



mental welfare
commission for scotland

Mental Welfare Commission Report Summary Easy Read

July 2021

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1. What is this report?

Mental Welfare Commission

1. What is this report?



This report is about women who are mentally unwell and are in the prison system.



Article 3 of the Human Rights Act says:

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment."



The law says if a person is sent to prison for committing a crime then they should be treated in a way that respects their dignity.

2. Who is this report about?

Mental Welfare Commission

2. Who is this report about?



This report is about 9 women and their experience in prison between 2017 and 2020.



This report is about how they were treated for their mental health conditions while they were in prison.

3. Who has written this report?

Mental Welfare Commission

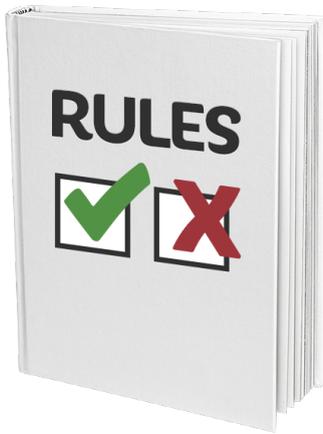
3. Who has written this report?



The Mental Welfare Commission wrote this report.

The Mental Welfare Commission is a public body.

It is independent of the government.



They make sure that the rules set out in the law are being followed.

Their job is to promote and protect the rights of the person.

Mental Welfare Commission

3. Who has written this report?



The Mental Welfare Commission wrote this report after another report was written in 2019.

The 2019 report was written by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.



That report raised concerns about how women were being treated in Cornton Vale.

Cornton Vale is Scotland's prison that is only for women.



So the Mental Welfare Commission decided to look into it.

4. What did the report in
2019 say?

Mental Welfare Commission

4. What does the report in 2019 say?



The report said that these women needed hospital treatment, care and support for their mental health.



The people who wrote the report said they had concerns about segregation of people with mental health issues.

This means they were kept separately from other people in the prison.

They also said they were placed in solitary confinement for a long time.

This means they were in a cell alone and had very limited contact with other people.

Mental Welfare Commission

4. What does the report in 2019 say?



The report said that when people needed treatment in prison it could take a long time for them to get it.



The report also mentioned that people with personality disorder could not get transferred to a hospital for the treatment they needed.

5. What did the Mental Welfare Commission do?

Mental Welfare Commission

5. What did the Mental Welfare Commission do?



The Mental Welfare Commission looked at the health records of 5 women mentioned in the 2019 report.



They also looked at the records of 4 other women who were getting treated for mental health issues while in prison.

6. What does this report say?

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6. What does this report say?



This report says that the Mental Welfare Commission agree with a lot of things the report said was happening in 2019.



The report says that there is a lack of available beds for women in some parts of Scotland's mental health units.



The report says that there are missed opportunities to treat people early and stop problems becoming very bad.

Mental Welfare Commission

6. What does this report say?



The report talks about some of Scotland's most disadvantaged women.

This means they are mentally unwell and in prison and don't get the help that they need.



It lets us see the damage being done to them and their loved ones by the way they are being treated.

7. What should happen next?

Mental Welfare Commission

7. What should happen next?



The report gave ideas on how things could be done better.

The report asked the following organisations to think about certain things:

- The Scottish Prison System,
- The healthcare staff in prison
- The government

The report said they should:

- Look at the support that women need in prison, including their medication.
- Move women out of prison quickly if they are not well.
- Look at segregation closely. They should make sure it is used only when it is needed. There should be regular checks on its use.
- The government should think about what they can do better for women who are mentally unwell and commit a crime.

