

## **Prisoners Forum Report Quarter 3 | July to September 2020**

### **1. Meeting of members of the Prisoners Forum**

The Prisoners Forum met on 13 August 2020. Representatives of the following organisations participated in the meeting: the Aboriginal Legal Service, Community Legal Centres NSW, Community Restorative Centres, Corrective Services NSW, Inspector of Custodial Services, Just Reinvest, Just Connect, Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network, Kingsford Legal Centre, LawAccess, Legal Aid NSW, NSW Ombudsman, Revenue NSW and Weave Youth & Community Services.

### **2. Terms of Reference**

The Prisoners Forum members agreed to expand the definition of vulnerable population groups in the Objectives of the Prisoners Forum to also include young people in detention in NSW, and for issues relating to young people in detention to be a standing agenda item for upcoming meetings. The revised Terms of Reference for the Prisoners Forum and Prisoners Legal Information Team were endorsed by members and will be submitted to the NLAF Plenary Group for approval.

### **3. Presentation from Corrective Services NSW on technology in NSW prisons**

Kelly-Anne Stewart, Acting Director, Corrections Strategy and Executive Services, Corrective Services NSW, gave a presentation to the Prisoners Forum on technology in NSW prisons. She outlined the in-cell technology pilots being conducted at Dillwynia and John Morony Correctional Centres in NSW. The trials involve use of hand-held tablets and will commence in October 2020. The presentation canvassed how in-cell technology will work, the dynamic risk factors addressed through digital services (for example education and training), the multi-tiered approach to security and the future of in-cell technology, which will be guided by the outcome of the trial.

### **4. Prisoners Legal Information Team update**

There was an update at the meeting on the Prisoners Legal Information Team (PLIT), which operates as a Subcommittee of the Prisoners Forum. Recruitment of a replacement Librarian to maintain the Legal Information Portal is ongoing. The PLIT members have been involved in discussions with Corrective Services NSW about the in-cell technology pilots and have been providing recommendations for website links for inclusion in the pilots.

### **5. Watching brief on emerging issue - disruptive prisoner policy**

Members of the Prisoners Forum raised and discussed recent legal action in Western Australia regarding the solitary confinement of prisoners by use of a 'disruptive prisoner policy'. Members agreed to monitor this area in NSW, including the policies and procedures around separation of prisoners and the role of s78A of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 (NSW). Information will be exchanged out of session and further analysis conducted in the next quarter.

### **6. Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Prisoners Forum is on **Thursday 29 October 2020, from 9:30am to 11am.**

Nadine Miles

**Chair, Prisoners Forum**

24 August 2020