



HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland
Improving Policing across Scotland



Thursday, June 29, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

From the Care Inspectorate and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

Progress has been made on improving the way communities are kept safe and protected from risks posed by registered sex offenders, inspectors have said in a report published today.

Inspectors said good progress had been made in protecting young people from online exploitation by raising awareness of the dangers of “sexting”, and the way data is used to plan protection arrangements. However, more needs to be done in other areas.

The findings come in a progress review of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which set out how police, local authorities, the prison service and health boards jointly assess and manage the risks posed by registered sex offenders after release from prison or whilst on a community-based order.

A review of MAPPA in Scotland in 2015 noted that MAPPA was well-established across Scotland and working well, and made ten recommendations. HMICS and the Care Inspectorate inspectors have assessed progress against these recommendations. Today’s report found four of the recommendations had been fully met and four had been partially met. Two recommendations had not been met.

Inspectors looked at the extent to which the Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR), which allows risk and information to be shared, is being used effectively. Its use by criminal justice social work remains an “ongoing challenge” with a slow pace of progress, although inspectors praised the recent engagement of senior leaders and the development of a ViSOR improvement action plan.

Inspectors also noted that a recommendation to support organisations to better monitor the use of social media devices to ensure offenders comply with licence conditions had not been met.

Karen Reid, Chief Executive of the Care Inspectorate, said: “This report contains an important update on progress made to implement our recommendations from November 2015.

“Whilst we are pleased to note progress has been made on key areas, there needs to be a concerted effort to overcome barriers to using the right tools designed to store and share information about managing sex offenders in the community. This will provide further reassurance to people and ensure that we are doing all that we can do to keep people safe.

“I am particularly pleased to note the progress made in strengthening the way children are protected from online exploitation, because this remains an area of concern for many parents and families, but it is important to remain vigilant.

“MAPPA has transformed the way agencies work together to manage risks, with very strong relationships between the police and social workers. We now expect to see further work to ensure the outstanding recommendations are progressed quickly.”

Gill Imery, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, said: “In 2015 we reported that there was strong evidence that MAPPA was well-established across Scotland and was effective in contributing towards public protection.

“We also identified a number of emerging trends and issues such as a change in offender behaviour, and the ageing population of sex offenders, and that there is a need to better understand the emerging nature and scale of sex offending in Scotland to inform future planning arrangements.

“Our 2015 report produced 10 high level recommendations requiring a national response.

“We asked Scottish Government and Responsible Authorities to provide an action plan in response to our recommendations which we would monitor progress.

“This follow up has enabled us to review the action plan and to evaluate progress made across the 10 recommendations.

“It is our assessment that much has been achieved since publication of our report in 2015, and work continues across the recommendations. We shall continue to monitor progress of those recommendations that remain on-going.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) place a statutory duty on Scottish local authorities, the police, prisons and health to establish joint arrangements for the assessment and management of risk posed by registered sex offenders and mentally disordered restricted patients and those offenders who, by reason of their conviction, are assessed as posing a risk of serious harm to the public

Since then a range of local and national governance arrangements have been introduced including MAPPA National Guidance produced by Scottish Government and partners. Local governance arrangements are administered by Strategic Oversight Groups. They are responsible for performance monitoring and the quality assurance of MAPPA. A key role is the MAPPA coordinator, a dedicated function undertaken on behalf of the ‘responsible authorities’, accountable to the MAPPA Strategic Oversight Group.

The MAPPA National Strategic Group (NSG) has responsibility for strategic oversight and development of MAPPA. Membership includes SOG chairs and representatives from Responsible Authorities.

ViSOR is a UK-wide system used to store and share information and intelligence on those individuals who have been identified as posing a risk of serious harm to the public. ViSOR facilitates the work of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) by facilitating co-operative working between the “Responsible Authorities” (Police Scotland, Local Authorities, Scottish Prison Service and Health Boards or Special Health Boards) in their joint management individuals posing a risk.

For any media enquiries please contact:

Care Inspectorate

Ewan Fergus

media@careinspectorate.com

01382 207 171

@CareInspect

HMICS

Stephen Whitelock

hmic@gov.scot

0131 244 5617

@hmics

ENDS