended and had become possible due to the declining prison population. As a result, during our visit, only some wings in the Upper Prison were in use and there were fewer staff on site. By mid-December 2020, all the wāhine had been relocated and the Upper Prison was closed.
17. The prison accommodates remand and sentenced wāhine. Sentenced wāhine are classified from minimum to high security.

Location	Unit name	Category of prisoner	Available beds	Number of wāhine (on day one of our inspection)
Tawa	Self Care Unit (4 houses)	Minimum security sentenced prisoners.	16	5
	Te Araroa (Drug Treatment Unit)	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners.	20	14
	Tizard Unit	High security sentenced prisoners and remand prisoners.	43	26
	He Whare Āwhina	Minimum to low medium security sentenced prisoners.	25	22
	Intervention and Support Unit (ISU)*	Prisoners at risk of self-harm.	4	2
	Secure Unit*	High security sentenced prisoners.	4	2
Upper Prison (Upper Hutt)	Wing 1 [†]	Minimum to low medium sentenced prisoners. Some remand prisoners.	28	0
	Wing 2	High security sentenced or remand prisoners.	28	15
	Wing 3	Minimum to high security sentenced prisoners. Some remand prisoners.	28	25

³ The Upper Prison 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.

	Wing 4 [†]	High security sentenced prisoners. Some remand prisoners.	28	1
	Separates Unit*	Prisoners serving a sentence of cell confinement	4	0
	ISU*	Prisoners at risk of self-harm	4	0
	Total		160	112

* Beds in these units are used on a temporary basis and therefore not counted as part of overall capacity.

† These units were not in use at the time of our inspection, with the exception of Wing 4 being used briefly for a wāhine on voluntary segregation.

18. In 2019, construction began on a new high security unit at the Tawa site. The unit, Āhuru Mōwai, had not been completed at the time of our inspection but will offer an additional 60 beds once operational. Wāhine began moving into this unit in February 2021.

Wāhine

19. At the time of our inspection, the prison accommodated 112 wāhine, 71 at the Tawa site and 41 at the Upper Prison. Of these, across both sites, 35 (31%) were remand prisoners.
20. The largest ethnic group of wāhine was Māori (58%), followed by Pākehā/European (32%).
21. At the time of inspection, there was one wāhine aged 19 and under, and three aged 60 and over.

Staff

22. Until May 2015, the prison was managed by a Prison Director, supported by a small management team. This structure was similar in operation to other smaller prisons across the prison network. A restructure completed in May 2015 saw Arohata Prison absorbed into Rimutaka Prison's management, with Rimutaka's Prison Director taking responsibility for both sites.
23. In 2020, Corrections introduced the position of Prison Director at Arohata Prison along with other key management positions, including an Assistant Prison Director. The new Prison Director appointment was confirmed to staff during our inspection.
24. At the time of our inspection, the prison had 96 FTE⁴ custodial staff, which was 0.4 FTE above its full establishment staffing level. Seven staff were unable to be rostered.
25. The health team was led by a Health Centre Manager⁵ and was 1.6 FTE below its full establishment level for registered nurses. The team included 11 registered nurses and an administration officer. The Clinical Team Leader was on long-term leave, without this position being filled (since December 2019). Nurses were on site from 6.15am until 9.00pm, with a nurse allocated on-call overnight.
26. The health team worked across both the Tawa and Upper Prison sites.

⁴ Full time equivalent.

⁵ Previously the Health Centre Manager at Rimutaka Prison had responsibility for health services at Arohata Prison. The Health Centre Manager position at Arohata Prison was established in 2018.



27. At the time of our inspection, the prison's case management team had its full establishment staffing level of six FTE staff. Four case managers were based at Tawa, while two were based at the Upper Prison.
28. Around 76% of staff at Arohata Prison were women and staff ethnicity reflected that of the local community.

Complaints received and deaths in custody investigated by the Inspectorate

29. For the six-month period ending 29 February 2020, the Inspectorate received the following contact from wāhine at the site:
 - » 19 complaints⁶
 - » 13 statutory reviews (misconducts and temporary release/removal reviews)
30. There were no deaths in custody.

⁶ The top four complaint categories were: prisoner property (37%), complaints process (21%) prisoner telephone and written communication (16%) and sentence management (11%).

Inspection

Reception, induction and escorts

Escorts and transfers

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners travel in safe, decent conditions and are treated with respect, and attention is paid to their individual needs.
- Prisoners understand why and where they are being transferred to.

31. Wāhine are transported to and from the prison for a range of reasons including inter-prison transfers, court appearances, and medical or reintegration appointments.
32. Shorter transfers, for example between the prison and courts, are undertaken using an eight-seat Prisoner Escort Vehicle (PEV). Longer transfers, for example to and from Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility, may be undertaken by PEV or commercial flight. Transfers to and from Christchurch Women's Prison take place by commercial flight or, very occasionally, when there are several women to be moved, a private charter flight may be arranged.
33. The wāhine we spoke with who had experienced longer transfers did not express concerns about how they were treated, particularly if they travelled by plane, but one found travelling in a PEV "too cramped".
34. We were advised that the prisoner transfer process does not always take into consideration reintegration activities when identifying prisoners for inter-prison transfers. We were alerted to one wāhine who was being actively considered for a Release to Work opportunity locally while separately being considered for relocation to Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility.

Findings

- Finding 1. The needs of wāhine being transferred between prisons and courts were generally well met.
- Finding 2. The process for transferring prisoners did not always consider reintegration activities.

Reception and induction

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are safe and treated with respect on their reception and during their first days in prison. Prisoners' immediate needs are identified on arrival and staff ensure that individuals' immediate anxieties are addressed before the end of the first day.
- Prisoners are promptly inducted and supported to understand life in prison and know what will happen to them next.
- Prisoners can access legal advice and, where applicable, a consular representative.
- Information relating to prison life is accessible for all prisoners.
- Gender identity disclosures are managed with sensitivity and care.
- On arrival in prison, women's needs are accurately assessed, and facilities are provided to contact their families and dependents.
- Children accompanying prisoners are cared for and feel safe.
- The safety of a prisoner's children and other dependents is assessed and action is taken by staff to promote their safety.

35. In the six months to 29 February 2020, the prison managed 199 prisoner receptions and 198 exits. At the time of our inspection, two staff were working in the Receiving Office. They told us there were insufficient staff working in the Receiving Office to manage the volume of wāhine arrivals/departures, process personal property, manage audio visual facility bookings/movements and liaise with other prisons, Police and Courts. We also observed that the Receiving Office staff were busy, but continued to work calmly and effectively.
36. When wāhine arrive at the prison, they are processed at the Tawa site's Receiving Office. Wāhine are strip searched and issued with prison clothing, before custodial and health staff conduct an immediate needs assessment⁷ and a risk assessment.⁸ The prisoner is then assigned to one of the prison's residential units. Prisoners who are to be housed in the Upper Prison are transported to the Upper Hutt site.
37. The prison's Receiving Office was clean, tidy and well organised although, as we noted in our 2018 inspection, it is small and not fit for purpose. The area consists of two holding cells, a laundry room, a small office used by Receiving Office staff (which also houses the Property Office), an interview room and a small room used to take prisoner fingerprints and photographs.
38. The Receiving Office does not have a dedicated area for strip searching wāhine. If one wāhine arrives, she is strip searched in the holding cell. If a number are received at the same time, they are placed in a holding cell together and moved individually into the remaining holding cell to be strip searched. Staff were concerned about the process for conducting strip searches of wāhine in this environment.

⁷ Assessment covering matters such as health, mental health and childcare.

⁸ Assessment covering risks to safety including risks of self-harm.

39. Most wāhine we spoke with told us that staff in the Receiving Office treated them well and the processes in place were good, including ensuring they could make an initial telephone call to their family or whānau. However, wāhine told us staff did not ask about care arrangements in place for their children at home and this was only discussed later after they received access to a social worker.
40. During our inspection, due to COVID-19 protocols, the first point of contact upon arrival to the site was with health staff in the sallyport who completed a COVID-19 screen assessment. Prisoners were required to adhere to strict hygiene control measures and new arrivals to the prison who were assessed as higher risk were tested and kept isolated from other prisoners for two weeks in the secure unit at the Tawa site. Low risk wāhine were accommodated in 'bubbles' with other wāhine who arrived around the same time for 14 days in Wing 2 based in the Upper Prison.
41. This response was in line with Corrections' COVID-19 guidance. Staff used full Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) when engaging with these wāhine.
42. Unit staff are required to complete an induction with every new prisoner arriving at the prison. Most of the wāhine we spoke with received an induction. However, a few wāhine told us that at times staff appeared rushed and did not always have time to complete a comprehensive induction.
43. One wāhine told us it was her first time in prison and she felt overwhelmed on arrival. Records show that unit staff read the induction handbook to her because initially she did not have her glasses and they wanted to ensure she understood. The wāhine told us she also relied on other prisoners to help her adjust to prison life.
44. One wāhine in Tizard Unit had created a poster to assist newly arrived wāhine to understand what she believed to be the important information provided during an induction. Staff have since used this poster as a reference for wāhine, and we saw it displayed in Tizard Unit during our inspection.
45. Some wāhine we spoke with who had children told us they were not advised about the prison's Mothers with Babies Unit until they were able to speak with the social worker following their induction.

Findings

- Finding 3. Receiving Office staff treated wāhine with respect and the reception processes in place generally ensured their safety and immediate needs were met, although they were not always asked about care arrangements for their children.
- Finding 4. Although the Receiving Office was clean and well organised, it was small and there was no dedicated area for wāhine to be strip searched.
- Finding 5. Receiving Office staff were under significant pressure given the demands of their role. Despite this, staff were observed to be working calmly and effectively.
- Finding 6. Most wāhine received an induction from unit staff, but these were sometimes rushed and not always comprehensive.
- Finding 7. One wāhine demonstrated good initiative by creating a poster of induction information, and this was later displayed by staff in the unit.

Finding 8. The Receiving Office did not provide wāhine, who had children under the age of two, information about the Mothers with Babies Unit on arrival into prison.

Gender responsive health assessment on entry

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners' immediate physical and mental health needs, including substance use and prescription medication needs are assessed on reception and responded to promptly and effectively.
- Prisoners receive a gender-specific confidential assessment of their physical and mental health upon arrival at the prison, including urgent health needs (e.g. daily medications, injuries, self-harm and suicide risk assessment).
- As soon as possible after their arrival in prison, prisoners undergo a confidential, gender specific health examination and screening which includes detection of sexually transmitted diseases, mental health needs, post-traumatic stress disorder, reproductive health history, drug or alcohol dependency, ill-treatment and sexual abuse. Referral is made to the appropriate services for treatment or support relating to issues identified during screening.

46. A Reception Health Triage assessment is undertaken by nursing staff for all new arrivals or wāhine returning to the prison. New arrivals are prioritised for any follow-up care based on their immediate health care needs.
47. Due to the COVID-19 screening process, nursing staff were unable to sit with new arrivals to undertake a thorough triage and were recording information manually outdoors in the prison sallyport.
48. We noted there was limited communication between health and custodial staff before a wāhine's at risk status was determined at reception. However, if wāhine were deemed to be at risk, communication between the necessary staff did take place.
49. We reviewed Reception Health Triage assessments over a six-month period to 1 August 2020, which showed that wāhine were triaged appropriately on arrival and were seen promptly by health staff in the clinic when required. All wāhine at reception were asked about their pregnancy status and a pregnancy test was offered to any wāhine who requested it.
50. Initial health assessments (or updated health assessments if an initial one had been undertaken within the previous 12 months) were undertaken within the triaged timeframes. Referrals to the medical officer were timely and appropriately triaged. Nursing assessments were thorough and well documented. Wāhine were referred to mental health services when required.
51. All new arrivals are offered sexual health screening at their initial health assessment, and cervical and breast assessment screening if appropriate. Records we reviewed showed over a six-month period, 44 cervical smear tests were undertaken. Wāhine under the age of 26 years are offered the human papillomavirus (HPV) and meningococcal vaccine if they had not previously received it.

Findings

- Finding 9. While observed interactions were brief due to COVID restrictions, reception triaging assessments appeared thorough and well documented.
- Finding 10. Wāhine were offered gender specific screening and immunisations when arriving into custody.

Placement**Inspection Standards**

- Women are located as close to their family or whānau support as possible, in prisons that will meet their rehabilitation and reintegration needs.
- Trans prisoners are consulted and their preference is considered when deciding whether to place them in a men's or women's prison.
- Trans prisoners are informed of their right to apply to be transferred to a prison that houses prisoners of their preferred gender identity, and are supported by staff to apply if they choose.
- Trans prisoners have individualised support plans that address their specific needs and requirements and are regularly reviewed.

52. Given there are only three women's prisons in New Zealand, the possibility is increased that wāhine become disconnected from their home region and family and whānau while they are in prison. Corrections data from November 2019 showed that almost 60% of wāhine at Arohata Prison came from the immediate or surrounding regions. Arohata Prison accommodates some wāhine from other regions, at least temporarily, as it hosts the only Drug Treatment Unit for wāhine in New Zealand.
53. We spoke with one trans prisoner accommodated in the prison at the time of our inspection. This wāhine was consulted and her preference considered before being placed in the prison and her individual needs were generally well met.
54. We confirmed that the two trans prisoners at the site had well developed support plans in place and these had been recently reviewed by staff. Staff we spoke with were aware of the support plans for these wāhine.

Findings

- Finding 11. Most wāhine in the prison are from Wellington or nearby regions. Some wāhine are placed at Arohata temporarily to complete their rehabilitation requirements.
- Finding 12. It was pleasing to note that trans prisoners had well developed support plans in place.

Duty of care

Access to legal advisers and attendance at court hearings

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have reasonable access to consult with a legal advisor.
- An audio-visual link can be used for eligible court cases and for other legal consultations.⁹

55. The prison has audio-visual link (AVL) facilities at both sites. The Tawa site has AVL facilities for Parole Board hearings and court appearances, and another for whānau hui, reintegrative opportunities and assessments required prior to entry into the Drug Treatment Unit.
56. The Upper Prison had an AVL room for whānau visits and one for the Parole Board. There were no AVL booths in the Upper Prison for court hearings and wāhine were transported to the Tawa site for these hearings.
57. Between 1 September 2019 and 29 February 2020, prison records showed there were 293 AVL sessions undertaken for family visits, reintegration purposes and lawyers' calls and 91 Parole Board hearings.
58. Each AVL booth includes a stool fixed to the floor. We observed the telephone receivers had a very short cord, which we understand is to prevent wāhine from self-harm. However, the short cord required wāhine to lean forward for the duration of their call, which was uncomfortable over an extended period.
59. Overall, staff told us there were few issues getting wāhine to AVL facilities. During recent COVID-19 restrictions, there was a high demand for prisoners to have court appearances via AVL, which put additional pressure on movements staff and available facilities. Increased volumes led to hearing delays and temporary toilets were brought in for the wāhine.
60. Wāhine we spoke with were able to make legal calls and reported no issues. Prisoners in the Drug Treatment and Tizard Units told us they used a separate room when they need to speak with their lawyer in private. Several prisoners in other units told us they had added their lawyer's telephone number to their approved telephone number list so they could call their lawyer from the unit at any time. We understand the wāhine are aware that this would result in their calls being recorded.

Finding

Finding 13. The prison is making good use of the AVL facilities.

Finding 14. While some units provided good access to telephone calls with lawyers, some wāhine placed their lawyer's telephone number on their approved list which would lead to the calls being recorded.

⁹ Note this is an indicator – not a standard.

Bullying and violence reduction

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners feel safe from bullying, abuse and violence.

61. Corrections data for 1 September 2019 to 29 February 2020 showed no serious prisoner on staff or prisoner on prisoner assaults recorded. There were 12 non-serious¹⁰ prisoner assaults on staff and 19 non-serious prisoner on prisoner assaults recorded for the same time period. There were also 63 recorded incidents of prisoner abuse or threats towards staff and 31 incidents of prisoner abuse or threats towards other prisoners. Overall, most incidents related to prisoner behaviour and occurred in units with high security prisoners.
62. Prison Tension Assessment Tool (PTAT)¹¹ data for the six months to 29 February 2020 showed very low levels of tension across the site. Wāhine we spoke with generally agreed that relationships between wāhine were the most common contributor to unit tension.
63. Most wāhine and staff we spoke with did not consider that the presence of gangs contributed towards unit tension. Corrections data for the six-month period to 29 February 2020 showed 40 prisoners (25%) identified as having gang affiliations. The gangs most commonly recorded were Mongrel Mob (21 wāhine) and Black Power (11).
64. Seven of the eight wāhine we interviewed in Tizard Unit and the Drug Treatment Unit said they felt safe in prison. Five wāhine we spoke with in Wing 3 of Upper Prison told us they did not feel safe in their unit. Four of these wāhine told us they felt bullied by particular prisoners. They said leaving the unit to go to work every day helped them cope. Inspectors reported the issue of bullying to prison management.
65. During our inspection, one wāhine was seriously assaulted by two other prisoners in the Upper Prison. She had previously told staff that the other wāhine were threatening her and making her feel unsafe. She had asked to be placed in voluntary protective custody, but her request was declined. The victim told us she did not feel that staff took her safety concerns seriously.¹² After her return from hospital, she was returned to her unit where the other wāhine remained and no action had been taken. She was later placed in voluntary protective custody. When the Inspectorate raised the issue with prison staff, the other wāhine were placed on directed segregation and one had a misconduct charge laid.
66. We noted that the prison does not have a dedicated Site Emergency Response Team (SERT) to respond to serious incidents of violence and disorder. We were informed that Rimutaka Prison's SERT team provided support if necessary. However, due to the geographical distance between Rimutaka Prison and the Tawa site, urgent assistance was unlikely to be available.

Findings

Finding 15. Most wāhine we spoke with at the Tawa site reported feeling safe and incidents of bullying, abuse and violence were recorded as non-serious.

¹⁰ Act of physical aggression where the victim does not sustain an injury.

¹¹ The PTAT records tension in each unit and is used to identify trends and manage risks.

¹² The Inspectorate subsequently monitored this prisoner's allegation that staff did not perform their duties to prevent her from being assaulted by other prisoners.

- Finding 16. At the Upper Prison, some wāhine said they were bullied by other prisoners.
- Finding 17. During our inspection a serious prisoner on prisoner assault occurred. Staff did not respond appropriately and no action (to ensure the victim's safety or to punish the perpetrators) was taken until the Inspectorate intervened.
- Finding 18. Rimutaka Prison's SERT team was unlikely to be able to respond to serious incidents of violence and disorder at the Tawa site in a timely way.

Prisoner files

Inspection Standards

- A prisoner file management system is in place and used to record all information about that prisoner and confidentiality is maintained.

67. During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of paper and electronic prisoner files across both sites. The information contained in the electronic (IOMS) and paper files was of a good standard overall. The files were stored correctly, and confidentiality was maintained.
68. Staff told us files for wāhine on remand were stored in an office near the Receiving Office and not in the residential units. Consequently, some documentation was stored in temporary files in the units. We did not observe any outstanding documentation waiting to be filed in the units.
69. During September, daily staff briefings included 'Getting Basics Great' training, which focused on improving the quality of prisoner records. Staff told us that the training had helped improve staff practice in this area.

Findings

- Finding 19. The information contained in the documents stored in electronic and paper prisoner files was of a good standard overall.
- Finding 20. The 'Getting Basics Great' training supported and encouraged staff to improve the quality of prisoner records.

Accommodation (cell sharing)

Inspection Standards

- The placement of prisoners in shared cells is done after careful consideration of their suitability for associating with one another.
- Trans prisoners are placed in single cells, unless a suitable trans prisoner of the same gender is identified.
- Trans prisoners' safety is assessed before placement in any cell or unit.

70. Before placing wāhine in a shared cell, a Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment (SACRA) must be carried out to determine any safety risks.¹³ Our review of the SACRA data for 1 September 2019 to 29 February 2020 showed 100% compliance with the requirements, which meant every cell movement was informed by a completed SACRA. During this period, 332 SACRAs were completed.
71. While some units were double bunked (including some cells that had beds positioned side by side), only 10 wāhine were sharing a cell at the time of our inspection. Wāhine we spoke with who shared a cell did not raise any concerns.
72. During our inspection, we observed some double bunked cells in the Upper Prison were small, making for a cramped environment.
73. The trans prisoner we spoke with resided in a single cell and no safety concerns were raised.

Finding

Finding 21. Prison staff consistently assessed wāhine for eligibility and suitability prior to being considered for sharing a cell.

Complaints

Inspection Standards

- Complaints procedures are effective, timely and well understood.
- Staff and prisoners are encouraged to resolve complaints at the lowest level in the first instance; when this is not possible prisoners understand how to make a complaint, and are able to do so easily.
- Prisoners feel safe from repercussions when using complaints procedures and can appeal decisions easily.
- Where a prisoner raises a concern about their safety, these matters are prioritised.

74. In the prison network, complaints should be resolved at the lowest level if possible. Prisoners can use the PC.01 system to make a complaint.
75. In the six months to 29 February 2020, 265 PC.01 complaints were recorded at the site. Forty-eight complaints were categorised as 'staff conduct and attitude' followed by 'other' (35) and 'prisoner property' (33). Of these, 86 complaints were generated by wāhine accommodated in Tizard Unit followed closely by the Secure Unit (78). During this timeframe, the Office of the Inspectorate received 19 complaints from wāhine at the site. The greatest number (7) of complaints were 'claims for lost property'.
76. Most wāhine we spoke with confirmed they were aware of the complaints process and could access PC.01 forms. In the six months to 29 February 2020, 177 wāhine (67%) received an

¹³ The risk assessment considers a prisoner's age, offending history, gang affiliation, prison experience, size and strength, mental health, risks of violence and/or self-harm, special needs, security classification, segregation status, sentence status, and other factors relevant to safety and good order.

interview with a staff member to discuss their complaint within the required timeframe and 88 (33%) did not.

77. During the six-month period to 1 August 2020, 34 PC.01 complaints were recorded about health services, with seven complaints being referred to the Office of the Inspectorate. Of the complaints we reviewed, all met the necessary response timeframe. We confirmed that the confidentiality of health information was maintained during the complaints process.
78. One wāhine spoke favourably of the health complaint process and reported that she was happy with the outcome of her interactions with health staff.
79. We confirmed information was visible in all units about how to submit a complaint to the Office of the Inspectorate and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Finding

Finding 22. The complaints process was well understood by the wāhine, and well managed by staff.

Wāhine Māori

Inspection Standards

- Māori women can access and practise their Māori culture and customs.
- Māori women have access to kaupapa Māori informed and tikanga-based rehabilitation and reintegration programmes that are specifically designed to meet their needs.
- Māori women are supported by staff to access stable whānau support.

80. At the time of our inspection, 58% of the wāhine in the prison (91 individuals) identified as Māori. Opportunities to practise Māori culture and customs were limited.
81. The Tikanga Māori Motivational Programme is delivered at Arohata Prison. Six wāhine started and completed the programme in August 2019. A further four wāhine started the programme in June 2020.
82. During our inspection, we observed that karakia was part of the Drug Treatment Unit's daily routine.
83. He Whare Āwhina is a low security unit at the Tawa site. Four wāhine told us the unit was supposed to have a kaupapa Māori focus but there was no such focus nor were there opportunities to practice tikanga in the unit. The wāhine said it was more like a working unit.
84. The Prison Director confirmed there are no programmes, providers or volunteers to support the kaupapa or provide cultural focused activities in the unit. However, planning was underway to strengthen the prison's connection to local iwi and staff hoped to implement a kaupapa Māori programme in the future.
85. The education tutors shared with us that recently the Education Team at National Office had attempted to support the site by arranging Māori weaving tuition to be available to wāhine by video. However, this method of tuition was poorly suited to the wāhine.

86. During the period of our inspection, it was Te Wiki O Te Reo Māori – Māori Language Week.¹⁴ While we observed cultural activities for staff to participate in and recognition of Corrections' Hōkai Rangi Strategy, similar opportunities were not available to the wāhine.
87. One wāhine we spoke with in Tizard Unit told us she was disappointed that given it was Māori Language Week, no activities were available in the unit to support and encourage Wāhine Maori to connect with their culture.

Findings

Finding 23. Wāhine Māori receive few opportunities to practise their culture and customs.

Finding 24. He Whare Āwhina Unit has no programmes, providers or volunteers in place to support the wāhine and kaupapa of the unit. The site plans to engage local iwi and hopes to implement a kaupapa Māori programme specific to the Wellington region.

Foreign national wāhine

Inspection Standards

- There are prison staff with the skills to communicate with all prisoners on site. Where required, interpreters are provided.
- Foreign national women receive practical help to keep in touch with family overseas.

88. Foreign national wāhine (those who are not New Zealand citizens) can expect to be supported in prison to access their consular representative, if required, and a translation service if they need support to understand key information such as during inductions. Foreign national wāhine should also have their health, culture, religion and dietary requirements met.
89. At the time of our inspection, the prison accommodated two foreign national wāhine. They told us they were content with their management and received contact from their consulate every six months.
90. The wāhine said they often had limited or no access to money to buy telephone cards to call their families overseas and international calls were expensive.
91. One wāhine told us staff had arranged for her sister to telephone the prison every fortnight to speak with her and she said this supported her overall well-being. She said she was hopeful she would be able to see her family via video calls in the near future.
92. The other wāhine was subject to a deportation order. She told us she had one close family member living in New Zealand whom she had regular contact with. She said she rarely felt the need to contact her family overseas.

¹⁴ Te Wiki O Te Reo Maori – Māori Language Week was held 1-20 September 2020, and is an annual initiative to promote the use of te reo Māori

Finding

Finding 25. Staff supported foreign national wāhine to maintain contact with their family overseas and access support from their consulate.

Property**Inspection Standards**

- Prisoner's property held in storage is secure, and prisoners can access it on reasonable request.
- Prisoner funds are managed securely and are accounted for.

93. When wāhine arrive at the prison, their personal clothing and other property is sorted and stored in the prison's Property Office. Wāhine can ask family and whānau to send them a limited number of personal items (such as underwear or other clothing, and telephone cards), which is registered by staff on individual property lists for each wāhine.
94. The Property Office is located in the Receiving Office at the Tawa site and managed by Receiving Office staff. There are no dedicated Property Office staff.
95. We did not see any property waiting to be processed and the procedures in place to manage property were appropriate.
96. Staff told us wāhine can experience delays receiving their property because items must be checked by the detector dogs¹⁵ before they can be issued.
97. Fourteen of 21 wāhine we spoke with did not raise any issues regarding property. However, five others reported frustration with the time taken to receive personal property.

Finding

Finding 26. Despite processes in place to manage prisoner property, distribution could be delayed by the availability of detector dogs and their handlers.

¹⁵ The two detector dogs and their handlers are based at Rimutaka Prison and are a shared resource between Arohata and Rimutaka Prisons. From time to time, the detector dogs are needed to support other prisons and agencies.

Health

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have timely access to community-equivalent health and dental services, and receive treatment which is sensitive to their diverse needs from competent staff in an environment that promotes dignity and maintains privacy.
- Prisoners are supported and encouraged to optimise their health and well-being.
- Prisons have a health-care service which ensures professional care of the physical and mental health of prisoners.
- Health files are accurate, up-to-date and confidential, and accompany the prisoner when they are transferred.
- Prisoners have access to specialised external secondary and tertiary health care services when required.
- On reception, prisoners are made aware of the prison health services available and how to access them.
- Prisoners have a right to health confidentiality and do not have to provide information, undergo health interventions or screening.
- Gender-specific health care services, at least equivalent to those available in the community, shall be provided to prisoners.
- Prisoners receive the option of having a chaperone present if they receive health treatment from a nurse or doctor of a different gender.
- Trans prisoners receive health care equivalent to that available to them in the community.
- Prisoners receive gender appropriate information about health promotion and the control of communicable diseases.
- Preventative health screening, equivalent to that provided in the community, is available to prisoners of any gender.

Provision of health care

98. 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*".
99. The prison's health service is supported by contracted providers such as medical officers, a dentist and physiotherapist. Other external health providers who come on site include maternity, podiatry and counselling providers.

100. The Arohata Prison health service is split across the Tawa site where the main health centre is located, and the Upper Prison where there is a small satellite health centre. The health centres, consultation rooms and other clinical areas were clean and well equipped.
101. The Tawa centre and the Upper Prison centre each have two holding cells. Tawa has a treatment room, a consultation room used by the Medical Officer, a general interview room and a dental clinic room. The Upper Prison centre had a treatment room and a general consultation room.
102. Space in both centres was limited when multiple clinics were being held, although at the time of our inspection a low number of wāhine were in the Upper Prison so there were only a small number of health appointments.
103. Health promotion material was well displayed in both clinics, along with information advising patients of the Code of Patient Rights and access to Health and Disability Advocacy support.
104. Wāhine we interviewed told us health services were helpful and generally good. The main issue highlighted were delays seeing the doctor. All the wāhine we interviewed stated they liked the Medical Officer and felt comfortable talking with her.
105. A custodial officer is assigned to both clinics daily to provide movement support and security. Escort staff respected patients' privacy, with consultation room doors being closed for all observed interactions and custodial staff remaining outside the door.
106. During our inspection, the health centres appeared to run efficiently within the restrictions of custodial movements. We saw no evidence of appointments being cancelled due a lack of custodial support. Staff told us a small number of appointments were cancelled due to over-booked clinics or limited time. Data we reviewed for a one-month period showed only three of approximately 135 appointments were cancelled due to over-booking.
107. We observed custodial staff ensuring that a wāhine was able to attend her hospital surgical appointment despite short staffing.
108. The medication rooms at both sites were tidy and had secure medication bins. While there were set times for medication rounds, health staff ensured other medications that were required outside these times (e.g. insulin) were provided to the wāhine. Nurses we spoke with stated they rarely had incidents when custodial staff were not available to assist with medication rounds.
109. Medical Officers are currently contracted for six hours per week of clinic time. The Tawa Health Centre has a female Medical Officer who had been working at the prison for 15 months while the Upper Prison was supported by a female Medical Officer from Rimutaka Prison.
110. Appointments for the Medical Officer are prioritised according to need, and wāhine are usually seen within two to three weeks. If wāhine are assessed as a high priority, they are added to the next clinic list.
111. The Medical Officer told us the six contracted hours per week was insufficient to meet the health demands of the wāhine in prison and she often worked additional hours. Data we reviewed over a one-month period showed 49 patients were seen in a clinic over that time.
112. One wāhine we interviewed stated that sometimes staff did not explain changes to her medication, and she had become frustrated. The Medical Officer acknowledged that medications were sometimes changed without discussion with the patient and agreed that this was not best practice.

113. A Dentist is contracted to provide a clinic one day a week and on average saw 10 patients per week. The current waiting list is around three weeks to be seen. The Dentist noted there was a high need for dental treatments and said they would like to be able to offer wāhine more therapeutic options however they were only contracted to provide basic treatments.
114. Wāhine also spoke favourably about the Dentist.
115. The Health Centre Manager, Medical Officer and Dentist expressed concerns that the current budgeted hours for the Medical Officer and Dentist would not be sufficient when the prison consolidated on one site. At the time of inspection, they were over budget for these services.
116. Wāhine submit health request forms (known as chits) to access health services. The forms are collected each morning from locked boxes in the units where they are triaged, with any urgent issues addressed that day. All forms are responded to, with replies returned during the evening medication round. There appeared to be no issues with wāhine accessing the request forms.
117. We observed nursing staff interacting professionally and compassionately with the wāhine. Wāhine we interviewed told us about a recent and enjoyable health promotion activity run by a nurse they attended on maintaining a healthy weight.
118. Nursing assessments reviewed were well documented with thorough and comprehensive assessments being undertaken. Chronic health issues were well managed with staff using best practice assessment tools.
119. Our review of the care given to two trans wāhine showed that both were receiving appropriate support from health services with referrals and specialist services at the District Health Board.
120. All nursing staff were up to date with their mandatory training, with new staff working to complete their individual induction programme. Two nurses were working towards their Professional Development Recognition Programme,¹⁶ with one near completion.

Findings

- Finding 27. The health centres at both sites were clean, and well equipped with medical equipment and health promotion material.
- Finding 28. Health staff demonstrated professionalism and compassion in their interactions with the wāhine.
- Finding 29. Health staff consistently documented high-quality assessments with the use of best practice assessment tools.
- Finding 30. There is limited access to consultation rooms at the Tawa site to meet the demands of the health service.
- Finding 31. The budgeted hours for the Medical Officer and Dentist were not adequate for the prison population.
- Finding 32. Custodial staff work collaboratively with health staff to ensure patient privacy is maintained.

¹⁶ The Professional Development Recognition Programme is a clinically focused competency-based programme for nurses.

Substance abuse

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners dependent on drugs and/or alcohol receive prompt clinical treatment which is effective, meets individual and gender-specific needs and offers the same services as those available in the community.

121. Health staff actively assessed and supported wāhine experiencing substance withdrawal. Documentation showed that best practice assessment tools were used as part of their management.
122. No wāhine required opioid substitution therapy at the time of our inspection.

Finding

Finding 33. Wāhine experiencing withdrawal upon arrival at the prison were well managed, with best practice tools being used by health staff.

Mental health care

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners with mental health needs are identified promptly and supported by community-equivalent services to optimise their well-being during their time in prison and on release.
- Gender-specific mental health needs are recognised, treated and supported by health staff and specialist services at the prison, and they have appropriate access equivalent to that available in the community.
- The gender-specific needs of all prisoners are recognised to prevent self-harm and suicide and therapeutic responses are implemented and are culturally appropriate.
- Staff are able to identify and support women at times when women may feel particularly distressed.
- Prisoners who report abuse while in prison are protected and provided with support and access to gender-specific counselling.

123. At the time of our inspection, the prison had one trauma counsellor and recruitment was underway for a second.¹⁷
124. The trauma counsellor has a large, therapeutic room that wāhine enjoy going to. Wāhine we interviewed said they found the trauma counsellor very supportive.
125. The trauma counsellor told us there were difficulties in finding services in the community to refer wāhine to when they were released.

¹⁷ An appointment to this position has since been made.

126. Four ACC counsellors are available for those who qualified for counselling through this service. There are no other primary mental health providers available for wāhine support.
127. The Mental Health and Reintegration Service provider contracted to deliver primary mental health support to wāhine had been unable to recruit clinicians for the past two years.
128. At the time of our inspection, two wāhine were in the Intervention and Support Unit (ISU). Both wāhine had management plans that were reviewed and updated daily. The plans were mostly general in nature but had some individualisation.
129. Staff in the ISU worked collaboratively to manage the wāhine within the unit. Multi-disciplinary team meetings included custodial staff, the Health Centre Manager, case management and a social worker. Forensic staff participated if they were on site and had a patient in the unit.
130. Forensic Services supporting wāhine with a major mental illness are provided by Capital and Coast District Health Board, with the psychiatrist and forensic nurse coming on site on a regular basis.
131. At the Tawa site, the ISU is clean but is an unsuitable environment for its intended purpose of accommodating prisoners who are at risk of self-harm or mentally unwell. The unit is small, with three cells (including one dry cell¹⁸), and has a small internal day room that receives no natural light. When the ISU cells were full, staff place wāhine at risk of self-harm in the Separates Unit.¹⁹
132. Inspectors could not find any documentation which showed the Separates cells had been designated for at risk prisoners, as required by law to meet the requirements for an at risk cell.
133. The prison has attempted to brighten the space with the addition of a wall mural and landscape pictures in the communal areas. We observed there was very limited natural light available in each cell.
134. The day room is equipped with a soft padded table, chairs, a television fixed to the wall and a chalk board, however there was limited space available to enable wāhine to use these. There were limited activity resources for the wāhine although staff were looking at purchasing supplies of items such as pens, paper and pencils.
135. There are no interview rooms available for assessing patients in the unit, meaning the day room must be used for this purpose.
136. A small exercise yard is available for wāhine; however, it can only be used in dry weather due to the absence of any shelter. Staff advised that when it rained the yard flooded due to poor positioning of the drain.
137. At the time of our inspection, the exercise yard was equipped with a stationary bike but no other equipment. Wāhine were able to spend time in the yard and mixed with other wāhine if they wished to and when appropriate.

¹⁸ A dry cell or round room has no running water or toilet and is designed to be used when a prisoner is suspected of internal concealment.

¹⁹ Separates cells are where people are placed after they have been sentenced to cell confinement after a misconduct or are placed on segregation. Each cell has its own yard. At the time of the Inspection, the Separates were used for COVID-19 isolation.

138. Custodial staff demonstrated some understanding of some of the drivers of self-harming behaviour. They recognised it was a learned behaviour that wāhine used to cope with their emotions and worked to try and manage the associated risk. All custodial staff in the ISU expressed a need for training on how to best manage and support the wāhine in their care.

Finding

- Finding 34. The Intervention and Support Unit does not provide a suitable environment for prisoners who are at risk of self-harm or mentally unwell. The unit is small, has no interview room, has an exercise yard that is only usable on dry days and there is little natural light.
- Finding 35. There is limited primary mental health and trauma counselling available for the wāhine.
- Finding 36. When the ISU cells were full, staff place wāhine at risk of self-harm in the Separates Unit, although these cells do not appear to be designated for at risk prisoners.

Released under the Official Information Act

Environment

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners live in a clean and suitable environment which is in a good state of repair and fit for purpose.
- Prisoners have sufficient bedding that is laundered regularly.
- Prisoners are encouraged to keep themselves clean and are provided with the appropriate toiletries.
- Prisoners have adequate access to a variety of clean clothing, including underwear and footwear, which is seasonally appropriate and of the right size and quality.
- Prisoners have a varied, healthy and balanced diet which meets their individual needs.
- Upon request, the prison provides meals and food in line with religious, cultural and other special dietary requirements.
- Prisoners' food and meals are stored, prepared and served in line with hygiene regulations.
- Clean drinking water shall be available to every prisoner.
- Mealtimes are reasonable and generally match those in the community, where possible.

Residential units

139. Staff and wāhine we spoke with during our inspection told us the wāhine take pride in ensuring their cells and unit are clean and well looked after. Our observations confirmed this, and we found overall the prison to be clean and in a good state of repair. The residential units and cells at both sites were largely free of graffiti, apart from some which was etched into cell doors. The outdoor areas in and around the Self Care and low security units were generally well maintained. Tizard Unit had ground-in soap and toothpaste-based graffiti on the brickwork in the yards that required water blasting.
140. The site appeared to be keeping up with maintenance and the facilities maintenance contractor did not raise any concerns with us about their work and requirements. We were advised that in Tizard Unit the prisoner kiosk had been broken for at least nine weeks while they waited for an electronic part to arrive from overseas. At that time, wāhine had to request forms in hard copy. The kiosk was working in the unit at the time of our inspection.
141. In contrast, the Drug Treatment Unit offered an inviting, therapeutic environment. The outdoor courtyard was laid with artificial grass to soften the look of the area, however, the courtyard had not been appropriately levelled and we were informed the area floods during heavy rain.
142. Most units in both sites had shared showers rather than showers in individual cells. Tizard Unit was the exception and had showers in individual cells. Because the cells in this unit were

- double-bunked and some had double occupancy, plastic shower curtains had been installed to maintain privacy.
143. We found access to natural light, heating and ventilation levels to be acceptable in most units across both sites.
 144. Wāhine in Tizard Unit told us the unit was too warm due to the underfloor heating, especially on the upper landing. The heating pipes in Tizard Unit were hot to touch. The prison has provided fans for each cell to help alleviate the heat and has installed a venting system to exchange warm air from inside with cooler air from outside. Managing the temperature remains an ongoing area of focus for the prison as highlighted in minutes from a management meeting dated August 2020. This issue was also identified in our 2018 inspection.
 145. In the Upper Prison, the cells were double-bunked. At the time of our inspection, all wāhine were accommodated alone in individual cells.
 146. Unlike the other units, Tizard Unit did not have kitchen appliances such as a microwave, fridge, toaster and toasted sandwich maker. Staff said they were removed after being misused by wāhine. Although it is not a requirement to have such appliances in high security units, some prisons do provide these.
 147. We reviewed incident reports for the 12 months prior to our inspection and found no records indicating that wāhine had misused appliances.
 148. The prison has a minimum security Self Care Unit located outside the secure perimeter of the Tawa site. The unit has four houses which can each accommodate up to four wāhine. All wāhine residing in the Self Care Unit are electronically monitored by GPS. One of the houses is designated as a Mothers with Babies Unit. At the time of our inspection, five wāhine were residing in the Self Care houses and there were no mothers with babies.
 149. Each of the Self Care houses has an open plan living and kitchen area, four bedrooms, a bathroom, separate toilet and laundry.
 150. The new high security unit at the Tawa site was still under construction at the time of our inspection. We observed improvements had been made to soften the environment after feedback given by the Office of the Inspectorate during construction.

Findings

Finding 37. Overall, the prison was clean and in a good state of repair.

Finding 38. The Drug Treatment Unit offers a therapeutic environment.

Finding 39. Despite the efforts of staff, the temperature in Tizard Unit continues to be uncomfortable for the wāhine.

Hygiene

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have gender appropriate and reasonable access to facilities and sanitary items for their specific hygiene needs, including during escort.

151. During our inspection, we observed that the site held an adequate supply of sanitary and basic toiletry items, and wāhine we spoke with confirmed they could readily access these items.

Finding

Finding 40. Sanitary and toiletry items are readily available to wāhine.

Clothing

152. There was a good supply of prison issue clothing for the wāhine, including availability in a range of sizes. Wāhine we spoke with reported no issues with accessing clothing and bedding.
153. We observed the prison's Receiving Office had a good supply of bras and underwear, which were made available to prisoners who required them. However, we found some wāhine had only one bra and two pairs of underwear and they were unaware they could request more. Staff in these units appeared to be unaware of this shortage, but they obtained additional supplies when we highlighted the issue.
154. We confirmed wāhine had access to a washing machine and dryer in their units (including one shared laundry for the Self Care Unit) at the Tawa site. Staff told us the non-commercial washing machine and dryer in Tizard Unit often broke down due to heavy use.
155. Wāhine in the Upper Prison did not have access to a washing machine and dryer in their units. Instead, all laundry was washed and dried in the central laundry.
156. During our inspection, staff told us that bedding and towels were washed regularly in the main laundry at both sites. However, we observed towels being washed in some units at the Tawa site.
157. Some wāhine raised concern that their duvets could not be washed more regularly than every three months.
158. The quality and condition of pillows varied across the site and we observed several wāhine using clothing or duvets to provide more comfort and support.

Finding

Finding 41. The prison had a good supply of clothing. Some wāhine were unaware they could access additional bras and underwear and some staff were unaware of shortages of supply.

Finding 42. Wāhine in the Tizard Unit did not always have access to a washing machine and dryer in the unit.

Finding 43. The quality and condition of pillows varied across the prison.

Food

159. The wāhine we spoke with told us they were generally satisfied with the food provided as part of Corrections' new national menu.
160. Wāhine were unhappy with the mealtimes. Breakfast was typically served at 8.30am, lunch at 11.00am and dinner at 3.30pm at both sites, which the wāhine found to be too close together and they wanted dinner served later in the day. At the Tawa site, a hot meal was provided for dinner, while at the Upper Prison the hot meal was served for lunch because the meals were prepared in the kitchen at Rimutaka Prison and delivered to the site. Wāhine at the Upper Prison had the option of eating their sandwich meal later in the evening.
161. Due to the early dinner times, some wāhine told us they often felt hungry later at night and many reported they supplemented their meals with additional food purchased through the prisoner canteen system. We understand the prison is considering the provision of the daily hot meal during lunchtime at the Tawa site so prisoners can eat their sandwiches later in their cells at a time that best suits them.
162. Some wāhine told us they had gained weight since being in prison and this was due to the prison food. We spoke with the gym instructor who was aware of this perception among the wāhine and had provided a pamphlet that showed the calories in each prison meal compared to the food items available from the prisoner canteen system. We commend this initiative and encourage staff to make this information more widely available to all prisoners.

Finding

Finding 44. Overall, wāhine were satisfied with the food available from the national menu.

Finding 45. Some wāhine were unhappy with the timing of meals, which left them feeling hungry in the evening.

Prisoners and children

Pregnant prisoners and post-natal support

Inspection Standards

- Pregnant and breastfeeding prisoners, people who have recently given birth, and those caring for a child in prison have their mental, physical, emotional, cultural, and health needs fully supported throughout their time at the prison by appropriately trained staff.
- Prisoners should give birth in hospital wherever possible.

163. Pregnant wāhine can access midwifery services delivered by the Capital and Coast District Health Board as required.
164. At the time of our inspection, there were six pregnant wāhine at the prison. None of the pregnant wāhine we spoke with had any issues with the pregnancy support and care they were receiving in prison.

Finding

Finding 46. Wāhine who were pregnant could access appropriate midwifery support and care.

Children residing in prison

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners whose child is with them in prison shall be provided with the maximum possible opportunities to spend time with their child.
- Prisoners whose child is with them in prison are provided with a safe, supportive and comfortable environment which prioritises the care and development of the child.
- The psychological/emotional needs of the child are closely monitored to assess any adverse effects of living in a closed institution and measures are taken to reduce the negative psychological impact of institutionalisation, based on individual needs.

165. The Mothers with Babies Unit is intended to support mother and child bonding and offers continuity of care.
166. At the time of our inspection, the Mothers with Babies Unit was unoccupied and staff advised that no children had been in residence during the previous five years. One application had been received and declined during this period.
167. Staff incorrectly understood that the Mothers with Babies Unit was restricted to wāhine with a minimum security classification who were eligible for external self care placement, and was

limited to children under nine months of age for health and safety reasons because the unit is located on a rise.²⁰ Staff told us that additional fencing could resolve the safety concerns.

168. The official entry criteria, however, is that mothers must undergo a risk assessment, be drug free, have no serious misconducts, and be motivated to live in the unit and care for their child. The long-held beliefs of staff about the entry criteria for the Mothers with Babies Unit may help explain why the unit was under-utilised.
169. Following our 2018 inspection we were told 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."* It is disappointing that this progress has not taken place.
170. We observed the Mothers with Babies Unit required some updating and staff confirmed that the work was underway and new heat pumps had recently been installed.
171. The Social Worker told us the site did not have a formal referral process to enable eligible wāhine to apply to have their children with them in the Mother with Babies Unit. However, it was her expectation that staff would inform her when they learn during site inductions that a wāhine has a child under two years of age at home.

Finding

Finding 47. Misunderstandings about the entry criteria for the Mothers with Babies Unit may have led to a long-term situation where the unit is not utilised.

Finding 48. The Mothers with Babies Unit continues to require improvements to address health and safety concerns in order to accommodate children over the age of nine months.

²⁰ The Mothers with Babies Units at Christchurch Women's Prison and Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility allow mothers to live with their babies until the child is aged two years.

Good Order

Classification and placement

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are held in a safe environment where security is proportionate to risk and not unnecessarily restrictive.
- Classification, placement and treatment are based on an individual assessment of each prisoner's risks and needs.
- Prisoners are held in the appropriate security conditions and can seek review about decisions on their security classification.
- Prisoners are classified based on their gender-specific needs and circumstances. Prisoners are housed in units and managed in regimes which match their gender-specific risks and needs.
- Prisoners are accommodated in units that have the lowest possible security level.
- Prisoners of different categories are separated, where possible, by allocating them to separate parts of the prison.

172. Overall, wāhine we spoke with did not raise any concerns regarding their unit placement.
173. Staff we spoke with at the time of our inspection were aware of the importance of wāhine having time out of their cells. The wāhine and staff we spoke with and unit desk files confirmed the following unlock hours:

Tawa site

- Tizard Unit (high security unit) – Groups of wāhine averaged one and a half hours out of their cell each day, split between morning and afternoon. This included the opportunity to go into the yard for an hour, if they wished. Four unlock regimes were in operation to ensure different categories of prisoners remained separate. We note this time had reduced from four hours during our 2018 inspection.
- ISU/Secure Unit - Wāhine are offered one hour out of their cell each day, which is taken alone in the yard if they are restricted or denied association. Wāhine in the ISU may interact with each other in the day room on approval.
- He Whare Āwhina – Wāhine with jobs receive seven hours or more out of their cell each day. Those without jobs receive at least four hours out of their cell.
- Drug Treatment Unit – Wāhine receive between six and seven hours out of their cell each day to attend their programme, exercise and socialise in the common areas.
- Self Care – Wāhine can access the outdoors for around seven hours each day and at all other times they are locked in their houses (not their rooms).

Upper Prison

- Wing 2 – Wāhine averaged about one and a quarter hours each day out of their cells. Staff offered the wāhine time in the yard each day.

- Wing 3 - Four unlock regimes were in operation to ensure the different categories of prisoner remained separate. Each group averaged one and a half hours out of their cell each day, split between morning and afternoon.
 - Wing 4 – One wāhine, on voluntary segregation, who was the only prisoner in the wing, was unlocked from her cell for one hour each day.²¹
174. We observed some unit staff managing multiple unlocks to maintain the separation of different categories of prisoners. While this can reduce the opportunity for incidents to occur, it leads to a reduced time out of cell which, in turn, can cause increased tension or boredom.
175. Time out of cell was often used for cleaning and making telephone calls rather than exercise. Time out of cell for other activities should be in addition to any hour allocated for exercise.
176. Staff in Tizard Unit said they found it challenging managing the high number of remand prisoners in the unit and the frequent movements in and out. As a result, staff spent much of their time unlocking and locking wāhine instead of engaging purposely and constructively with them.

Findings

Finding 49. While wāhine generally received at least one hour out of their cell each day, this time was often used for cleaning and making telephone calls rather than exercise. Time out of cell for other activities should be in addition to any hour allocated for exercise.

Finding 50. Staff maintained the separation of different categories of wāhine. This led to multiple unlock regimes and wāhine having limited time out of cell.

²¹ The woman, who had been assaulted by other prisoners, was in the wing for three days, then went back to the mainstream wing and was released soon afterwards.

Segregation and cell confinement

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are placed on directed segregation only with proper authority and for the shortest time period, which is regularly reviewed. Prisoners understand why they have been segregated.
- Prisoners are kept safe at all times while on directed segregation and individual needs are recognised and given proper attention.
- Cell confinement is subject to strict policies and procedures.
- Prisoners suspected of internal concealment are located in a dry cell as a last resort and the proper authorisation is recorded.

177. At the beginning of our inspection, the site had no wāhine subject to directed protective custody.²²
178. Two wāhine accused of assaulting another prisoner were placed on directed segregation for the purpose of maintaining safety and good order.²³ This occurred after Inspectors raised the issue with the Prison Director.
179. Inspectors were unable, during our visit, to access all the required approval documentation to support the placement of the wāhine on voluntary or directed segregation.
180. The response from staff demonstrated a lack of understanding of the procedures associated with segregation. On this occasion, staff failed to maintain prisoner safety and to consider segregation procedures.

Finding

Finding 51. During our inspection, appropriate segregation processes were not followed after a serious incident occurred.

²² Section 59(1) of the Corrections Act 2004. Segregation for purpose of protective custody is used when the safety of the prisoner has been put at risk by another person.

²³ Section 58(1) of the Corrections Act 2004. Segregation for the purpose of security, good order, or safety is used where the security or good order of the prison would otherwise be endangered or prejudiced; or the safety of another prisoner or another person would otherwise be endangered.

Incentives

Inspection Standards

- Systems of rewards and privileges appropriate for different categories of prisoners are established, in order to encourage prosocial behaviour, develop a sense of responsibility and secure the interest and cooperation of prisoners.

181. During our inspection, we noted there was no system of rewards or privileges (incentives) to encourage pro-social behaviour

Finding

Finding 52. The site offers no incentives to encourage pro-social behaviour among the wāhine.

Discipline

Inspection Standards

- Disciplinary sanctions against prisoners are imposed by the proper authority.
- Prisoners are subject to disciplinary procedures which are fair and proportionate and follow due process.
- Prisoners are promptly informed of any disciplinary sanction, and understand the charges and procedures they face.
- Interpreter services will be used, where necessary, to explain any disciplinary charges, procedures and the process for defending the charges.
- Prison management does not rely on prisoners for any disciplinary functions, whether in a formal or informal manner.
- Cell confinement or disciplinary segregation shall not be applied to pregnant or breastfeeding prisoners or prisoners with babies in prison.
- Prisoner disciplinary sanctions do not include prohibition of family contact, especially with their children.

182. Prisons are required to maintain good discipline and order through 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.
183. For the period 1 September 2019 to 29 February 2020, 265 misconducts were generated across the site. Of these 60% were withdrawn (111), cancelled (29) or dismissed (18) and one wāhine was released before the charge could be heard. Most of the misconducts that were withdrawn related to incidents in one of the high security units. Withdrawals most often resulted from staff failing to meet necessary deadlines for laying charges or conducting hearings.

184. The Prison Director told us that staff are encouraged to try and resolve incidents at the earliest opportunity by talking with the prisoners before laying misconduct charges.
185. In Wing 2 in the Upper Prison we observed some custodial staff did not communicate effectively with wāhine nor actively manage what we identified were demanding and confrontational prisoner behaviours.
186. At the time of our inspection, the site had only one trained prosecutor who was also a Corrections Officer responsible for the ISU. This staff member told us they could only spend a few hours per week on prosecutions and consequently an additional staff member may be trained in the future.
187. Three managers were trained as hearing adjudicators at the site.

Findings

Finding 53. The administration of the misconduct process is not working effectively at the site.

Use of Force

Inspection Standards

- Force is used only against prisoners as a last resort and never as a disciplinary procedure. When used, force is legitimate, necessary, proportionate, and subject to rigorous governance.
- Instruments of restraint are used only in clearly defined circumstances, when lesser forms of control fail, and only for the time strictly required.

188. During our inspection we reviewed the prison's use of force register. In the six months to 29 February 2020, there were 23 incidents requiring the use of force at the site. Of these incidents, four incidents involved the use of pepper spray and in four others pepper spray was drawn but not used. Staff and wāhine we spoke with raised no concerns about the use of force.

Finding

Finding 54. Staff and wāhine we spoke with raised no concerns about the use of force.

Searches

Inspection Standards

- Searches of cells and prisoners are carried out only when necessary and are proportionate, with due respect for privacy and dignity.
- Women prisoners are searched only by female staff.
- Strip searches are carried out only when necessary, women prisoners are never fully naked and only two appropriately trained female staff are present.
- Trans prisoners can nominate staff of their preferred gender identity to perform searches, and their dignity and privacy is protected at all times.

189. Contraband such as drugs, alcohol and weapons can create risks to safety and good order in a prison. For the six months to 29 February 2020, 66 incidents of contraband being found were recorded for the site. The most common types of contraband were 'other'²⁴ (68%), drugs (12%) and tattoo equipment (11%).
190. Corrections data for the six-month period to 29 February 2020 recorded 93 strip searches across the site, 20% (19) occurred on entry to the Receiving Office (including after wāhine arrived from another prison or completed an escorted outing). Wāhine are strip searched by female staff according to policy when they arrive at the site, and wāhine we spoke with said they were treated with dignity and did not raise any concerns about their experience. We confirmed that closed-circuit television cameras were absent from all strip search areas, as required.
191. Most wāhine we spoke with regarding rubdown searches also did not raise any concerns. One trans prisoner we spoke with confirmed they were searched by staff of their preferred gender.
192. We observed staff undertaking rubdown searches during our inspection. We noted the quality of these searches was inconsistent and staff did not always examine the hair and footwear of wāhine.
193. We did not observe any cell searches during our inspection, however custodial staff were observed checking cell standards in some units. Wāhine we spoke with did not raise any concerns regarding cell searches. Corrections data confirms cells are routinely searched throughout the prison.
194. One staff member was rostered on a part-time basis for the delivery of the prison's drug testing regime. We were told the site was considering training more staff to undertake this work. Six out of 108 wāhine tested positive for illicit drug use in the six months to 29 February 2020.²⁵ Wāhine undertaking the Drug Treatment Programme were subject to regular, random drug testing and regular contraband searches of the unit are completed.

²⁴ Contraband finds categorised as 'other' include tobacco and smoking equipment, and gang-related paraphernalia.

²⁵ S.07.01 of the Prison Operations Manual notes prisoners can be drug tested randomly, voluntarily as a participant in any rehabilitation programme, as a temporary release returnee, or on reasonable grounds as required by the Prison Director (or their authorised staff member(s)).

Findings

Finding 55. Wāhine were strip searched in areas where their privacy and dignity were maintained and staff treated them with respect.

Finding 56. The quality of the rubdown searches we observed was inconsistent.

Finding 57. While the number of wāhine who tested positive for illicit drug use in the six months prior to our inspection was low, there is insufficient resource to effectively deliver the prison's drug testing regime.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Purposeful activity

Exercise

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners are able to spend at least one hour in the open air every day.
- Prisoners have access to physical exercise and recreational activities.

195. Minimum entitlements are set out in section 69 of the Corrections Act, and include physical exercise (as defined in section 70):
- Every prisoner (other than a prisoner engaged in outdoor work) may, on a daily basis, take at least one hour of physical exercise.
 - The physical exercise may be taken by the prisoner in the open air if the weather permits.
196. High security wāhine in Tizard Unit at the Tawa site and Wing 2 in the Upper Prison received less time out in the yards for exercise daily compared to the lower security units (one hour daily, as discussed previously). At the time of our inspection, the wāhine were using the yards to walk in, socialise and enjoy the fresh air. There were no recreational balls or exercise equipment in the Tizard Unit yards for the wāhine to use. Following our inspection, we were informed that balls had since been made available. We also noted there were no board games or usable puzzles available to the wāhine in Tizard Unit.
197. Wāhine in the low security units (including Wing 3 in Upper Prison) received more time out of their cell and opportunities for exercise and other recreational activity. Wāhine in the Upper Prison received daily access to two yards for exercise. The Drug Treatment Unit also has its own courtyard with a volleyball net and ball, other exercise equipment, board games and a common area where the wāhine can watch television together. Wāhine in He Whare Āwhina had access to basketball and volleyball in the yards; despite this some of the wāhine told us they got bored in the yard.
198. Wāhine in the Self Care Unit were locked in their houses at night only. During the day wāhine could access a shared recreational area indoors and an outside grassed area with tables and seating. The shared recreational area had a television, books, an exercise bike and a pool table. There was also a sewing machine available and unit staff were supporting wāhine to make items such as curtains for their rooms using material donated to the site.
199. The Tawa site has an outdoor swimming pool which remains unused. The unheated pool is fully fenced, operational and meets legislative pool safety requirements. Staff said the site was hoping to provide wāhine with opportunities to utilise the pool in the summer months and learn water safety. Staff told us they hoped to access funding required to employ part-time lifeguards to support this opportunity. Unless lifeguards are available, the pool will continue to sit unused. While the 2018 inspection found that the pool was not in use, some improvements had been made.
200. The Tawa site has a gym which was clean, had natural light and wall murals that were painted by wāhine. The gym was supported by a full time gym instructor. We noted the gym has been repainted since our 2018 inspection.
201. The gym was well equipped with a variety of exercise equipment that appeared to be in good working condition. The gym instructor told us a range of exercise classes were available

including spin (stationary bicycle), yoga, dance and high and low impact aerobics classes. There were also medicine balls and skipping ropes that wāhine could use and these were utilised in circuit training classes. The gym was equipped with hoops and nets so the wāhine could play basketball and volleyball.

202. The gym also has a stage which is used for the prison's annual Christmas performance that is always well attended by family, whānau and staff.
203. At the time of our inspection, the small gym at the Upper Prison was being disestablished in preparation for the closure of the site. The gym instructor had recently stopped providing sessions at the Upper Prison gym as there were too few wāhine at the prison and those who remained did not want to attend.
204. Wāhine we spoke with considered the gym instructor and the gym to be a positive influence on their overall health and well-being while they were in prison. The gym instructor told us wāhine had little time to exercise when they were out of their cells as they also must attend programmes, meetings and health appointments in this time. She focused on trying to motivate the wāhine to take responsibility for their own health and well-being and offered exercise routines they could undertake by themselves. The gym instructor told us many high security wāhine were unmotivated to take part in the exercise activities offered in the gym.
205. The gym instructor had established timetables for each unit to access the gym when the instructor was on site and when she was not. Custodial staff were required to accompany and monitor wāhine in the gym if they were high security or visiting the gym at a time when the gym instructor was absent or unavailable. We were told by the gym instructor and some wāhine that some custodial staff were reluctant to escort and supervise wāhine in the gym and tried to deter them from going.
206. During the COVID-19 lockdown, the gym instructor said she provided wāhine with instructions on how they could exercise in their cells without the need for equipment. We were told this guidance was welcomed by some wāhine and staff noted the benefits of this exercise. We commend this practice and hope this information will be shared with all prisoners on an ongoing basis.

Findings

- Finding 58. Wāhine receive daily opportunities to spend time in the open air and undertake exercise and other recreational activities, but this time was often limited by unlock regimes.
- Finding 59. Despite the site having a swimming pool, it was disappointing that it was not utilised to support health and well-being and teach water safety.
- Finding 60. The gym instructor is supporting wāhine to take responsibility for their own health, well-being and exercise routines.

Communication with family and whānau

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are encouraged and receive practical help to communicate with family and whānau.
- Prisoners have regular access to telephones and other communications, subject to a risk assessment.

207. Maintaining contact with family and whānau is important for the well-being and reintegration of wāhine following their release from prison. Most wāhine we spoke with did not share any concerns about the opportunities available to keep in regular contact with family and whānau via telephone. One wāhine said she could not speak with her young family member by telephone because he was usually at school when she was able to make telephone calls. A few wāhine shared that they were disappointed with cost of telephone calls in prison.
208. Several wāhine in the Upper Prison shared their frustration at the time taken to get telephone numbers approved. A review of the records showed telephone numbers took approximately a week to be approved. Staff in the affected units said that recent delays were attributed to miscommunication between staff.
209. While we were in the Upper Prison, we observed a staff member supporting a wāhine who did not have the means to purchase a telephone card and could not attend her family member's funeral that day. Staff comforted the wāhine and connected her by telephone in a quiet area so she could speak with another family member.
210. We observed that most telephones in the units did not have privacy hoods which can be problematic due to the location of the telephones in high traffic areas and the acoustics in some units. Some soundproofing adaptations had been made in the Upper Prison units, but staff told us this had not solved the problem and some wāhine still had difficulty hearing.
211. We noted that telephones in the units had notices placed nearby providing the contact details for the Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of the Inspectorate and other external agencies.
212. Wāhine can also apply to have a video call with their approved family and whānau visitors. Calls are limited to 10 minutes and the wāhine are monitored by staff throughout.
213. Wāhine can use the AVL facility once per month to call family and whānau. The prison has only one AVL facility available for this purpose. One wāhine told us she spoke with her child via AVL, which she found was beneficial. As mentioned previously, wāhine with family living overseas also appreciated this opportunity.
214. During our inspection, we observed wāhine being notified by staff of upcoming transfers to other prisons. Advance notification gave wāhine the opportunity to share the news of their transfer with their family and whānau.

Findings

- Finding 61. Wāhine were provided with opportunities to maintain contact with family and whānau by telephone and video calls, however these opportunities were limited.
- Finding 62. Some wāhine experienced delays getting telephone numbers approved.
- Finding 63. Telephones were often situated in high traffic areas in units which made it difficult for wāhine to hear calls.

Visits

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have regular access to visits.
- Prisoners are aware of prison procedures and their visits entitlements.
- Prisoners and their visitors are able to attend visits in a clean, safe and respectful environment which meets their needs.
- Visitors are informed about search procedures, and understand their right to refuse the search and leave the prison.
- Child visitors are searched only when there are reasonable grounds. Reasons for the search should be explained to the child, who should be searched in full view of his/her guardian.
- Visits areas are child friendly and allow for physical contact.
- There is special provision of visits for children at times which are least interruptive of their education and other activities.

215. The visiting area at the Tawa site was an inviting and clean multipurpose area. It is also used for Drug Treatment Unit graduations and other events. Visits take place at weekends, with both morning and afternoon sessions available.
216. There is a mother and child bonding room, available to wāhine who have younger children for 2-3 hours at a time, located in a separate area near the social worker's base. We found the bonding room was an appropriate safe space for children and families that was well-equipped with a rocking chair, change table, cot, books and toys.
217. Scheduled visiting takes place at weekends, with both morning and afternoon sessions available. At the time of our inspection, visitors were required to have their temperature checked as per the COVID-19 protocols at that time. The prison was observed to be strictly adhering to all COVID-19 protocols. We observed these requirements did not unnecessarily delay visitors.
218. We observed a relaxed, positive atmosphere among staff, wāhine and their families during visits. Staff appeared professional and interacted respectfully with wāhine, their children and other visitors. Children's toys and books were available in the main visits area.
219. Posters and information sheets were visible confirming key processes for visitors, and we observed staff providing clear instructions to visitors upon their arrival.

220. During our inspection, we observed prisoners being promptly moved by staff to the visits area following notification that their visitor had arrived, which helped avoid any chance of the visits being shortened unnecessarily.
221. We did not observe the visiting process at the Upper Prison, which also takes place at the weekend. At the time of our inspection, due to the low numbers of wāhine at that site, few visits were scheduled and children's books and toys had been transferred to the Tawa site.
222. We observed wāhine wore overalls during their visit to minimise the introduction of contraband. This approach also reduced the need to strip search wāhine suspected of concealing items. Wāhine were subject to rubdown searches (in the strip search area of visits or prior to entering their units) at the end of their visit as required by policy.
223. Most of the wāhine we spoke with during our inspection did not have visits with family or whānau. They told us they did not have visits either because their families lived too far away, or they preferred their families (and children) not to visit them in prison. These wāhine also told us they did not want to have video calls with family or whānau. However, most of these wāhine tried to keep in touch by writing letters or making telephone calls.

Findings

- Finding 64. Wāhine could have visits with their family and whānau, and the opportunity for video or AVL visits, although many chose not to have these visits for a variety of reasons.
- Finding 65. Visiting areas were inviting for families and children. Staff managed wāhine and their visitors professionally and respectfully.

Library

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have regular access to a suitable library, library materials and additional learning resources that meet their needs.

224. The prison has dedicated libraries at each site, which are inviting areas for wāhine to visit. The library at the Upper Prison is larger than the Tawa site library, with more storage for books.
225. At the Tawa site, wāhine could access the library one day a week at scheduled times. Low security prisoners are scheduled to visit according to their unit. Wāhine in Tizard Unit (including remand prisoners) can choose books from a trolley that is brought into the unit on Sunday.
226. Most wāhine told us they were happy with their access to books, but prisoners in high security units said they would prefer to be able to visit the library to see the full range of books to choose from.
227. The librarian is a part-time staff member who supports the libraries at both sites. She works one day a week at the Upper Prison library. The librarian said it was difficult at times to manage two libraries. A wāhine also works in the library alongside the librarian at the Tawa site.

228. The prison relies on book donations from the community to stock the library and has no dedicated fund for book purchases. Each book must be reviewed to ensure it is suitable for wāhine.
229. At the time of our inspection, books in the Upper Prison library were being sorted by the librarian in anticipation of the two libraries merging at the Tawa site. The librarian told us there was limited storage space at the Tawa site for any excess books, so the number of books needed to reduce. Following our inspection, the Upper Prison library closed, and the excess books were donated to other prisons.
230. The library had no electronic catalogue, instead the librarian was developing a spreadsheet listing each book's title, author, genre and a brief synopsis. She was hoping to eventually print the spreadsheet and share it with the wāhine so they could choose books themselves.
231. The librarian confirmed she had only a limited supply of books in foreign languages. However, she said there was an established process with other prison libraries so she could source additional foreign reading material if requested.
232. The librarian also had a collection of puzzles, magazines, word and number games, and colouring pages that could be loaned to wāhine. A small supply of audio books had also been acquired recently. It was pleasing to note a selection of books in Te Reo Māori at the Tawa site library.
233. Wāhine can access a book club at the Tawa site that meets once a month during the weekend and is managed by a volunteer.

Finding

Finding 66. Prisoners generally have good access to books, other reading material and recreational activities from the library. While there is no catalogue, it is positive to note that a spreadsheet is being developed to list the books available for the wāhine.

Religious or spiritual support

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are supported by the chaplaincy, which contributes to prisoners' overall care, support and rehabilitation.
- Prisoners' freedom of religion is respected, and they are able to practise their religion.

234. The prison receives religious and spiritual support from one part-time chaplain and three volunteer assistant chaplains.
235. The Tawa site has a chapel, which is a small room located off the visiting area. The room has become a multi-purpose space that is increasingly used by other groups due to the limited number of programme rooms available on site.
236. The prison hosts a religious service, catering to a variety of faiths, in the chapel every Sunday for low security wāhine. Bible study classes are available to all wāhine. The chaplains will also

regularly visit each unit to engage with and meet individual wāhine when this has been requested.

237. The chaplain told us they had no issues accessing the low security units, although they had to work around programmes and work schedules. They found it more difficult meeting with wāhine in Tizard Unit due to the multiple unlock regimes and reduced unlock hours. Wāhine were often required to go to medical appointments or other meetings when the chaplains were in the unit. To enhance their engagement with the wāhine in this unit the chaplains had begun delivering a midweek religious service.
238. The chaplain told us they try to meet the needs of all faiths when they are informed of a need or receive a request.

Finding

Finding 67. Wāhine receive good access to chaplains and other faith-based support.

Supporting prisoner well-being

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners can access out of cell activities which promote learning, well-being and support rehabilitation.

239. Corrections data we reviewed for the six month period between 1 September 2019 and 29 February 2020 showed there were 639 visits from volunteers recorded at the Tawa site. At the Upper Prison, 124 visits were recorded.
240. Volunteers frequently represented charitable organisations including Toastmasters, the Howard League, Good Bitches Baking, the Salvation Army,²⁶ Alcoholics Anonymous, the Mother's Project (which offers free family law expertise) and Dress for Success. Other volunteers offer a wide range of constructive, life skill and well-being activities to wāhine such as quilting, creative writing, Zumba/dance, meditation, kapa haka, crafts and yoga.

Finding

Finding 68. The prison has a number of volunteers who provide support and constructive activities for the wāhine.

²⁶ Delivering gambling addiction counselling.

Offender Plans

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners have an offender plan.
- All prisoners receive support to achieve the targets in their offender plans and progress through their sentence.

241. Custodial staff are expected, through their daily interactions, to actively encourage wāhine to make positive changes in their lives. Units should have regular Right Track meetings where prison staff, including case managers, meet and share information about the offender plan progress for wāhine. Right Track meetings were regularly held by staff in each unit.
242. Every wāhine should have ready access to a custodial staff member in their unit who is allocated as their case officer.²⁷ At the time of our inspection, not all wāhine we spoke with had been allocated a case officer. Corrections data reviewed prior to our inspection showed 57% of wāhine were allocated to a case officer within the required timeframe.
243. We reviewed the Case Management Standards of Practice for the six months to 29 February 2020. The prison was achieving good results across all Standards of Practice, including a 96% average for having an initial contact with a prisoner in the first 20 days of their arrival.
244. Case managers motivate and work with wāhine to develop an offender plan (including a release plan), which identifies any immediate needs and rehabilitation and reintegrative needs. At the time of our inspection, the prison's case management team had its full establishment staffing level of six FTE staff. Two case managers were based in the Upper Prison and four were based at the Tawa site. Each case manager managed around 20 wāhine.
245. The eight wāhine we spoke with in the Drug Treatment and Tizard Units all confirmed they had case managers. Half of these wāhine said they found their case manager interactions frustrating and felt poorly supported or unprepared for their upcoming release. Four other wāhine we spoke with said they were preparing information to complain about their case manager because they felt unsupported.

2020 Finding

Finding 69. Some wāhine were not allocated a case officer in the required timeframe.

Finding 70. Wāhine had good access to case managers, however some wāhine felt unsupported or unprepared for their release.

²⁷ A case officer is a senior corrections officer or corrections officer who is assigned to an individual prisoner to support their rehabilitation and act as the conduit between the prisoner and their case manager.

Education

Inspection Standards

- Education and vocational training programmes are offered in line with the needs of the learners.

246. Wāhine can take part in a range of education programmes. Between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020, these included Secure Online Learning²⁸ (67 starts), and self-directed learning (40), as well as the Parenting Support Programme (7). Education tutors completed 224 prisoner education assessments for the same period, which included the COVID-19 lockdown period.
247. At the time of our inspection, the site had two FTE education tutors, who meet with every wāhine who arrives at the prison to assess their learning undertaken to date (which includes a literacy and numeracy assessment). Tutors then develop a learning pathway for each wāhine, which can include NCEA 1 and 2 through to the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills and the contracted Intensive Literacy and Numeracy service.
248. Wāhine were also able to learn independently through external education providers such as the Learning Connexion, the Open Polytechnic and Massey University. At the time of our inspection, two wāhine were completing papers through Massey University, which supported the wāhine with paper-based and video transcript resources. Another was completing her Level 4 Certificate in Art and Creativity.
249. The education tutors told us that generally wāhine were limited in the independent learning courses they could access because of the need for learners to be able to access online learning and support. This meant wāhine generally could not complete a degree while in prison.
250. The education tutors told us they felt education was not a priority for many staff and managers at the site. They believed the education opportunities were poorly resourced compared with rehabilitation and work activities. There was also a shortage of suitable classrooms and interview rooms to work individually and in groups.
251. At the Upper Prison, wāhine could access NCEA Level 1 and 2 Certificate in Graphic Design. An external tutor came on site to deliver the learning.

2020 Finding

Finding 71. Wāhine can access a range of education programmes. However, self-directed learning opportunities are limited due to the extent of online learning required.

Finding 72. The prison has a limited number of suitable classrooms and interview spaces for educational activities.

²⁸ Where wāhine at the Tawa site, including those on remand, could prepare for their learner driver license test, learn Microsoft Office programmes, create a curriculum vitae etc.

Rehabilitation

Inspection Standards

- Appropriate interventions are provided to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and promote successful reintegration.
- Rehabilitation programmes, targeting the specific needs of the prisoner, are available and accessible.
- There is good cooperation and communication between the prison and social support organisations, including those that deliver rehabilitation programmes in the prison.
- A balanced and comprehensive programme of activities is provided that is gender responsive.

252. Rehabilitation programmes help wāhine address the attitudes and behaviour that led to their offending and enables the development of necessary skills required to avoid future offending. Rehabilitation programmes are available to all sentenced and remand convicted²⁹ wāhine, with most programmes available to those identified as a moderate to high risk of reoffending.
253. Programmes available to eligible wāhine include the Drug Treatment Programme, Kowhiritanga,³⁰ Kia Rite,³¹ the Short Rehabilitation Programme, the Short Motivational Programme and the Maintenance Programme. A proposal had also recently been submitted for a new programme for wāhine focused on developing 'healthy relationship skills' which would also be available to remand prisoners. Staff will receive training (delivered over six hours) on how to manage and respond to disclosures from wāhine of abuse and harm. The prison has since confirmed to us that delivery will commence in early 2021.
254. During the period 1 September 2019 to 29 February 2020, 89 wāhine started a rehabilitation programme. The number of completions varied between programmes. Overall, the average completion rate was 75%. Corrections data for the same period showed 17 wāhine commenced individualised treatment with a psychologist.
255. Programme facilitators told us there were often difficulties finding eligible and suitable participants for the prison's two main programmes – the Drug Treatment Programme and Kowhiritanga. Frequently, participants had to transfer from the other two women's prisons to meet the minimum participant threshold, often removing them from family support and disrupting progress on their offender plans.
256. The psychologists and case managers we spoke with shared their concern about the lack of suitable programme rooms at the Tawa site and how the closure of the Upper Prison (and loss of the programme rooms there) will impact on the wāhine. The lack of programme rooms impacted the number of programmes that could be offered and the number of wāhine attending. We observed a programme room in use at the Tawa site that needed

²⁹ Remand accused prisoners cannot access offence-focused treatment programmes because their offending has not been proven in court. Instead focus is given to their education and reintegration needs.

³⁰ Kowhiritanga is a medium-intensity general programme for wāhine identified as having a moderate risk of reoffending. A high-intensity version of the programme has also recently become available.

³¹ Kia Rite, a programme designed for wāhine who are new to prison, is based on the principles set out in Corrections' Women's Strategy and takes a gender informed and kaupapa Māori responsive approach.

soundproofing to reduce the strong echo in the room. Programme staff also said there were occasions when custodial staff shortages impacted wāhine movements to and from programmes.

257. Case managers told us rehabilitation programmes needed to be delivered more frequently, with smaller class sizes, so wāhine had a better chance of meeting Parole Board requirements. We recognise the difficulty of doing this when programme space is limited. They told us the Parole Board will stand wāhine down for short periods of time so they can complete their programmes. Often programmes are not scheduled or are full within the time period.

2020 Finding

Finding 73. The prison offers a range of rehabilitation programmes, but access is limited by the availability of programme rooms and occasional custodial staff shortages to support prisoner movements.

Finding 74. Some wāhine were unable to complete their rehabilitation programmes prior to their appearance before the Parole Board.

Work

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners, where possible, can engage in work that is purposeful, benefits them and increases their employability.
- Prisoners' health and safety is safeguarded during all work activities to the same standards as in community based work.
- Prisoners receive a fair incentive payment for the work they perform.

258. At the time of our inspection, 68 wāhine (including remand convicted) were working in the prison in areas including electronics, painting, laundry, catering and grounds maintenance. Other prisoners also held jobs as unit and facility cleaners. The wāhine we spoke with appeared motivated to work.
259. Wāhine working in the kitchen and laundry can achieve the National Certificate in Hospitality (Level 2) and the New Zealand Certificate in Laundry and Processes (Level 2). However, instructors told us that completion of these certificates was infrequent because wāhine were often moved to undertake rehabilitation or reintegration activities or were released.
260. There was no meaningful work available to remand accused prisoners other than domestic work in their unit.
261. While a high number of wāhine engaged in work, both staff and wāhine expressed frustration regarding the type of work available. They told us they wanted some of the work and training opportunities that were available in men's prisons. They also wanted to gain work experience and qualifications in areas such as mechanics and construction, where there were well paid jobs available in the community after their release.
262. Several wāhine who had spent time in other women's prisons told us there were fewer work opportunities (both the type of work available and a lack of jobs) at Arohata Prison compared to the other prisons.

2020 Finding

- Finding 75. While many wāhine worked, the prison offered limited work opportunities that would provide skills and qualifications leading to meaningful employment on release.
- Finding 76. Work opportunities for remand accused wāhine were limited to domestic roles in their units.

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Reintegration

Inspection Standards

- Where possible, prisoners are housed in prisons close to their families or in prisons which meet their rehabilitative needs.
- Prisoners are able to keep up to date with news and the outside world while in prison, where appropriate.
- Prison management actively prepares prisoners for their release by facilitating access to post-release services.
- Prisoners with continuing health and social care needs are prepared and assisted to access appropriate services in the community prior to their release.
- Prisoners with drug and/or alcohol problems are prepared for release and have access to appropriate support and continued treatment in the community.
- Prior to release, prisoners have an up-to-date plan for addressing outstanding rehabilitation needs, which is managed in partnership with Community Corrections.
- Prisoners are given all necessary practical support and support information ready for their day of release.
- Pre and post-release reintegration programmes are available and are gender responsive.
- Offender plans are gender responsive and take into account, and plan for, prisoner's post-release social reintegration requirements from the beginning of their sentence.

263. Wāhine are provided with a range of opportunities to help them reintegrate into their communities and reduce re-offending. With only three women's prisons in New Zealand, staff are required to maintain reintegration networks over a much larger geographical area compared with staff working in men's prisons. This is because wāhine released from prison can return to many different parts of the country.
264. Most wāhine we spoke with about their reintegration activities told us they were working with their case managers to make plans. Some were pleased with the help they were receiving to obtain their birth certificate, driver's licence and set up a bank account.
265. Case managers found it difficult to access suitable accommodation in advance, particularly in the regions. This was particularly stressful for wāhine we spoke with who were about to be released. Case managers could refer wāhine to Work and Income for an emergency accommodation appointment, however these meetings could only occur on release when the accommodation need became an emergency.
266. Two wāhine had plans to be released to community-based alcohol and other drug treatment facilities. Case management staff told us they were also concerned accommodation providers were not tailoring their support to the specific needs of wāhine.

267. Wāhine in the Self Care Unit were approved to undertake the weekly grocery shop for their houses and go shopping for clothes when necessary under supervision with custodial staff. These wāhine did not wear prison-issue clothing during these outings.
268. At the time of our inspection, only one wāhine was approved for Release to Work (RTW). She was working part-time in retail and as a commercial cleaner. RTW is a type of temporary release which allows wāhine to work in the community.³² We were told by staff that until recently three other wāhine were taking part in RTW. Of these, two had since been released (one was offered full time work with her RTW employer) and one was redirected by the Parole Board to complete further rehabilitation.
269. At the time of our inspection, eight wāhine were approved to participate in Guided Release, which is available to long-serving prisoners and aims to gradually reintegrate those individuals into the community. Guided Release case managers assist prisoners to deal with their immediate needs, such as finding accommodation, opening bank accounts, looking for work and applying for benefits. At the time of our inspection, the prison had one Guided Release case manager.
270. Twenty-seven Guided Release outings were completed between 1 September 2019 and 29 February 2020. These included attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, driving lessons, practical driver license tests, banks (to open a bank account) and supported accommodation.
271. Data we reviewed for 1 September 2019 to 29 February 2020, showed 97% of Parole Board reports met the timeliness standard and case managers were achieving 71% for release planning timeliness.
272. Case management staff said they wanted to have the capacity to work more closely with probation officers particularly to offer transitional support to wāhine who were assessed as high risk and were being released due to their sentence end date.

2020 Finding

Finding 77. Wāhine can access a good range of reintegration opportunities including Guided Release outings.

Finding 78. Suitable accommodation, particularly in and around smaller regions, was difficult for case managers to find in advance.

Finding 79. Case management staff wanted to work more closely with probation officers to provide support in preparation for wāhine being released.

³² RTW is available to minimum security prisoners who are serving a sentence of 24 months or less, or have reached their parole eligibility date, or are within 12 months of their sentence end date; and low and low-medium security prisoners who have a release date set by the New Zealand Parole Board.

Prison Staff

Inspection Standards

- All prison staff, who work with prisoners, have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude, and are trained to work in line with professional and human rights standards.
- There is an adequate number of custodial staff to manage prisoners safely.
- Staff are good role models for prisoners and relationships between them are professional, positive and courteous.
- Prisoners have a dedicated member of staff who supports them to make positive changes in their lives.
- Prison staff include a sufficient number of specialists, which could include social workers, teachers, trade instructors, counsellors and psychologists.
- Women's prisons are staffed predominantly by women, including in senior roles.
- All staff working in women's prisons have completed training in the gender-specific needs of women and gender sensitivity.

273. At the time of our inspection, the prison had recently appointed a new female Prison Director who had sole responsibility for Arohata Prison. Previously, Arohata and Rimutaka Prisons were managed jointly by one Prison Director.
274. Around 76% of staff at Arohata Prison were women and staff ethnicity reflected that of the local community.
275. At the time of our inspection, the prison had 96 FTE³³ custodial staff, which was 0.4 FTE above its full establishment staffing level. Seven staff were unable to be rostered.
276. Corrections demands a high standard of conduct from all employees and staff are expected to role model pro-social behaviour. Wāhine we spoke with told us most staff were good role models, but at times they received inconsistent responses or support from some staff. Some wāhine told us they felt other wāhine received better or special treatment from some staff.
277. We found that awareness and the practical application of *Wāhine – E Rere Ana Ki Te Pae Hou: Women's Strategy 2017-2021* was limited, across the site as staff told us they had limited time to manage priorities.
278. Staff told us there was a need for on-going training and professional development opportunities for all staff working in women's prisons. Specialist staff training, in areas such as trauma informed practice, had not been repeated or refreshed since it was initially delivered in 2018. Recently appointed staff were unlikely to have received this training. Training was scheduled to be delivered, but was cancelled as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

³³ Full time equivalent.

2020 Finding

- Finding 80. The prison is staffed predominantly by women, including a recently appointed female Prison Director.
- Finding 81. Corrections' Women's Strategy is not yet fully integrated into staff practice and culture.
- Finding 82. Specialist training for staff, including trauma informed practice, is not currently provided on a regular basis.

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Appendix A – Images



1. Drug Treatment Unit (DTU) cell (Tawa)



2. DTU programme area (Tawa)



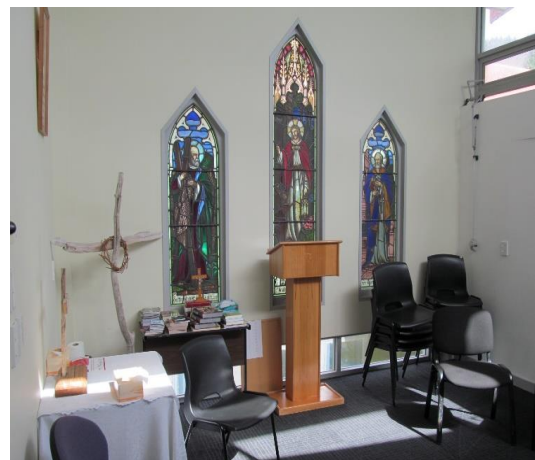
3. DTU yard (Tawa)



4. Library (Tawa)



5. Gym (Tawa)



6. Chapel (Tawa)



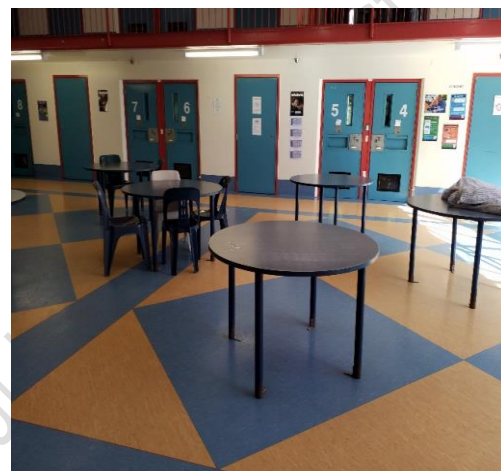
7. Self Care Unit (Tawa)



8. Self Care Unit (Tawa)



9. Self Care Unit (Tawa)



10. Tizard Unit (Tawa) communal area



11. Cell in Tizard Unit (Tawa)



12. Tizard Unit small yard (Tawa)



13. Upper Prison – Wing 2



14. Upper Prison graphic design



15. Health treatment room (Tawa)



16. He Whare Awhina dining area (Tawa)



17. He Whare Awhina unit (Tawa)



18. Upper Prison engineering workshop

Appendix B – Corrections' response



27 May 2021

Janis Adair
Chief Inspector
Department of Corrections

By email: janis.adair@corrections.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Janis

Re: Draft Report on Arohata Prison Announced Inspection September 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft inspection report.

I was glad to read the report described a generally positive standard of care provided to the women at Arohata Prison. It was pleasing to read that a range of rehabilitation, education and employment activities that build skills and knowledge to support successful transitions into the community were reflected in the report. We do however note that there is also opportunity for continuous improvement in these areas including the development of suitable spaces for programmes and health and ensuring the right skills are developed for employment upon release.

It was also positive to see recognition of the high level of care provided by health staff who were deemed to be professional and compassionate in their interactions, including following relevant COVID-19 protocols and policies in place at the time of the inspection.

The report noted an effective relationship between custodial and health staff, a coordinated system for managing medical appointments and that the women's health needs were being addressed within reasonable timeframes. We do note that the report outlines Medical Officers (MO) are contracted for six hours per week, however we can confirm MO contracted hours are currently set at eight hours per week, which is considered as sufficient to meet the needs of the current population.

I wish to highlight some changes that have taken place since your inspection.

It is important to note that along with the appointment of the new Prison Director during your inspection, a new Assistant Prison Director has also been appointed, and they have now been in the role for several months.

As you noted within your report, the Upper Prison based at Rimutaka Prison, has now closed and all prisoners are now situated at the Tawa location. The

new high security unit, Ahuru Mowai was opened in February 2021 and offers an additional 60 beds. The unit is already having a positive impact on the site.

Tizard unit has recently had an upgrade including the internal floors, paint, and polish throughout the unit. New tables and chairs have been installed, and the air conditioning unit cleaned and serviced. Washing machine and dryers have always been and continue to be available for women to use.

Improvements have been made to ensure women have up to an hour and 45 minutes out of their cell daily to do activities and maintain contact with family and whānau, in addition to the opportunity to exercise.

The swimming pool which was not in use at the time of your inspection had some use in the summer/warmer months. A new filtration system and upgrade occurred, which enabled those women who attended gym sessions to be offered the opportunity to utilise the pool at the end of their session. The pool is part of the heat management plan for Arohata Prison.

Your report indicated some concerns regarding telephone calls between women and their lawyers. Sections 77 and 110 of the Corrections Act 2004 govern prisoners' legal mail and phone calls. A call between a prisoner and their lawyer, relating to the prisoner's legal affairs, is an exempt call under the Act, and will not be monitored. I am assured by the Prison Director that telephone calls to lawyers are not recorded.

Staff have been undertaking ongoing training across a range of topics, with some training areas not specific to women but will support overall prisoner wellbeing. To date, 156 staff have completed trauma informed practice training, with an additional 22 staff completing this training by 2 June 2021. Training has been provided to staff working with the women at Arohata including custodial staff, instructors, and all non-uniformed staff.

Other training to date has included Pandemic and CIMS training, Making Safety BAU, Safety Leadership, Suicide Training, targeted training for ISU staff and professional supervision.

Health and Safety and wellbeing officers alongside the Operations team supported Mental Wellbeing training for staff including how to identify indicators not only for staff, but for the women in our care.

Your report indicated the administration of misconducts was poorly managed. I am informed 11 further staff have been trained in this process, and the site has implemented a roster to improve and ensure timeliness is addressed.

As you are aware, recently a programme of work has been established to drive the transformation of our three women's prisons into a cohesive network, underpinned by a trauma informed operating model, tailored specifically to the needs of women. This will involve working alongside the Te Mana Wāhine pathway to develop a programme for the Women's Prison Network focusing on

the design, implementation and embedding of a gender responsive operating model, including a review of the maximum security classification for women. We have acknowledged some of the challenges and are collaborating to identify and implement practical and sustainable improvements including the integration of the Women's strategy into staff practice and culture.

Challenges to address

Your report offers valuable insight into the facility by detailing several challenges faced. The following areas have been identified as priority areas of focus for the site.

Limited space for health, programmes, and the receiving office.

The physical infrastructure limitations at Arohata, which present specific challenges in delivering services, have been acknowledged by Corrections' Asset Management function as a priority for investment and infrastructure planning, via the capital planning prioritisation process in 2020/21. Two long term national asset management planning programmes have been allocated funding from July 2021 onwards; one focused on prison site master planning and the other specifically on health-related infrastructure in our prisons.

The health investment programme will identify and prioritise needs across the whole of Corrections' health infrastructure provision, and provide an assessment of current state against required service outcomes, which can then be used as evidence to request further funding to enable a significant multi-year, long-term national health infrastructure improvement programme.

The new unit, Ahuru Mowai, has a dedicated health interview room and a dental suite was added approximately two years ago. While neither address the issues of lack of health space, the Department has invested in more health spaces and is looking at further investment through the master planning exercise.

The prison master planning programme will create site-based masterplans for each of our prisons over a few years. Although prioritisation of prisons in this programme is yet to be finalised, it is likely that Arohata will be dealt with towards the beginning, due to the recognition that it faces a relatively high number of infrastructure challenges.

In the interim period, the Prison Director will assess all capacity available at Arohata including the self-care units to identify opportunities for the future development and utilisation of these spaces.

The Intervention and Support Unit

While the longer-term significant investment planning for national health infrastructure is underway over the next two years, an interim programme of non-structural cosmetic infrastructure improvements has been initiated for the

2021/22 financial year, to make immediate and tangible improvements to the environment for prisoners in Intervention and Support Unit (ISUs). Planning is underway for a refresh to the ISU at Arohata. This will include acoustic softening treatments, a repaint of cells and common areas to meet wellbeing colour guides, and the replacement of current lighting with warm light bulbs to create a more relaxed and softer effect. The yard drainage issue will also be addressed.

The extension of the yard roof is not included in this interim programme of works, as it is structural, and will require separate capital investment as part of either the health or prison master planning longer-term programmes. The day room is currently used as an interview space and has appropriate furniture for this.

It is agreed that when ISU cells are full, the placement of women at risk of self-harm in the Separates unit is less than ideal. It has been identified through capital investment, the three separates cells need to be upgraded to meet the same standards as the ISU cells, including fittings, taking into account considerations such as anti-ligature points, colours, and blackboards for example.

If women are acutely unwell, consideration is made as to whether a transfer to a forensic inpatient unit under a Section 45 under the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992, is needed.

The Mothers with Babies Unit

While some work has already commenced since your inspection, and also an inspection by the Children's Commissioner, it is acknowledged further work needs to be completed to make the Mother with Babies unit operational, including the development of a formal referral process and education of staff regarding the placement of mothers and babies in the unit.

We acknowledge that misunderstandings about the entry criteria for the Mothers with Babies Unit may have led to a long-term situation where the unit is not utilised. Arohata Prison has one room available in the Self Care Unit with all equipment necessary to receive babies and mums

We continue to work with other prisons in the women's network when mothers and babies require care, ensuring we meet their needs, taking into consideration their whanau needs and where they are best placed in custody.

There is an application process in place for women that have children at home that they may wish to have live with them in custody. This is considered on a case by case basis.

The Prison Director, Chief Advisor Maori, and Regional Operations Director Health have engaged in early discussions with Mana Whenua to partner with iwi and support a collaborative approach for future developments that will address the immediate health and safety concerns as part of the wider project to improve the Mothers with Babies Unit.

Searches

Your report also highlighted the quality of the rubdown searches was inconsistent. The Prison Director has already tasked managers/Principal Corrections Officers (PCOs) to facilitate training for rub down searches. They will also be monitoring staff doing rub down searches during May and June to ensure staff are conducting quality searches. A progress update from managers/PCOs will be provided to the Prison Director by 31 May 2021.

Conclusion

Prison inspections play an important role in building a culture of continuous improvement for Corrections and many of the opportunities to improve take time to implement successfully. I am confident the new Arohata management team along with their wider staff will continue to strive to implement the changes, resolve persisting issues and identify areas for further growth and improvement in meeting the needs of women and providing a healthy environment for staff.

We trust that you are satisfied with our response to your recommendations. Please let me know in the first instance if you have any concerns.

Ngā mihi nui



Rachel Leota
National Commissioner

Release