**Reintroduction of family case work**

As you will be aware we recently re-issued four EDMs having increased the scope of what could be delivered in each area at level 3. We did this in recognition of the fact that some establishments may not be able to progress to stage 2 swiftly and may remain at stage 3 for a protracted period. Those jails remaining at stage 3 still need to deliver the most purposeful regime they can and the refreshed EDMs allow Governors and Directors to push the regime offer in a few areas and remain within the parameters of the EDMs. However we also recognise that some specialist services operated successfully pre-COVID and brought great value to establishments but fall between the cracks of existing EDM subjects. We need to issue guidance relating to these services wherever we identify that jails can reintroduce these specialist services at stage 3. We have received requests from several establishments wanting to reintroduce family support case-workers or family support workers into their establishments as a bolt-on to their existing Local Operating Procedure for social visits. We have considered this and are content for establishments to reintroduce family support work as an addition to their existing social visits model where the following caveats are met:

1. The establishment must have a Local Operating Procedure for social  visits already approved  by Gold and their PGD.
2. The establishment must have PGD support for reintroducing family support work
3. The establishment must be able to deliver family support work with existing resources
4. The establishment must have a pre-existing contract for family support work. New services should not be developed at this point

Provided these conditions can be satisfied, establishments are able to develop a model for reintroducing family case work or support workers. A model for operating this service must be developed collaboratively between the establishment and their contracted provider of family support services. Trades Unions must also be actively involved in this process. The agreed model must be incorporated into the prison’s existing LOP for social visits. Any accompanying risk assessments and safe systems of work must be updated to incorporate the mitigation for any risks introduced by this activity. We have developed guidance on undertaking one-to-one interviews with prisoners and an associated SOP as this is an element of family support work at some sites and must be undertaken safely. Having amended their LOP and associated risk assessments/SSOW establishments need their respective PGD to sign off the addition. As this is an additional element bolted onto a pre-approved LOP, establishments do not need additional Gold sign off to reintroduce this service. As we recognise the value of family support work in both stages 3 and 2, establishments remaining at stage 3 are able to follow this process for reintroducing family support before they progress to stage 2. Those prisons working towards stage 2 can follow the same process either now or wait until they have attained stage 2 status, at which point the same process for gaining PGD approval would be activated automatically.

Further information on introducing one-to-one prisoner interviews is provided in the attachments. For further information on the contents of this briefing, please the COVID prison regime management team ([COVID19.Regimes&OpsGuidance@justice.gov.uk](mailto:COVID19.Regimes&OpsGuidance@justice.gov.uk)  )

