

**Welcome to our March 2015 update.**

**If you would like further information please go to our [website](#) or contact us at [admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk](mailto:admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk).**



### **Success stories**

#### **Release and resettlement for disabled prisoner**

Our Community Care Caseworker successfully obtained a direction for release on parole for a disabled prisoner who had been imprisoned for 30 years. He is elderly and infirm and has a heart condition, reduced mobility, and was also demonstrating significant cognitive decline – including a drastically impaired short-term memory. She secured a comprehensive community care package providing a suitable release address. This enabled the parole panel to direct his release and to enable him to resettle successfully in the community. His placement is a specialist supportive care home that specifically supports those who are institutionalised. Our Caseworker has also initiated arrangements for him to receive mentoring in the community from an ex-prisoner.

#### **Securing care after release for vulnerable woman prisoner**

Our Women Prisoners Caseworker acted for a prisoner detained in a low secure psychiatric hospital. Even though she was considered well enough by a Mental Health Tribunal to be released from hospital, she needed to be released by the Parole Board before she could be discharged into the community. Her local authority rejected the application for the cost of her post-release accommodation and care support services in the community.

Our Caseworker corresponded with the local authority, setting out the woman's legal rights and putting them on notice that judicial review proceedings would be instigated if funding was not agreed. The local authority then agreed to provide the funding. This case highlights the difficulties that women prisoners with mental health conditions can face in obtaining the discharge care packages they require upon release.

## News

### Caseworker appointed to NICE committee

Our Women Prisoners' Caseworker, Naomi Lumsdaine, has been invited to be a professional member of the Development Group for a new NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guideline on mental health of adults in contact with the criminal justice system. The guideline will address the identification and management of mental health problems for adults from their first contact with police, through the court system, during a prison sentence and under supervision in the community, either on a community sentence or following release on licence. As a legal representative member, Naomi will draw on her experience assisting women prisoners detained in prisons and hospitals.

### Visit to Huntercombe prison

Our Outreach Caseworker attended Huntercombe prison in Oxfordshire in February to speak to prisoners being trained by the St Giles Trust organisation to act as Peer Advisers. Huntercombe houses only foreign nationals and our Caseworker's talk, which was followed by a lively discussion, was structured to relate to the specific needs of this group of prisoners. This includes the difficulties that foreign national prisoners who are very low security face in obtaining Category D status which will allow their transfer to an open prison, due to the complex interplay between prison and immigration procedures.



### New PAS website

Our new site is now live! Information is now much easier to find and more comprehensive. It has sections on what PAS does, how we do it, our history, case studies, testimonies,

how to get involved, and much more. Visit [www.prisonersadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonersadvice.org.uk) to take a look.

### **Seeking PAS trustees**

We are seeking one or two trustees to complement our small, but highly motivated, Management Committee. If you are interested in playing a strategic role in our development, please email a current CV and covering letter to [admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk](mailto:admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk).

Expressions of interest are particularly welcome from those with experience in Human Resources, finance or fundraising. The Board encourages applications from candidates with disabilities or experience of mental health services, as well as ex-prisoners and black and minority ethnic applicants. Applications close on Friday 24th April.

### **Thank You!**

Thanks very much to all of you who kindly supported our on-line fundraising appeal in the first week of March. Thanks to your generosity, and the 50% matched funding provided by the organisers (Global Giving), we managed to raise a further £3,500 towards our work with women prisoners and disabled prisoners – which is terrific!



### **The Great Legal Bake sale**

Our staff and volunteers enthusiastically baked cakes that were kindly bought by staff from local solicitors' firms and the Prison Reform Trust during The Great Legal Bake week in February. This is a series of bake sales coordinated by the London Legal Support Trust. Our cake sale raised a welcome £255 towards our work.

### **Ska and Mod benefit night**

Tottenham Chances' vinyl DJ club night 'In the City' will be a benefit night for PAS this month. Please come along if you can for a night of great music, featuring a medley of Mod, Motown, Northern Soul, Rock-Steady, Ska & Two Tone. The event takes place on 21st March and entry is £5 (or £3 for concessions).



# **PRISONERS' ADVICE SERVICE**

.....  
THE INDEPENDENT LEGAL CHARITY PROVIDING INFORMATION AND REPRESENTATION TO PRISONERS

### **Contact PAS:**

**PAS**

**PO Box 46199**

**London**

**EC1M 4XA**

**Tel: 020 7253 3323 / Tel: 0845 430 8923 Fax: 020 7253 8067**

Copyright © Prisoners' Advice Service 2015, all rights reserved.

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please email [admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk](mailto:admin@prisonersadvice.org.uk).