**Operational Capacity Reductions - Update**

Dear Executive Directors, Prison Group Directors and Governors/Directors,

In line with the latest version of the Cohorting and Compartmentalisation Strategy (v6) published earlier this week (accessible via this [link](https://hmppsintranet.org.uk/ersd-guidance/2020/04/15/cohorting-and-population-management/)), and the reintroduction of the red, amber and green ratings today (accessible via this [link](https://hmppsintranet.org.uk/ersd-guidance/2020/09/28/heat-map-for-reverse-cohorting-requirements-to-review-regime/)), we are now requesting Governors to think about recovery plans for their previously agreed operational capacity reductions that were provided to create the space for compartmentalisation.

Compartmentalisation still remains an important control but with the current infection levels we have much reduced use of shielding and protective isolation.  The further suspension of reverse cohorting for transfers from Green sites adds to this.  Since we originally introduced the Compartmentalisation strategy and capacity reductions, the options for delivery of compartmentalisation have been expanded to allow establishments to design a model that best fits their fabric and population. The guidance on use of single cell accommodation has been relaxed where appropriate and many sites are now operating the policy as a process rather than using specific units.  Reception prisons will still need the capacity to manage reverse cohorting for new arrivals into custody and others will require the ability to reverse cohort anyone whom refuses a test on transfer, however this should not necessarily require the need for specific units given we anticipate this will be on an exceptional basis.  Prisons will still need to have a contingency plan and future requests for capacity reductions may be required if circumstances change. We are also not expecting for this return to operational capacity to happen immediately, but we would be grateful if you could enter a return rate (e.g. x a week) and a planned date by which all places will be back in use (as identified in column J).

We know Governors have a huge amount to contend with at the moment, but these places will be of paramount importance, as court activity starts to ramp up further.  We also need to ensure that we have the right prisoners in the right places and re-entering spaces allows us to make these moves possible whilst creating capacity in the system where we need it as a contingency for any future rise in outbreaks and infection again.  The Reconfiguration team are working with PMU to develop a plan to support prisons in aligning their populations with their future role. The plan, utilising offender flows, will focus on required and resettlement moves, targeting concentrations of prisoners in the wrong prison for their cohort, prioritising their movement into the right prisons and to support progression in their sentence, while maximising prison places to better align to the 2023 vision . Due to this approach some prisons may see more movement than others in the coming months.

Please can each establishment’s plan (including return rate and date by which all places will be returned to operational capacity) be completed in column J in the attached spreadsheet and returned to **Executive Director Offices by noon on Friday 21st May**. Executive Directors will review individual returns before submitting final recommendations to Custodial Capacity.  If there are specific reasons why an establishment is not able to revert back to the op cap identified in column I then Capacity Management will arrange calls with the PGDs/governors to discuss on an exception basis.

Kind Regards,

Ed Cornmell

