

Food and Nutrition Inspection Report

Inspection of Adult Custodial Services in
Tasmania, 2020



Produced by the Tasmanian Custodial Inspector

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From the Custodial Inspector

The purpose of the Custodial Inspector is to provide independent, proactive, preventative and systemic oversight of custodial centres. A custodial centre is defined as a prison within the meaning of the *Corrections Act 1997*, and a detention centre within the meaning of the *Youth Justice Act 1997*.

As Inspector, I am required under the *Custodial Inspector Act 2016* to carry out a mandatory inspection of each custodial centre at least once every three years and to report on my findings and recommendations to the responsible Minister and Parliament.

Due to limited resources, to respond to legislative obligations, my staff undertake themed inspections of custodial centres focussing on particular inspection standards. At the end of a three year cycle, all aspects of custodial centres will have been inspected against the entire set of inspection standards.

Section 15 of the Custodial Inspector Act requires me to prepare a report of my findings in relation to each mandatory inspection. In this regard, I report directly to the Minister responsible for the custodial centre and the responsible Minister is required to table a copy of the Inspector's report in each House of Parliament. In this way, the findings and recommendations relating to inspections become a public record. After tabling, all inspection reports are published on [my website](#)¹

In August and September 2020, inspections against the Food and Nutrition standards were undertaken and I am now pleased to present this inspection report.

Prior to publication of this report, the Department of Justice was consulted and invited to correct any factual inaccuracies in it and to provide a written response to the recommendations included in this report. Appendix 3 details that response.

Richard Connock
Custodial Inspector

August 2021

¹ www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au



Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Ms Ngaire Hobbins, Accredited Practising Dietician, who consulted on this inspection. I sincerely thank Ms Hobbins for her expert advice and assistance, which ensured my office had access to an up-to-date and credible source of nutrition information and dietetic expertise.

Acknowledgment and appreciation is also extended to all staff at the Department of Justice and Tasmania Prison Service who supported the inspection.

I also greatly value the contribution of service providers who provided information about their services relevant to the correctional environment.



Executive summary

This is the report of the inspection of Tasmanian adult custodial centres covering the suite of Food and Nutrition inspection standards for adult prisoners. All the inspections were unannounced inspections, carried out in August and September 2020. It was pleasing that staff were open, cooperative and welcoming despite the inspections being unannounced for the first time since the inception of the Custodial Inspector's oversight role.

Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) is responsible for providing care and custody, at various levels of security, for prisoners and people remanded in custody in Tasmania².

The following custodial centres operated by TPS were visited during the inspections:

1. Risdon Prison Complex (RPC);
2. Ron Barwick Prison (RBP);
3. Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP);
4. Hobart Reception Prison (HRP); and
5. Launceston Reception Prison (LRP).

During the inspection, a number of evidence sources were used to assess the custodial centres against the inspection standards. These included:

- onsite visits;
- meetings with senior management;
- individual interviews carried out with staff, service providers and external stakeholders;
- conversations with prisoners;
- review of documentation; and
- observation by inspectors and the expert consultant.

The following general observations and findings were made during the inspection:

1. Food is of sufficient quality, quantity and variety to meet prisoners' nutritional needs. Menus have been developed in consultation with a qualified dietician and have been planned to ensure that high quality, nutritional and varied meals are provided. Prisoners are provided with three meals per day at reasonable intervals.
2. No one engaged in food preparation and food handling is trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities. There has been a breakdown in processes facilitating prisoners' completion of food safety training and many of the prisoner workers in the kitchen had not completed this basic training.

² Note: For the purposes of this report, a reference to the term prisoner includes people that are remanded and detained in custody.



3. There was occasionally evidence among some in management and in health support systems of an inadequate regard for the vital importance of nutrition and education, and for the health benefits of good food and drink choices more widely and how these choices underpin not only physical, but mental health. An organisation-wide commitment to ensuring a focus on food and nutrition that can support better mental health and potentially improve behaviours is encouraged.
4. There is a high level of modification of prison food including using components of prison meals for inclusion in later meals with the addition of canteen foods. It is the wider influence of food choices outside that being provided by the TPS kitchens which often has greater impact on the nutrition and thus the physical and cognitive health status of prisoners and detainees. As a result, food and nutrition and its impact on both these outcomes must be viewed from a much wider perspective than the workings of the kitchen alone.
5. The canteen system has a great impact on the nutritional status of prisoners in Tasmanian adult custodial centres. While there should be access to individual choice through canteen purchases, the items on offer can certainly be reviewed to allow access to more products which facilitate healthier choices to be made. There is significant resistance in the canteen to finding ways to action these changes, which are essential to the health and wellbeing of prisoners.
6. The ongoing services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD), to provide education and individualised support to prisoners and detainees beyond the menu review process, is needed. An APD is vital to supporting the physical and mental health needs of the prisoner population. Nutritional education and support services should be an integral part of improving wellbeing and the rehabilitation of prisoners and detainees.
7. TPS has reduced the amount of salted, processed meat used in sandwiches. Meat for salads is mostly cooked fresh, chilled then sliced in house. This is a very positive improvement.
8. The selection of meals available to vegetarians has improved; a specific menu of vegetarian options is now available, with attention having been given to providing better protein content in meals. Again, this is a positive improvement, but while this recommendation from my previous inspection has been acted on, there must be an ongoing process of improvement.
9. There were a number of concerns voiced by prisoners at this inspection, and in 2017, that the salami, devon and other processed meats provided by TPS are not pork-free. Some prisoners refuse to eat these products despite verbal assurances from the TPS kitchen that all meats are halal appropriate. On making enquiries about these prisoner concerns, a 2013 letter from Robbo's Meats was provided to the inspection team. This letter assured TPS that all their products are free from pork. An ingredient list supplied by that company following the onsite inspections, however, lists pork trimmings in the ingredients list for salami and does not specify the meat in the devon. This is extremely concerning given the assurances by TPS over time that there is no pork in these



products. TPS needs to ensure that all processed meat products to be included in meals for those who are Muslim are guaranteed free of any pork product and are labelled as such.

10. TPS has not made any real progress in respect of self-catering options, appropriate to their security and behavioural status, for prisoners to prepare their own meals from ingredients supplied by the Risdon Main Kitchen – that is, preparation of meals by prisoners in their own units in place of the pre-cooked meals currently supplied.
11. There are significant issues with TPS supporting prisoners' needs for a strict gluten free diet due to diagnosed coeliac disease. Coeliac disease must be treated seriously and people who have this must follow a strictly gluten free diet. There is a definite need for education of TPS staff around the gluten free diet and the impact of gluten on prisoners that are coeliac. TPS is obliged to ensure that anyone with a diagnosed serious autoimmune condition such as coeliac disease is provided with appropriate nutritional options to maintain their health. The consequences of not adhering to a strict gluten free diet on long term health outcomes can be very serious for individuals and very costly for the health system. In the TPS kitchen particularly, there was a feeling there is maybe only 'one true coeliac' and that it was possible to have more or less serious coeliac disease. This is not the case.
12. More generally in relation to food allergies, the expert consultant felt that not all staff in the TPS kitchen take such allergies as seriously as is required. It is suggested that a meal labelling system which includes an ingredient list and identifies the presence or absence of gluten, lactose, soy and other allergens should be introduced as soon as possible. This will have benefits for both TPS and prisoners in that it has potential to minimise complaints to the kitchen, and prisoners will appreciate the certainty these meals offer those with special diet needs.
13. The expert consultant expressed concerns about possible Vitamin D deficiencies in prisoners. It is her advice that TPS should initiate an analysis of the Vitamin D status of prisoners across all sites. In the very least a representative sample analysis should be carried out to determine if there is cause for concern, as Vitamin D deficiency has wide ranging impacts on cognitive health.
14. COVID has had impacts on the food provided to prisoners. At this inspection fresh sandwiches were available at RPC but not at HRP or LRP. A number of products such as rice were unavailable through the canteen. TPS was providing one frozen meal each week to prisoners to reduce the stock supplies that were produced in order to cope in the event of a wide spread lock down. All of these issues are COVID specific and not indicative of ongoing system issues.



Summary of recommendations

The following recommendations have been extracted from the expert consultant report provided at Appendix 2.

Please refer to the additional information that is provided in the consultant's report in relation to each of the outlined recommendations. My staff have redacted names in the consultant's report for privacy reasons.

It is recommended that Tasmania Prison Service:

1. Adopts, or considers the adoption of, the recommendations contained in the Quality Indicator Report prepared for Tasmania Prison Service by their Accredited Practising Dietician, taking into consideration the specific advice of the Inspector's external consultant provided in Appendix 2 to this report.
2. Engages the ongoing services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) to assist TPS meet the nutritional needs of prisoners (noting that the APD referred to in Recommendation 1 was only engaged by TPS for a specific undertaking).
3. Works with Correctional Primary Health Services to include malnutrition screening within health screening for older prisoners (aged 65 and over).
4. Reviews and reworks the canteen list so that there is better balance to facilitate both individual choices made by prisoners, and to accommodate additions and changes to the canteen list which support better health outcomes.
5. Ensures that all processed meat products included in meals for those who are Muslim are guaranteed free of any pork product and are labelled as such.
6. Initiates an audit by a suitably qualified food service nutrition professional to determine that gluten free food production by the kitchen is carried out according to strict guidelines, ensuring food provided to those with coeliac disease is guaranteed to be free from gluten.
7. Considers the supply of psyllium or a similar fibre supplement to assist with constipation, which is especially an issue among older prisoners.
8. Routinely provides prisoners requiring a puree diet due to oral or facial issues or injury with *Ensure* brand commercial supplement (or an equivalent substitute brand if applicable) to support adequate nutritional intake for healing and maintenance of nutritional status.
9. Reviews what a finger food diet comprises for prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm, and provides specific instructions to the TPS main kitchen about the types of food that should be provided that are suitable for consumption with a cardboard spoon.
10. Introduces as a priority a meal labelling system which includes an ingredient list and identifies the presence or absence of gluten, lactose, soy and other allergens.
11. Reintroduces tea bags to assist with the reduction of nutritional wastage of vegetables.



12. Develops systems to allow prisoners at Launceston Reception Prison access to fresh vegetables and salads, and to reintroduce the making of sandwiches onsite using supplied ingredients including salad.
13. Initiates an analysis of the Vitamin D status of prisoners across all sites.
14. Considers outsourcing the supply of desserts at Launceston Reception Prison to allow for a better range of desserts containing fruit and dairy and thus being nutritionally superior to the frozen range that is currently supplied.
15. Continues to progress Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison kitchen to greater independence by providing more raw ingredients, eggs, a variety of sauces or condiments and vegetables so that prisoners cook nutritional meals of their choice.
16. Provides Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison prisoner kitchen workers with guidance on filtering and/or reusing cooking oil as appropriate and ensure they have an adequate supply of oil so that they do not have to reuse oil when it is not safe to do so.
17. Provides prisoners accommodated in the Vanessa Goodwin Units with ingredients they can use to cook their own meals in the well-equipped unit kitchens that are currently underutilised.
18. Installs a rabbit proof fence for the vegetable gardens in Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison, and elsewhere as necessary, so that the vegetables grown can be enjoyed by prisoners.
19. Seeks opportunities to introduce more vegetable gardens in all adult prisons.
20. Considers developing an onsite cafeteria at the Risdon site to service visitors and staff so as to help prisoners gain skills and confidence in food service and cooking and to improve the interface between the prison and wider community.



About Tasmania Prison Service

TPS is responsible for providing care and custody, at various levels of security, for prisoners and people remanded in the five adult custodial centres in Tasmania. Most adult custodial centres are located on one large site at Risdon which is approximately 12 kilometres from the Hobart CBD and very close to the suburb of Risdon Vale.

As noted, the five adult custodial centres are:

1. The Risdon Prison Complex (RPC). This facility is located at Risdon in the south of the state and comprises the medium and maximum security precincts. The medium security precinct has the capacity to house 196 prisoners and the maximum security precinct the capacity to house 103 prisoners.
2. The Ron Barwick Prison (RBP). This facility is located at Risdon, and has the capacity to house 295 prisoners (including the O'Hara Cottages).
3. The Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP). This facility is located at Risdon and has the capacity to house 63 prisoners.
4. The Hobart Reception Prison (HRP). This facility is located in the Hobart CBD and has the capacity to house 36 prisoners.
5. The Launceston Reception Prison (LRP). This facility is located in Launceston and has the capacity to house 26 prisoners.

The prison service has to respond to an increasing prisoner population across all population groups. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, in its publication [Corrective Services, September quarter 2020](#)³, has reported that Tasmania's prisoner population rose from 526 prisoners in 2008 to 655 prisoners in 2019.

The total prison population fluctuates but is regularly above 650. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that on 1 September 2020, Tasmanian Prisons held 641 prisoners (92% male and 8 % female). The proportion of female prisoners was low compared to other jurisdictions, excepting the Australian Capital Territory, and after a period of growth over the past few years has seen a slight decrease from 25.3 per 100,000 females for the September quarter 2019 to 23.0 per 100,000 for the September quarter 2020. Twenty three percent of Tasmanian prisoners identified as Aboriginal.

Based on information provided by TPS:

- The average progressive prisoner population for 2019-20 was 664, comprising 611 males and 53 females. This was an increase of 1.68% from the previous year's average progressive prisoner population which was 653.
- In the 2019-20 year, the prisoner population at its highest was 695 on 10 March 2020. The lowest recorded population was 633 on 26 December 2019.

³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/corrective-services-australia/sep-quarter-2020>



- There were 1,757 receptions into custody for the 2019-20 financial year. Of these, 1,516 were male and 241 were female. All prisoners entering the Tasmanian prison system do so through one of the two reception prisons.
- At the time of the receptions, 1,516 were un-sentenced and 241 were sentenced. Coincidentally, the numbers breakdown for those sentenced and un-sentenced receptions was the same as the male and female breakdown. This data was checked with Tasmania Prison Service and confirmed to be correct.



Inspection methodology

Inspection provides independent, external evaluation that includes an analysis of areas that require improvement. It is based on a range of evidence that is gathered and evaluated against an inspection framework.

All inspections of custodial centres are conducted against the Custodial Inspector's published inspection standards. The inspection standards are based on international human rights standards, and cover matters considered essential to the safe, respectful and purposeful treatment of prisoners in custody.

The inspection standards specify the criteria for inspection. During the Food and Nutrition inspection, a number of sources of evidence were used to assess the custodial centres against the standards. These sources included individual interviews carried out with staff, conversations with prisoners, discussions with external stakeholders and service providers, documentation, and observation by inspectors and the expert consultants.

Inspection reports are tabled in Parliament after an inspection is completed. Prior to publication of the report custodial centre management and the Department of Justice are consulted, and invited to correct any factual inaccuracies in the report. The responsible Minister is also provided with an opportunity to comment.

How will the inspection team make judgements?

The inspection team will ensure that their judgements are:

- secure - based on sufficient evidence;
- first-hand - based on direct observation of processes, prisoners and staff;
- reliable - based on the criteria contained in the inspection standards;
- valid - accurately reflecting what is achieved and provided; and
- corporate - findings reflect the collective view of the inspection team.



Inspection standards

The *Inspection standards for adult custodial services in Tasmania* provide the structure for reviewing and assessing the performance of custodial centres in relation to the treatment of, and conditions for, prisoners in Tasmania.

The standards were developed taking into account the full range of relevant international treaties, covenants, and the then *Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia, Revised 2012*.

The standards are closely aligned to both the New South Wales and Western Australian inspection standards for adult custodial services, providing an element of harmonisation across multiple Australian jurisdictions. The Custodial Inspector consulted with TPS and other stakeholders throughout the drafting process of the inspection standards.

Independent monitoring and assessment is important to ensure custodial services are meeting standards. An independent perspective can identify issues – both shortcomings requiring improvement and strengths that can be better utilised – that may not be immediately apparent to the custodial centre, thereby providing a continuous improvement framework.

The inspection standards are publicly available on the [Custodial Inspector's website](http://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au)⁴.

Summarised below are the findings of the inspection team in respect of the Food and Nutrition suite of inspection standards.

⁴ www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au



1. Food and Nutrition

Inspection Standards 90 to 92

The following extract is taken from the *Inspection standards for adult custodial services in Tasmania*:

It is a fundamental right of prisoners to be provided with sufficient nutritious and varied food, at normal meal times, and to have access to drinking water at all times.

Food is a constant focus for complaints in correctional centres across Australia. 'The NSW Ombudsman Annual Report 2008-09' (p.80) comments that "It is rare to come away from a visit to a correctional centre without receiving a single complaint about food" while the '2010-11 Annual Report' (p.36) observes that the "dissatisfaction with the food is unsurprising when we see the large number of prison provided meals which are thrown away uneaten by many inmates each time we visit correctional centres."

Many prisoners are overweight and in need a healthier diet with more exercise. However, prisoners cannot be made to live and eat healthily, nor should they be. Health issues stem in part because prisoners are able to supplement their dietary intake with confectionary and other items bought at the canteen, and in part because making a choice about the foods that are eaten is one the fundamental distinguishing attributes of being an individual. There is a wide disparity in food preferences among prisoners and prisoners should be allowed some food choices.

This extract refers to findings of the NSW Ombudsman dating back over a decade, but its relevance and legitimacy remain. My staff continue to find that concerns about food are raised by prisoners at every available opportunity. Their observations from this inspection are that:

- a large number of prisoners in the Tasmanian prison system are overweight, particularly female prisoners; and
- there are few healthy options available through the canteen even with the knowledge that a significant portion of the prison population supplement their dietary intake through canteen purchases.

The meals prepared and provided by Tasmania Prison Service were found by my expert consultant, Accredited Dietitian Ngaire Hobbins, to be adequate and nutritionally sound. Despite this, prisoners express dissatisfaction with the quality and variety of food provided. It appears that the concerns raised by prisoners can be attributed largely to the following factors:

- the cook chill process, which results in a delay between cooking and consumption adversely affecting the quality of meals, as was noted in the first report. The inspection found, however, that the length of time between preparation and consumption has been significantly reduced since the last inspection. Additionally, better quality 'hot



boxes' have been procured which result in meals staying hotter for longer;

- personal preference, that is the likes and dislikes of prisoners;
- the amount of food provided; and
- the perceived lack of variety of meals.

Inspection standard 91.4 provides that prisoners should be consulted and can make comment about the quality, quantity and variety of food and have their views taken into account. The expert consultant has noted that this standard has been achieved by TPS, though I have concerns about the ad hoc nature of the consultation, and am firmly of the view that much more can be done by TPS in this regard. Rigorous consultation processes should be implemented in all facilities, with feedback provided to prisoners in response to their suggestions and comments. Prisoners report feeling that their concerns and requests go unheard and unacknowledged.

The inspection standards require that:

- food should be hygienically prepared and of sufficient quality, quantity and variety to meet prisoners nutritional needs;
- special dietary food should be provided where it is established such food is necessary for medical reasons, on account of a prisoner's religious beliefs, because the prisoner is a vegetarian, or where the prisoner has other reasonable, special needs; and
- prisoner accommodation that involves self-catering must be monitored to ensure appropriate standards of hygiene and nutrition.

I have included at Appendix 2 the full report prepared by Ms Hobbins which contains:

- detailed observations and findings from the 2020 inspection;
- an analysis of the progress against recommendations from the inaugural inspection against the food and nutrition standards undertaken in 2017, and reported in the *Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report 2017*;
- a summary of achievements against the standards identified at the 2020 inspection; and
- recommendations for improvement.

Due to the comprehensive expert consultant report it is not necessary to repeat in detail much of the content relating to observations and findings. Rather, I have provided below a snapshot of the observations of my staff and prisoner voices in relation to each of the overarching food and nutrition inspection standards.

Please note that some of the content in Ms Hobbins' report has been redacted to maintain confidentiality of sources of information.

Ms Hobbins recommendations have largely been accepted by me in full, with one exception being the recommendation to provide additional food for those who are hungry.

I have not restated the expert consultant's recommendations in the body of my report – please refer to the full report at Appendix 2 for detail.



Hygienic food preparation and prisoner nutritional needs

It is a fundamental right of prisoners to be provided with sufficient nutritious and varied food, at normal meal times, and to have access to drinking water at all times.

The inspection found that TPS provides prisoners with three meals per day at reasonable intervals, and all prisoners have continuous access to clean drinking water. TPS has arrangements in place at all facilities for food to be available at non-meal times for late arrivals and late court returns etc.

In accordance with inspection standards, prisoners should be issued with evening meals at a time that reflects community practice. In RPC, however, meals are usually delivered between 1600 and 1630 which is quite early and prisoners report getting hungry later in the evening.

It's a long time between dinner and breakfast. Sometimes I eat my breakfast pack while I'm watching TV at night

Inspection standard 90.1 provides that menus should be planned to ensure that high quality, nutritional and varied meals are provided. Following the last inspection in 2017, TPS engaged an Accredited Practising Dietician to review their menu and provide advice. Pleasingly, I understand that the menu review was commissioned by TPS as a result of the recommendations made in the *Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report 2017*.

An issue with the menu review identified by the inspection team was that the menu TPS supplied to the APD for analysis was a six week menu. Unfortunately, that six week menu bore little resemblance to the menu being utilised at the unannounced inspection. The menu being followed at the time of the inspection was a four week cycle with one meal from 'COVID stock' a week substituted for another from the menu. When questioned about the difference between the four week menu being used and the six week menu that had been reviewed, TPS advised that *there wasn't the storage capacity* for a menu with a six week cycle. Effectively this means that the nutritional analysis of the menu undertaken by the APD is not really representative of what is being supplied to prisoners from the TPS main kitchen. Despite this, the expert consultant Ms Hobbins felt that the menu in use at the time of the inspection did provide nutritional and varied meals for prisoners.

The inspection found that the quality of the meals is still compromised somewhat by the cook-chill method that is employed, despite the positive improvements that have been made to reduce the time between preparation and consumption of meals, and the higher quality 'hot boxes' which ensure meals stay hotter for longer.

Since the last inspection in 2017, the total vegetable content provided to prisoners has increased, with more salads and vegetables in sandwiches. At the time of the inspection the lunch menu was as follows:

- Monday - hot lunch;
- Tuesday and Friday - soup and sandwiches;
- Wednesday - salad and cold meat;



- Thursday - wrap and sandwich;
- Saturday - salad and cold meat; and
- Sunday - pastry usually pie (the pies are made on Mondays, frozen and reheated on Sunday).

The amount of bread provided has been reduced from seven to five slices a day, and only grain bread is provided. This is a nutritional improvement, though not necessarily popular with prisoners.

The inspection team consistently heard from prisoners that they do not get enough food, with many supplementing their diet with purchases from the canteen.

Big guys are always after extra meals. I think a lot of it is boredom. They only get an hour walk, doing nothing the rest of the time. I was putting on about a kilo a week when I first come in, and now I'm about 6 kilos heavier. All the bread too, doesn't help.

The meals aren't big enough. People come in fresh off the street, coming off benders. They are given only five slices of bread, and they haven't eaten for days. They are locked in a cell with nothing to do apart from eat.

TPS fails to meet inspection standard 90.2 which requires that prisoners should be able to choose between food options. It appears that little has been done in this area since my 2017 inspection. There is no choice provided in respect of meals at present, the only alternative option is to eat a vegetarian diet.

My staff have visited a number of prisons in Australia, with larger prison populations, that are able to accommodate choice and greater variation. Ravenhall Correctional Centre in Victoria is an exemplary facility in this regard. TPS should take steps to implement seasonal menus allowing for limited choice, for example between two options with one being vegetarian. It is acknowledged that better electronic systems will likely be required to facilitate this.

Not everyone likes spicy food. I couldn't eat last night's chilli con carne, so I ate eggs on toast. A lot of us have eggs on toast if we can't eat any meal.

We've had the same meals for six months and there is very little change with seasonal menus.

A number of issues were reported by prisoners in relation to choices, including:

- many would like access to *real* yoghurt, as the yoghurt provided by the TPS main kitchen is frozen yoghurt and more akin to ice-cream;
- there is no choice provided in respect of spreads or cereals provided in breakfast packs, and much trading between prisoners goes on in this regard;
- many prisoners expressed that they would like healthier cereal options, such as oats, for breakfast as many of the cereals provided are high in sugar content;



- the cheese provided is referred to as *plastic cheese*, it is sliced and processed;
- many prisoners would like the option of fresh full cream milk⁵;
- full-fat options are desired for items such as mayonnaise, sour cream, ice cream etc, as the products provided by TPS are fat free or low fat;
- the option of a chicken and fish only diet in relation to meal selection - many prisoners described feeling forced to select a vegetarian diet when their real preference is actually no red meat;⁶ and
- provision of more *real* meat instead of processed meat in salads.

The latter was a particular concern in MHWP in relation to the salads that are provided on the weekends by the TPS main kitchen.

Sugar and peanut butter is like gold here. Everybody likes peanut butter, but mostly you get honey and jam.

The cereals are sugary, not healthy. I would like the option of oats, and we could cook them in the unit.

Everything is processed - sandwich meat and cheese. You rarely get a real slice of cheese with salads and, if it is, it's a Coon slice and everyone loves it.

Ingredients like milk and mayonnaise are always fat free or low fat. There's more sugar in that than full cream. It's always light sour cream and low fat ice-cream when we get it.

The inspection team also heard a number of prisoner requests for condiments and spices to add flavour to meals. My staff were told that previously these were available, but the reason given for their unavailability at the time of the inspection was COVID, and this is difficult to understand given there is no shortage of supplies in the community.

The limitations with choice extend beyond the meals provided by the TPS main kitchen to canteen purchases. Prisoners are unable to select particular flavours in respect of a number of items including rice and potato chips.

The rice you buy on canteen is spicy as well. There is a variety, but you can't choose the flavour, you get what you're given. Tracey was buying 2 packets of rice every week [the maximum allowed] to try and get some that were okay for her, she ended up with six spicy packs and was giving them away.*

**Not her real name*

It's not possible to buy fresh cheese on canteen, it is long-life Dairy Lea

⁵ Prisoners are able to buy full cream milk on canteen but it is longlife UHT milk.

⁶ A chicken/fish only diet was also raised as a preferred option by a number of prisoners that are Muslim.



cheddar, it used to be Kraft.

The biscuits on canteen are from India now, not Arnott's. I wish they would change back.

Time and again prisoners expressed that there are no healthy food options available through the canteen. Rather, the canteen list is essentially a confectionary list with no nutritious choices.

There's no healthy stuff and it's all rubbish.

We need healthy options. Yoghurt maybe, fresh veggies and meat packs.

There's been no rice to buy for 10 weeks.

Common suggestions for healthier canteen options were:

- canned beans, chickpeas, baked beans;
- real cheese;
- flour;
- dark chocolate;
- rice noodles;
- meat packs;
- fresh vegetables; and
- fillings suitable for wraps⁷.

Healthy food options from the canteen was an area identified as requiring attention in the 2017 inspection and disappointingly there has been no change. The expert consultant identified that there is significant resistance in canteen to find ways to action this which is essential to the health and wellbeing of prisoners.

Additional concerns commonly raised by prisoners included that the canteen list has been the same for a significant period of time, and that prices are expensive particularly given the low pay rates of prisoners.

Prisoners reported concerns with the nutritional content of meals after freezing, though there was a general acceptance that it was necessary to keep frozen meals on hand due to the COVID threat of lockdown, and that these should be used and not wasted.

...it's only once per week but they're awful. The grey cauliflower doesn't present well and they need to look more carefully at what they freeze.

Some people try to take spare meals that are left over and then they reheat

⁷ Prisoners are able to buy wraps on canteen but said that they do not have any fillings available through the canteen to put in them.



them a few days after. They're reheated when delivered, so they are frozen, reheated, refrigerated and reheated. It's not a good idea.

The meals are watery and there is too much rice especially since COVID. It seems to be the go to

Concerns were raised, however, about the limited fresh food being served at HRP and it was reported that round 80% of the meals being provided at the time of the inspection were frozen as the TPS kitchen was sending over the COVID frozen meals that were close to expiry date.

Prisoners at HRP also noted that there is a restricted canteen list there with less items. One of the main restricted items raised was eggs, as these are not available to prisoners other than wardsmen. There are a number of prisoners accommodated long-term at HRP and if prisoners are being housed there for extended periods, consideration should be given to allowing access to the same canteen items as others on the same security classification in RBP and RPC. Prisoners largely accept that the restricted canteen list is acceptable for those housed short-term at HRP.

There were a number of practical issues identified by prisoners, particularly in the maximum units:

- soup in a packet was provided for lunch in the week before the onsite visits and the prisoners had no way of heating it up as they are confined to their cells at lunchtime and prisoners are not allowed to have kettles in their cell;
- there is a Breville sandwich press and a microwave in the common area of the units, but prisoners cannot access these appliances when locked down over the lunch period and at night, and more frequently all day due to operational lockdowns;
- eggs are not permitted in the maximum units due to behavioural incentives, limiting nutritional options for meal replacement if the prisoners do not like the prepared prison meal; and
- supplementing meals, whether due to taste preferences or larger appetites, through canteen purchases is not an option for all prisoners due to affordability - there are limited employment options in the maximum security units and most prisoners accommodated there are on a basic wage of \$25 per week.

There are not enough microwaves in Division 7 of RBP. My staff observed that there were three microwaves in the kitchen for (at that time) 24 prisoners, and according to the prisoners there are normally more than 24 in the division. This is a significant workload for domestic appliances and prisoners need to be patient when waiting to reheat their meals as the wait time can be significant.

Female prisoners at MHWP reported that the prisoner workers in the kitchen cannot get oil for the deep fryer. As a result, the prisoner workers have filtered the oil and reused it a number of times, but they are aware that this is not best practice saying *we won't do it too many times anymore*. More generally, prisoners in MHWP raised concerns that *there is nothing to cook*



with. We used to be able to get butter through the kitchen, but not anymore. The inspection team were told that a prisoner letter has been sent to management requesting the provision of oil for MHWP prisoners to cook with.

Other general concerns raised by female prisoners related to the potatoes which are provided by the TPS main kitchen. The potatoes are provided to the MHWP kitchen peeled already and these are have been sprayed or soaked in a solution which, my staff were told, has a chemical smell. Prisoners expressed that they can taste the solution when they eat the potatoes.

Not sure why we don't get fresh potatoes, when you open the bag you can smell the stuff they spray it with.

The inspection team also observed a rodent in the MHWP prisoner's vegetable garden, which is also suffering from the incursion of rabbits. The baiting program appears not to be effective. The expert consultant has recommended that TPS installs a rabbit proof fence for the vegetable gardens in MHWP, and elsewhere as necessary, so that the vegetables grown can be enjoyed by prisoners.

The inspection found that food provided to prisoners is procured, stored, prepared, produced and served in accordance with generally accepted professional health and safety standards and in compliance with legislation. Regular quality management audits and reviews of the TPS kitchens are undertaken. An improvement identified since the 2017 inspection is that there is now a refrigerated van used to transport meals from the TPS main kitchen to RPC and MHWP.

Inspection standard 90.10 provides that all persons engaged in food preparation and or handling should be trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities. The inspection found that TPS fails to meet this standard as the safe food handling online training that was previously being undertaken at HRP on admission to custody ceased some time ago. Many of the prisoners working in the TPS main kitchen had undertaken no food safety or food handling training. Likewise, the wardsmen working at HRP have no qualifications to work with food, and had not completed food safety training, despite a large portion of their duties being dedicated to feeding the prisoners accommodated there. Positively, the inspection team observed that all persons involved in preparing and serving food were wearing appropriate protective clothing.

Provision of special dietary food – medical need, vegetarian and religious beliefs

During the inspection some concerns were raised about the adequacy of nutritional requirements provided through the general menu for prisoners with special health considerations.

In this regard, TPS kitchen staff advised the inspection team that around 10-15% of prisoners are on varying special diets. These included vegetarian, diabetic, gluten free, and Halal diets, and prisoners with specific food allergies. In addition, some prisoners may require special diets for a temporary period of time, including prisoners:



- requiring soft food diets due to medical reasons, for example Crohn's disease, lap bands, broken jaws, facial injuries, dental issues etc;
- requiring finger food diets which require no cutlery because they are at risk of suicide and self-harm (SASH); and
- that have additional nutritional needs because they are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Inspection standard 91.2 provides that prisoners requiring special diets such as vegetarian, religious, cultural and special diets should be able to select from a menu that includes sufficient choice. The inspection found that many prisoners on special diets complained about lack of choices and little variation in the meals provided.

In order to be placed on a vegetarian diet, prisoners need to obtain a medical chit (obtained through a health request) from one of the CPHS doctors. The inspection team heard that one prisoner waited about a week and a half to receive the doctor's approval, and in the meantime was provided the standard menu items containing meat. I query why is it necessary to require a medical chit to approve a request for a vegetarian diet. Prisoners should be able to choose whether or not to be vegetarian, based on their personal beliefs, and because it is not a medically related diet this option should not require a doctor's approval. If a prisoner opts for a vegetarian diet they have to wait six months before they can revert to the standard prison menu.

Diabetic prisoners are provided with a specific diet to address their medical requirements.

They're not high sugar foods and the cereal is muesli or weetbix rather than cornflakes. The desserts are like low sugar custard. But you have to be put on there by the doctor, you can't choose [the diabetic diet].

Feedback provided by prisoners on a diabetic diet was that there are too many roast meals and too much chicken.

The meals are all too much of the same, there's not enough variation. It's rubbish.

The inspection identified significant issues with TPS supporting prisoners' needs for a strict gluten free diet due to diagnosed coeliac disease. Coeliac disease must be treated seriously and people who have this must follow a strictly gluten free diet. There is a need for education of TPS staff around the gluten free diet and the impact of gluten on prisoners that are coeliac. TPS is obliged to ensure that anyone with a diagnosed serious auto-immune condition such as coeliac disease is provided with appropriate nutritional options to maintain their health. The consequences of not adhering to a strict gluten free diet on long term health outcomes can be disastrous for individuals and very costly for the health system. Within the TPS kitchen particularly there was a feeling there is maybe only 'one true coeliac' and that it was possible to have more or less serious coeliac disease. This is not the case.

Inspection standard 91.1 provides that Halal and other religious requirements for food procurement, storage, preparation, distribution and serving should be fully observed, and this may involve the separate preparation and cooking of certain foods. The difficulties prisoners



have with adhering to their dietary requirements was an issue that was raised multiple times throughout the inspection.

I am Muslim and the kitchen knows that, but constantly sends me ham salads. They won't answer my questions about the type of protein and fat in pastry for pies, I ask about meat contents and they won't say what it is, but just say it's not pork.

The expert consultant noted in her report that Muslim prisoner concerns about meat content are valid. An ingredient list supplied to the inspection team by the company that supplies processed meats to TPS lists pork trimmings in the ingredients for salami and does not specify the meat in the devon. This is extremely concerning given the advice by TPS over time that there is no pork in these products.

Prisoners with food allergies are often served roast meals, as it is considered an easy option to avoid allergens. One particular prisoner that has an allergy to onion and tomato told the inspection team that he is served roast for the majority of his meals with little variation. This prisoner reported the same at the 2017 inspection too. While it is difficult to cater for allergies, there still needs to be choice and variation in meals for prisoners with special dietary needs.

A number of prisoners raised concerns about the food provided when a prisoner is medically required to consume a soft food diet. The main concern is that the kitchen staff puree whatever the meal of the day is in its entirety. And the effect is that all meals taste the same.

They puree the whole meal together, it's disgusting. Why couldn't they purée individual parts of meal and keep them separate?

Prisoners reported that previously those on soft food diets were provided with two servings of soup and a jelly. This was preferable to pureeing standard issue meals. The expert consultant indicated that hospitals and aged care homes puree separate components (such as vegetables and meat) individually. On querying TPS kitchen staff about this the answer was that it is too difficult to do this noting that meals are prepared a couple of days in advance and then reheated. The expert consultant suggested that prisoners on soft food diets should also be supplemented with a nutritional supplement such as the Ensure drink (or substitute brand if applicable).

There were concerns raised about the adequacy of food provided for prisoners with lap bands. The issue is not that the food is not nutritious, rather that due to the lap band prisoners are unable to consume enough food to meet their nutritional requirements.

For breakfast the only cereal I like is Nutrigrain and I manage to swap with other prisoners so I can eat this every day. They apparently noticed that I'd leave the stuff I don't eat and then I was inundated with Nutrigrain. I eat it dry in the morning before medication. I have found that nibbly crunchy things work quite well with my lap band. We have skim milk 2 to 3 times per day, 300mls cartons. Other in the unit realised that I only drink tea and milo, so they have the coffee and leave those for me. Basically with all food I



manage by swapping. The main meals are enormous. I can't eat them all. This might sound disgusting but I chew the meal, but don't swallow a lot of them. I spit them out. I do eat the veggies. I'm surviving on biscuits and cheese, 2 minute noodles which I get 4 meals out of, and cup of soup. I eat fruit, we get beautiful oranges, and I eat half at a time. For protein, I eat as much meat as I can and peanut butter too. Normally I carry the peanut butter in my pockets. I have lost 12 kilos since I've been in here [four months]. I'm just coping some days. Today had a handful of Nutrigrain, 1/4 noodle packet, one milo, a cup of tea, a cordial, and a salad at lunch.

MHWP kitchen workers reported that a prisoner with a lap band had been given a chit for soft foods but the TPS main kitchen does not send any suitable meals for her. To ensure that she has suitable food to eat, kitchen staff have been making a banana smoothie for her every day, but they are concerned that this is not providing enough energy for her. They suggested that the prisoner needs a pack with soup and custard or similar foods. Sometimes they prepare mashed vegetables for her.

The inspection team visited the Crisis Support Unit (CSU) while onsite at RPC. Commonly prisoners that are accommodated in CSU have restrictions on what items are allowed in their cells due to SASH concerns. Cutlery is an item that is regularly restricted and 'safe' options may be provided such as cardboard spoons, or if these are restricted too then prisoners may be placed on a finger food diet, which is food that does not require the use of cutlery to consume it. Finger food includes pies, pastries, sausage rolls and quiches, none of which have adequate nutritional value and this diet can be provided for days. Correctional staff reported that there are many occasions where instead of finger food, prisoners will be delivered a regular meal, which they have to attempt to eat without any cutlery. This was identified as a dignity issue, but may also be a trigger for bad behaviours due to frustration.

Correctional staff also identified that the food provided by the TPS main kitchen is inconsistent. This concern was not about the quantity of meals provided, there are always three meals per day for prisoners, but the suitability of the meals to be eaten in the CSU environment. Sometimes sandwiches and soup are provided, and staff put the soup into a foam cup and prisoners can use a cardboard spoon, other times a standard meal will be provided. If this happens, it is common that correctional staff will adapt the meal so that it can be eaten without cutlery by making sandwiches with a meal, but the type of meal is not always suitable as a sandwich filling. Bread rations are provided to prisoners in CSU, the standard five slices per day, and the correctional staff have to butter bread for them for sandwiches.

It was noted that prisoners in CSU are provided with the standard breakfast pack but if there are restrictions the pack cannot be provided to them as it contains a plastic bowl and plastic cutlery. Correctional staff have to provide a foam cup to the prisoners for their cereal and it is particularly hard to eat weetbix out of a foam cup. It was suggested that there be a specific CSU breakfast pack with a foam or cardboard bowl. Though the expert consultant did not make a formal recommendation in this regard, it is my view that TPS should review what a finger food diet comprises, as well as providing specific instructions to the TPS main kitchen about the types of food that can be provided with the cardboard spoon.



Older prisoners have different nutritional needs from the general prisoner population, as aging is linked to a variety of changes in the body that can make a person prone to nutrient deficiencies. Despite this, elderly prisoners (65 years and older) in Tasmanian prisons do not have a different diet, that is, the food provided is not adapted to their needs.

The issue of weight gain was raised many times throughout the inspection by prisoners and both TPS and CPHS staff.

People can put on 30 to 40 kilos in here. They no longer do Optifast [diet shakes] and there's no other option for diet. We can go a vegetarian diet but there's no other substitute for diet or healthier food on canteen. They're happy to give us S8s [opioid replacement therapy] and medications to help people fall asleep, but they don't want to help us eat healthy and lower weight. We've got exercise machines, but there's no direction on what we should be doing with those to lose weight.

They put on weight because all they eat is bread and the only things on canteen are sweets.

Specifically in relation to the weight gain seen in many female prisoners, it was suggested that meal portion sizes may be contributing. All meals prepared in the TPS main kitchen are the same size, essentially the meals cater for men.

If you put them onto a plate, they're huge.

Discussions with many prisoners indicated that prisoners are not educated about healthy eating and its benefits, as is required by inspection standard 91.3.

We don't [get any education, advice or guidance about nutrition] but it would be really good, because there are a lot of women here who complain about their weight and there's really no change. There's either chocolate or bread. Having a healthy morning tea snack would be really good, like hummus and carrot sticks, or even just chickpeas to make our own hummus.

There is no understanding of healthy eating, weight loss and nutrition.

What's missing is a weight loss type diet, not a medical one but something that is more along the lines of the low carb diet. There's need for more education and strategies.

Prisoner self-catering

There are few facilities in Tasmanian adult custodial centres that allow for prisoner self-catering, despite a number of units having been designed and built to accommodate this. This is particularly so in respect of the minimum security facilities for men, the O'Hara Cottages, and for women, the Vanessa Goodwin Cottages, all of which have fully operational kitchens installed.



There is a beautiful kitchen here but we can't use it! Why fit it out if we can't use it? I think Vanessa Goodwin had very good plans for the units but it hasn't turned out that way.

The limited opportunities for self-catering was an area identified for improvement in the previous food and nutrition inspection and it is disappointing that there has been no progress. The following excerpt is taken from the *Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report 2017*:

...TPS should consider options, appropriate to prisoners' security and behavioural status, for prisoners to prepare their own meals from ingredients supplied by the Risdon Main Kitchen – these meals would be in place of the pre-cooked meals currently supplied. To allow prisoners to prepare their own meals in areas such as the O'Hara Cottages, and some units in the Medium security precinct, would have the additional benefit of introducing more independent living, assisting prisoners to gain valuable life skills in preparation for release.

Inspection standard 92 provides that prisoner accommodation that involves self-catering must be monitored to ensure appropriate standards of hygiene and nutrition. This includes ensuring that food is stored safely and hygienically and not in excess of the recommended shelf life, including food purchased from the canteen for later consumption.

The inspection found that there are no checks on this, nor systems in place to monitor hygiene and nutrition. More importantly, there is no refrigeration, or inadequate refrigeration, to cater for the storage needs of prisoners. Prisoners store their canteen items on the shelves in their cells. Some also store items such as their fresh milk and left over meals in their cells with no refrigeration because they are concerned about sharing the common unit fridges with other prisoners.

I put my milk in a basin of cold water overnight to keep it okay. Other people just keep it on their shelves, opened or unopened. I could leave it in the fridge but someone will nick it. It happens a little bit, depending on what floor you're accommodated.

The expert consultant in her report identified that in some areas safe food storage is difficult to achieve and requires considerations.



Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term or Acronym	Definition
APD	Accredited Practising Dietician APDs are university qualified experts in nutrition and dietetics and are all members of the Dietician's Association of Australia
CPHS	Correctional Primary Health Services (Tasmania)
DSO	Director's Standing Order
HRP	Hobart Reception Prison
LRP	Launceston Reception Prison
MHWP	Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison
RPC	Risdon Prison Complex
RBP	Ron Barwick Prison
SASH	Suicide and self-harm
TPS	Tasmania Prison Service



Appendix 1

Inspection Standards

90 Food should be hygienically prepared and of sufficient quality, quantity and variety to meet prisoners nutritional needs.

90.1 Menus should be planned to ensure that high quality, nutritional and varied meals are provided.

90.2 Prisoners should be able to choose between food options.

90.3 Prisoners should be provided with three meals per day at reasonable intervals.

90.4 Prisoners should be issued with evening meals at a time that reflects community practice.

90.5 All prisoners should have continuous access to clean drinking water.

90.6 Particular care and consideration must be given to ensure that prisoners that are required to work outside the prison or prisoners in transit have access to adequate supplies of drinking water.

90.7 Menus should consider the availability of fresh produce, climate, prisoner work requirements, and the need for special meals.

90.8 Menus should be developed in consultation with a qualified dietician.

90.9 Food should be procured, stored, prepared, produced and served in accordance with generally accepted professional health and safety standards and in compliance with legislation.

90.10 All persons engaged in food preparation and or handling should be trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities.

90.11 All persons involved in preparing and serving food wear appropriate protective clothing.

90.12 Correctional officers must supervise the serving of food to prevent tampering with food and other forms of bullying. Particular care must be taken to ensure that food for protection prisoners is not subject to tampering.

90.13 There should be regular quality management audits and reviews of kitchens.



91 Special dietary food should be provided where it is established such food is necessary for medical reasons, on account of a prisoner's religious beliefs, because the prisoner is a vegetarian, or where the prisoner has other reasonable, special needs.

91.1 Halal and other religious requirements for food procurement, storage, preparation, distribution and serving should be fully observed. This may involve the separate preparation and cooking of certain foods.

91.2 Prisoners requiring special diets such as vegetarian, religious, cultural and special diets should be able to select from a menu that includes sufficient choice.

91.3 Prisoners should be educated about healthy eating and its benefits.

91.4 Prisoners should be consulted and can make comment about the quality, quantity and variety of food and have their views taken into account.

91.5 There should be arrangements for food to be available at non-meal times for late arrivals, court returns etc.

92 Prisoner accommodation that involves self-catering must be monitored to ensure appropriate standards of hygiene and nutrition.

92.1 Prisoner self-catering arrangements require the prison to ensure that proper standards are observed for the storage of food, the hygiene of the kitchen, and that prisoners are receiving a balanced diet.

92.2 Food that has been purchased from the canteen for later consumption must be stored safely and hygienically and not in excess of the recommended shelf life.

92.3 Healthy snacks should be available as an alternative to confectionary.



Appendix 2

Consultant Report

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REPORT ON FOOD AND NUTRITION IN TASMANIAN ADULT PRISONS
prepared for
The Tasmanian Prisons Custodial Inspectorate
November 2020

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BACKGROUND, ACTIONS SINCE INSPECTIONS IN 2017 AND EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW:

The Tasmanian Parliament passed the *Custodial Inspector Act 2016*, to establish an independent Custodial Inspector for Tasmania's prison system and youth detention centres. Richard Connock was appointed Inspector on 31 January 2017. The Office of the Custodial Inspector consists of Lisa Steele, Principal Officer and Kirsty Bower, Administration and Research Officer.

The purpose of the Custodial Inspector is to provide independent, proactive and systemic oversight of custodial centres in Tasmania. The focus is on systemic issues relating to the management, control and security of the State's custodial centres and the care and welfare of prisoners and detainees. In particular, the Custodial Inspector provides external scrutiny by undertaking inspections of custodial centres followed by the publication of reports and recommendations.

The first themed inspections in 2017 focussed on the health standards - Physical Health, Management and Treatment of Substance Abuse, Hygiene and Environmental Health and Mental Health. Those inspections (contained in report titled "Inspection of Adult Custodial Centres in Tasmania 2017. Care and Wellbeing Report" – herein called: 2017 Adult Report; included Food and Nutrition as a component of overall wellbeing, with findings reporting against the then draft Food and Nutrition Standards.

The draft standards were finalised in 2019 and are now: *Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Centres in Tasmania 2019* (ref 1) and *Inspection Standards for Youth Custodial Centres in Tasmania 2018* (ref 2). This 2020 report, which is a standalone Report on Food and Nutrition, assesses Tasmanian Adult Prisons against those current standards.

Also, since the first Food and Nutrition Inspection in 2017 the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) released, in 2018, a report: "The Health of Australia's prisoners" (ref 4). This report notes the following:

"People in prison have significant and complex health needs, which are often long-term or chronic in nature. They have higher rates of mental health conditions, chronic disease, communicable disease, acquired brain injury, tobacco smoking, high-risk alcohol consumption, recent illicit drug use, and recent injecting drug use, than the general population (AIHW 2015). Improving the health and well-being of people in prison, and maintaining those improvements after prison, benefits the entire community."

Tasmania's prison population is not dissimilar to the national situation reported by AIHW, with the majority of people in prison or in detention being either on remand or serving sentences under 5 years in length. But there is an increasing number of prisoners on longer sentences who can be classified as 'older' in terms of medical status (65+) and their needs are considered in this report.

I was pleased to be engaged again by Tasmanian Custodial Inspectorate to provide this review Food and Nutrition at TPS as it allows some continuity of observations.

[REDACTED]

I would also like to express my respect for the kitchen and custodial staff we encountered during our inspection. I observed a high degree of care for inmates balanced by interaction between inmates and custodial staff which was as light-hearted and respectful as possible given the environment in which these interactions occurred.

I would additionally support the unannounced nature of the site visits this time as we received many comments during the 2017 inspections that the food on offer was not what was usually served: that the prison must have 'put on special food for the inspection.' The unannounced visits allowed us to reassure ourselves that we were not provided special meals and thus be able to more accurately assess the concerns of inmates.

Involvement in the custodial system was new to me in 2017 and I am well aware that a full understanding of the many nuances of the system and how my area of work might be impacted by or might impact the expectations and the wellbeing of prisoners/detainees themselves and of the system more widely requires a wider experience. However, there are many similarities in the systems and processes employed within the aged care system where I have mostly worked for 2 decades and the custodial system: this is mainly in the connection (or disconnection) between provision of quality food and whether that food is eaten and thus provides the nutritional benefit intended.

In this inspection of the adult system there was occasionally evidence among some in management and in health support systems of an inadequate regard for the vital importance of nutrition and education around the health benefits of good food/drink choices more widely in underpinning not only physical, but cognitive health. An organisation-wide commitment to ensuring a focus on food and nutrition that can support better mental health and potentially improve behaviours is encouraged.

Prisoners in the main are representative of the less privileged groups in Tasmanian society, but that should instil in any directives around food and nutrition a desire to implement initiatives intended to improve understanding around food production and healthy eating. Training in food production and food service, where appropriate, can offer rehabilitation and future employment opportunities as well as offering nutritional benefits. That is not to say that consideration should not be given to the expectations of prisoners around food: many common food preferences do not have a positive nutritional focus, but must be balanced against the rights of individuals to make their own choices.

While research in this area in Australia is somewhat limited, a relatively recent paper from University of Qld (ref 3) expresses the challenge of providing nutritious food in a prison environment which is echoed in the Tasmanian Custodial System, particularly the adult system:

"the planned food (was) nutritionally adequate, with the exception of vitamin D for older males and long-chain fatty acids, with Na (sodium) above upper limits." But that "The Australian dietary targets for chronic disease risk were not achieved". As far as nutrient intakes, apart from Vitamin D which was a potential issue across all age groups, this study found that older inmates were more likely to have inadequate intakes of Magnesium, Calcium, Folate, Zinc and Vitamin A and ultimately that "nutrient intakes were greatly impacted by self-funded snacks."

Regarding the latter they further comment on prisoner food practices:

“The assessment at the group level showed a high level of modification of the prison food including holding back components of meals for inclusion in later meals with addition of ‘buy-up’ foods. For example, cold meat from a lunch time meal being added to noodles (from ‘buy-ups’) with sauces from the group’s rations being a modified meal. This practice was referred to by prisoners and (some) custodial staff as a ‘cook-up’. Group-level meal observations showed sharing and swapping of food, even though officially not permitted in the facility, but tolerated by custodial staff (to ‘keep the peace’) and monitored to ensure that the behaviour was not excessive. Dietary interviews confirmed ‘trading’ practices, particularly in relation to provided food such as milk, ‘buy-ups’ (including cigarettes), tokens for soft drinks and in some areas vegetables from gardens.”

(Note that this research was conducted in Queensland prisons before they became tobacco and smoke free in May 2014.)

Unfortunately, this is also very apparent in TPS and it is the wider influence of food choices outside what is being prepared and/or delivered by the TPS kitchens which often has greater impact on the nutrition and thus the physical and cognitive health status of prisoners and detainees. As a result, Food and Nutrition and its impact on both these outcomes must be viewed from a much wider perspective than the workings of the kitchen alone. The Canteen system in adult prisons often have the greatest impact on nutritional status. While there should be access to individual choice through canteen purchases, the items on offer can certainly be reviewed to allow access to more products which facilitate healthier choices to be made in purchases made there.

In addition, given our custodial system has, at its core, the intention to rehabilitate prisoners so they may make positive contribution to society on release and not re-offend, it is also important that there be opportunities to educate and assist prisoners – many of whom have very low health literacy levels and backgrounds with limited exposure to healthy food choices – about food and nutrition. Initiatives which connect prisoners with a wide variety of food options so they can make at least some healthier choices when they are able to, as vital.

Those can be in the support of prisoners who work in the kitchens, in food gardening and in programs which provide appropriate and supportive training in food production. These cannot be considered as ‘additional’ to prison operations, but in a food and nutritional sense, should be central to them. A wider understanding of production, presentation and access to food is essential in building capacity among individuals to engage in productive fulfilling lives for themselves on the outside.

In making such assertions I am well aware that recidivism is high and that such initiatives may not achieve significant reduction in those rates, additionally that there is an immense impact on much more than nutritional wellbeing as a result of drug usage prior to incarceration. However, it remains important to implement systems that support any initiative that has the potential to improve outcomes for prisoners, detainees and the custodial system more widely: my recommendations in this report are focused on that aim.

MY COMMENTS ON THE RESPONSE OF DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DoJ) AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DoH) TO THE 2017 ADULT REPORT

The 2017 Food and Nutrition report, incorporated into the document prepared by the Tasmanian Custodial Inspector and tabled in Parliament in 2018 as *Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania, 2017 – Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report* (herein called 2017 ADULT Report) was provided to the Department of Justice (DoJ) and Department of Health (DoH) for their comment. (Appendix 8 and 9 respectively)

Those responses are relevant here because some significantly impact the achievement, or not, of the standards at this 2020 inspection. My comments on the responses made by DoJ are in the last column of the table below.

I was dismayed and concerned however that DoH did not reflect on any of the recommendations (90-114) which address the provision of adequate Food and Nutrition.

In their introductory comments (appendix 9 of 2017 ADULT Report) the DoH states:

- A lack of healthcare within Adult Custodial Services can cause negative impacts on the quality of life for prisoners and detainees, adversely affecting their physical and mental health and wellbeing, which in turn increases pressure on the health system.
- That is why DoH is committed to continuing to provide health services in Tasmania's adult custodial settings and welcomes the Report's recommendations which are aimed at improving the safety, custody, care, wellbeing and rehabilitation of prisoners and detainees.
- The recommendations relating to the first five themes identified in the Report are the most relevant to Correctional Primary Health Services (CPHS), which is responsible for provision of general and primary healthcare in adult correctional centres in Tasmania. CPHS is a specialised stream within Statewide Mental Health Services (SMHS), within the Tasmanian Health Service (THS) under DoH.

It may be that my report was considered adequate in regard to these points, but it is my contention that CPHS should engage the services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian to fulfil the recommendations especially of Standards 90, 97, 111, 112, 113, 114. Adequate nutrition is fundamental to the support of both physical and mental health and education about healthier eating practices, especially those supporting better mental health outcomes, can go a very long way to assisting prisoners and detainees to have a reduced impact on the health system on release.

The services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian to provide education and individualised support to prisoners and detainees beyond the menu review process is vital to supporting the physical and mental health needs of this population. DoJ could fund these services separately, but DoH already has access to appropriate professional dietitian services which may be able to be extended to TPS: in either case funding is sure to be required for this service, but there are significant long term benefits from such a pro-active approach to expenditure which are gained later on in the health system when the outcomes of inadequate nutritional support during time in custody can result in very costly outcomes. Nutritional education and support services should be an integral part of improving wellbeing and rehabilitation of prisoners and detainees.

I preface my comments also with the observation recorded in the 2017 ADULT Report that “conclude(d) that at present the prison service is over-stretched at almost every point due to the continual increase in prisoner numbers and existing infrastructure constraints, and this is creating system pressures in many areas.”

COMMENTS ON DoJ RESPONSE to 2017 Report (Appendix 8 in 2017 ADULT Report)

	Recommendation	DoJ response in 2018	Outcome since 2018	COMMENT
90	Engages an Accredited Practising Dietician to provide food and nutrition education to employed prisoners and staff at the Mary Hutchinson Women’s Prison kitchen.	Supported in principle and to be considered but impacted by budgetary constraints	Not achieved	DoH have access to dietitians who could supply this essential service
91	Considers reinstating the kitchen in Mary Hutchinson Women’s Prison as a fully functioning kitchen as soon as possible so that it is a self-catered facility.	Supported and described as an existing Initiative	Largely achieved	Underway but cannot yet be described as a ‘fully functioning’, ‘self-catered facility’. See notes at point 19 below
92	Explores options for a central kitchen facility to be built onsite at Risdon Prison Complex.	Supported and included in planning for southern remand infrastructure project	Not achieved	A kitchen within the SRC is now considered to be outside budget See comments below
93	Considers options, appropriate to their security and behavioural status, for prisoners to prepare their own meals from ingredients supplied by the Risdon Main Kitchen – these would be in place of the pre-cooked meals currently supplied.	Supported in principle and aligned to std 91	Not achieved	Standard 91 refers only to MHWP. Consideration needs to be given to the same within the RBP and appropriate areas of the RPC

94	Explores options and make changes to introduce more menu variation.	Supported	Achieved	Ongoing, regular review should continue and needs to include a review of canteen
95	Implements all recommendations of the 2016 TPS Menu Nutrition Assessment prepared for TPS. Those recommendations are set out in the Appendix to the Report from the Consultant Dietician provided in Appendix 5.	Supported as per 2016 review		
96	Engages an Accredited Practising Dietician to reassess the prison menus following implementation of recommendations 1 to 6 and 8 of the 2016 TPS Menu Nutrition Assessment.	Supported	Achieved	
97	Engages an Accredited Practising Dietician to assess the nutritional status of pregnant and breastfeeding prisoners (with respect to recommendation 7 of the 2016 TPS Menu Nutrition Assessment).	Supported in principle during considerations around recommendation 90 above	Not yet achieved	Nutritional support is essential for pregnant and breastfeeding prisoners. Again, DoH should be approached to assist in this through their dietitian resources
98	Develops processes for Risdon Prison Complex to reduce the time between meals being removed from the reheating oven to consumption. That is, reducing the time meals are kept in hot boxes before serving.	Supported in principle. However that support is linked to std 92 and there is no longer to be a kitchen in the new SRC	Largely achieved	Most meals eaten with significantly less delay than previous 72 hr Work is ongoing in extending this. I am concerned however that the current kitchen, even with proposed equipment upgrades, will not be able to achieve this standard into the future.

99	Reassesses the TPS menu to include more microwave friendly meal options to reduce the likelihood of excess water in reheated meals.	Supported in line with overall menu planning	Largely achieved	This is ongoing and future meal quality may depend on the capacity of the kitchen to adapt to additional demands of the SRC and Northern Prison when they are completed
100	Reassesses meals containing vegetables with high water content and consider supplying instead a salad separately to meat and starchy vegetables	Supported in line with overall menu planning	Largely achieved	As per 99
101	Reviews recipes for casseroles, wet dishes, gravies and sauces with a view to making them more palatable.	Supported in line with overall menu planning		As per 99
102	Reviews the supply of crumbed fish to ensure that meals made using it achieve the same protein content as meals made using fresh meat (that is, 100-140g cooked meat per serve).	Supported in principle but fish portion not assessed at these visits	N/A	
103	Implements processes so that sandwiches are provided to prisoners for consumption on the day that they are made.	Supported in principle and review of processes was underway	Not currently achieved	COVID has had impacts. At this inspection fresh sandwiches were available at RPC but not at HRP or LRP
104	Supplies Hobart Reception Prison with ingredients for fresh sandwiches to be made onsite. Alternatively, sends fresh sandwiches direct to Hobart Reception Prison for same day consumption.	As per recommendation 103	Not currently achieved	

105	Considers sourcing fresh bread for Launceston Reception Prison from a local northern supplier.		Achieved	
106	Adds extra fresh vegetables (carrot sticks, celery, dried fruit etc. depending on availability and budget) to lunch meals when sandwiches contain limited vegetables/salad.	Supported in principle: TPS working to achieve this in line with menu review	Largely achieved	LRP has limited access to salad and fresh vegetables – partly due to COVID. See also my comment on smoking and tea below.
107	Reduces the amount of salted, processed meat used in sandwiches.	Supported in principle: TPS working to achieve this in line with menu review	Largely achieved	Meat for salads is mostly not processed now – it is cooked fresh, chilled then sliced in house.
108	Ensures potatoes entering the Vegetable Processing Facility are kept cool and away from light at all times.	No potatoes in the open this inspection	Achieved	
109	Explores options for an alternate hot drink to coffee to be provided to prisoners.	Supported in principle		See comments at point 13 – tea should be reintroduced.
110	Reviews the vegetarian menu to ensure that meals and recipes used provide an adequate supply of protein for prisoners who are vegetarian.	Supported in principle: TPS working to achieve this in line with menu review	Achieved	The selection of meals available to vegetarians has improved with a specific menu of vegetarian options now available. While this recommendation has been achieved, this must be an ongoing process
111	Initiates an education program for prisoners on healthy eating involving the input of an Accredited Practising Dietician.	Supported in principle but impacted by budgetary constraints	Not yet achieved	This is an area of great need and another area where the support of the DoH may well allow it to be achieved.

112	Engages an Accredited Practising Dietician to offer individual consultations on the recommendation of medical staff, to ensure the needs of those on special diets are met, to offer education to staff and prisoners, and to support TPS food services in recipe development and the selection of canteen items.	Supported in principle but impacted by budgetary constraints	Not yet achieved	See 111 above
113	Reviews the canteen with a view to directing prisoners towards higher nutritional value food choices through incentives and reducing the variety of high salt, high sugar foods on offer and replacing with healthier alternatives.	Supported in principle at TPS but impacted by budgetary constraints	Not yet achieved	This should be part of the menu review process and align with prisoner education initiatives as per 90, 97, 111, 112
114	Provides more education about healthy choices so that when prisoners are released from prison they have the information to be able to make the right decisions and choices regarding food options.	Supported in principle but impacted by budgetary constraints	Not yet achieved	As per comment 111, 112
115	Implements changes in the sugar distribution process at Risdon Prison Complex to ensure equal portions for all prisoners.	Supported in Principle in line with 90	Achieved	We were advised this process had been improved at this inspection, but did not observe sugar distribution at these visits. It seems this point was misunderstood by DoJ: this was not about nutrition, but about individual dignity.

THE 2020 INSPECTION PROCESS: NOTES, FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING OF MEETINGS, INSPECTIONS 2020:

February 2020

Initial discussions planning for inspections during May (eventually delayed due to COVID)

Contract signed

August 27th

Planning meeting in Custodial Inspectorate Offices

In attendance: Lisa Steele and Kirsty Bower

August 31st – Sept 3rd

Unannounced visits Risdon Prison Complex and Hobart Reception Prison

Sept 8th

Meeting with Food Services Manager and Industries and Facilities Manager

Sept 11th

Re-meet with Food Services Manager

Meeting with CPHS Doctor

Sept 21st

Meet with TPS Consultant Accredited Practising Dietician

Sept 28

Unannounced visit Launceston Reception Prison

October 6th

Meeting with Director of Prisons at Custodial Inspector's Offices

**SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST THE STANDARDS IDENTIFIED AT THIS 2020 INSPECTION
IN ADULT PRISONS**

	STANDARD	OUTCOME	COMMENT
90	Food should be hygienically prepared and of sufficient quality, quantity and variety to meet prisoners' nutritional needs.		
90.1	Menus should be planned to ensure that high quality, nutritional and varied meals are provided.	Achieved	
90.2	prisoners should be able to choose between food options	Not Achieved	
90.3	Prisoners should be provided with three meals per day at reasonable intervals.	Achieved	
90.4	Prisoners should be issued with evening meals at a time that reflects community practice.		
90.5	All prisoners should have continuous access to clean drinking water.	Achieved	
90.6	Particular care and consideration must be given to ensure that prisoners that are required work outside the prison or prisoners in transit have access to adequate supplies of drinking water.	Achieved	
90.7	Menus should consider the availability of fresh produce, climate, prisoner work requirements, and the need for special meals.	Achieved	
90.8	Menus should be developed in consultation with a qualified dietician.	Achieved	
90.9	Food should be procured, stored, prepared, produced and served in accordance with generally accepted professional health and safety standards and in compliance with legislation.	Achieved	
90.10	All persons engaged in food preparation and or handling should be trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities.	Not Yet Achieved	Food Services Manager and Industries and Facilities Manager are working to ensure this is achieved.

90.11	All persons involved in preparing and serving food wear appropriate protective clothing.	Achieved	
90.12	Custodial staff must supervise the serving of food to prevent tampering with food and other forms of bullying. Particular care must be taken to ensure that food for protection prisoners is not subject to tampering.	Achieved	
90.13	There should be regular quality management audits and reviews of kitchens.	Achieved	
91	Special dietary food should be provided where it is established such food is necessary for medical reasons, on account of a prisoner's religious beliefs, because the prisoner is a vegetarian, or where the prisoner has other reasonable, special needs.		
91.1	Halal and other religious requirements for food procurement, storage, preparation, distribution and serving should be fully observed. This may involve the separate preparation and cooking of certain foods.	Largely Achieved	See specific comments 4
91.2	Prisoners requiring special diets such as vegetarian, religious, cultural and special diets, should be accommodated.	Largely Achieved apart from coeliac	See specific comments at 10 Coeliac
91.3	Prisoners should be educated about healthy eating and its benefits.	Not Achieved	REQUIRES ACTION
91.4	Prisoners should be consulted and can make comment about the quality, quantity and variety of food and have their views taken into account.	Achieved	
91.5	There should be arrangements for food to be available at non-meal times for late arrivals, court returns etc.	Achieved	
92	Prisoner accommodation that involves self-catering must be monitored to ensure appropriate standards of hygiene and nutrition.		
92.1	Prisoner self-catering arrangements require the prison to ensure that proper standards are observed for the storage of food, the hygiene of the kitchen,	Largely Achieved	In some areas safe food storage is difficult to achieve and requires

	and that prisoners are receiving a balanced diet.		considerations.
92.2	Food that has been purchased from the canteen for later consumption must be stored safely and hygienically and not in excess of the recommended shelf life.	Largely Achieved	As 92.1 above
92.3	Healthy snacks should be available as an alternative to confectionary.	Not Yet Achieved	There is significant resistance in canteen to find ways to action this action which is essential to the health and wellbeing of prisoners.

OBSERVATIONS MADE DURING UNNANOUNCED VISITS AND SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS:**1. RPC Kitchen and Meal Preparation:**

- 1.1 The meetings with the Food Services Manager and Industries and Facilities Manager were encouraging as it is clear there have been operational changes that have delivered improvements in outcomes since last inspection.
 - 1.2 It is very disappointing that there is not to be a kitchen at the Northern Prison or at the new Southern Remand Centre (SRC) on the Risdon Site. This seems to be false economy to me as any impact on meal quality just means more wastage and worse health outcomes ultimately. It was apparently planned that the SRC would have a training kitchen so that makes the removal of that option extra concerning as that would greatly enhance the capacity of TPS to provide meaningful training opportunities for prisoners prior to their release.
 - 1.3 Some money from savings made as a result of this decision to cancel kitchen at SRC (and Northern Prison) will apparently go to upgrading equipment in current kitchen but that is an old space and with severely limited capacity for expansion, so I am at a loss to understand how it will manage to accommodate an additional 300 or so inmates, even with equipment upgrades.
 - 1.4 Maybe Northern Prison could use meals from the Launceston General Hospital? I am not aware of the food quality at LGH but it may ultimately be superior to that requiring the long transport up from Risdon into the future.
 - 1.5 There have been discussions around outsourcing bread supply for RPC, presumably to access the space those operations utilise, but the Food Services Manager feels the bakery offers training for inmates and I agree. I hope this does not occur.
 - 1.6 There was discussion around the Food Services Manager and Industries and Facilities Manager plans to get support for a cafeteria-style servery on the public facing side at Risdon that prisoners could work in. Serving visitors, staff etc. Great idea – needs action.
 - 1.7 In general the Food Services Manager doesn't seem well supported – there seems to be a lack of regard for the fact that prisoner numbers have increased significantly over 5 years but no increase in FTE staff numbers to assist.
-

2. Overall planning and changes since last inspection:

- 2.1 There have been increases in total vegetables in meals. Outside COVID times there are more salads and more vegetables in sandwiches/wraps.
- 2.2 Evening meal always hot at present. Hot lunch currently on Monday, soup and sandwiches on Tuesday and Friday, salad on Wednesday and Saturday, wrap/sandwich on Thursday, Sunday pastry usually pie.
- 2.3 Most meats for salads now cooked in house, chilled then sliced – thus reducing reliance on processed meats (and as a result reducing salt content of menu).
- 2.4 Pies are made in the kitchen on Monday and frozen, reheated Sunday. Pastry has been lowered in fat a bit by developing a new recipe in-house that works.
- 2.5 Bread is now all 'country grain' mix – not 100% wholemeal or wholegrain but better than previous white and acceptable to most inmates. They now get just 5 slices in packs rather than 7 (sandwiches at mealtimes are additional to that)
- 2.6 Shortened meal turnaround overall: approx. time between cooking and eating is now mostly 53 hrs (assuming cooking finishes approx. midday, eating approx. 5pm. Generally, they are cooking Monday and into chiller, plated Tuesday and eat Wednesday. Depending on what else is being cooked, this can vary: this week on Tuesday (the next day at these inspection) 2 meals are to be cooked – one plated for Thursday, one for Friday.
- 2.7 The kitchen has stopped use of smaller hotboxes and now only uses the larger ones. Also there is now a refrigerated van so cold foods are able to remain so more effectively. Generally, temperature control is better. All hot meals we tested at serving had retained their heat.
- 2.8 There are much better vegetarian options with attention having been given to providing better protein content in meals

3. Meal costs:

The Food Services Manager reports an allocation of \$11.34 food + \$1.00 for packaging (total \$12.34) per prisoner per day. There is no additional funding for either watch house or for the additional operation factor of 20 full day servings each day.

4. Halal certification and Pork products

- 4.1 There have been a number of concerns voiced by prisoners at this inspection and in 2017 that the salami, devon and other processed meats are not pork-free and some prisoners refuse to eat these despite verbal assurances from the kitchen that all meats are halal appropriate.
- 4.2 A 2013 letter from Robbo's meats (in appendix of 2017 ADULT Report) assured Paul Cowen all their products are free from pork.
- 4.3 However, an ingredient list supplied by that company at our request following site visits this inspection lists pork trimmings in the ingredients list for salami and doesn't specify the meat in the devon.
- 4.4 This is extremely concerning, especially given the assertions over time that there was no pork in these products.

5. Finger Food for SASH prisoners

- 5.1 We were provided an email sent by correctional officer (CO) to management where COs were asking for clarification about the use of safe spoons. While conceding that some inmates might cause themselves damage even with a safe spoon, there were some meals and foods that are virtually impossible to eat without a utensil, or where eating them without is extremely undignified
- 5.2 The issues include:
 - Individual directives that seem to contradict policy so create confusion (directive for one inmate that they could have a safe spoon despite being designated finger food only)
 - Inmates no longer being issued safe spoons yet being given weetbix in milk at breakfast
 - Breakfast packs are unusable for SASH inmates – bowl has to be removed so cereal has to be eaten dry for example.
- 5.3 COs have suggested that perhaps the introduction of a CSU specific breakfast pack to the unit to make things easier for staff and inmates. As cereal is difficult to manage, perhaps finger food breakfast options such as fruit can be added as well as the removal of the cutlery.

- 5.4 The following is an excerpt from the DSO on SASH prevention, point 8.8 states:

***“Finger Food”:** refers to the provision of no cutlery.*

This option is to be avoided where the provision of “Safe Return Cutlery” is available and suitable, due to the ability to provide better nutrition with the Safe Return Cutlery option. Finger Food may be provided where there is a risk to staff of a prisoner using a hot liquid, provided with the Safe Return Cutlery option, as a weapon/to harm others...”

- 5.5 Understandably, staff are struggling to make sense of this sentence and the correctional officer’s email continues as follows: “as it (DSO on SASH prevention pt 8.8) seems to suggest that the only reason somebody cannot have a safe spoon is if there is a threat to staff of hot liquid being thrown. If this is the case, can we not stop giving hot liquids to these inmates? As a safe spoon is seldom used to throw liquids at staff. As it stands, inmates who are not demonstrating any risk of throwing hot liquids, are on a finger food regime, and are not receiving a safe spoon. This makes no sense and is only causing inmates to get frustrated and take it out on staff. We are now uncertain as to other things that they may not be permitted. Milk cartons are also cardboard type material, are they allowed to have them on a safe cutlery regime?

- 5.6 This area needs practical consideration and guidance to reduce confusion while supporting the needs of prisoners at risk.

6. COVID planning and impacts:

- 6.1 During COVID, plans were put in place to have food available for inmates should staff encounter an outbreak and not be able to prepare meals if there be a prolonged lockdown as a result of an inmate encountering COVID.
- 6.2 This involved securing freeze-dried meals, purchasing extra supplies including milk powder and other dry goods. RHH and Blundstone Arena catering also helped supply meals, some of which were still in storage at this visit.
- 6.3 Instead of wasting these, they are now being gradually used where possible and excess freeze-dried meals now planned to go to the canteen.
- 6.4 COVID planning also impacts the outlets available to inmates for support groups or self improvement etc which is unfortunate.

7. Meal labelling:

- 7.1 RPC are looking at getting a labelling system – suggested by the Food Services Manager, confirmed by the Director of Prisons– similar to what is on RHH meals which would identify ingredients and allergens – GREAT plan and would get around the suspicion inmates often have about whether their preferences/dietary needs are being addressed.

8. Use of vegetables from the processing facility onsite

- 8.1 At last inspection it was suggested that fresh vegetables from the processing facility could be made available through canteen. But the Senior Industry Supervisor Vegetable Processing says that would require upgrading systems/processes as all produce from there is cook only. The processing facility is not HACCP certified to produce products to be eaten fresh.

9. Special diets/meals (10-15% of meals are usually special diets)

- 9.1 Jaw/mouth injury are relatively common and full meals are then pureed. There is no attempt made to separate to individual foods in the meal to puree and really no capacity in the kitchen to do otherwise.
- 9.2 Soft meals are accommodated only within the regular menu. In Div 7, 2 inmates spoken with have significant dental issues and need soft: one just eats soft sandwiches most of the time.
- 9.3 Occasionally, where inmates who need to gain weight are struggling to do so, supplements such as Ensure are prescribed and given on medication rounds. These are prescribed by doctors or nurses. There is currently no dietitian involvement. Ensure is generally loved by inmates but not that common occurrence.
- 9.4 When there is a facial/jaw injury that requires soft/puree diet, a nurse should initiate Ensure or similar to support nutrition for general requirements as well as healing/recovery.

10. Specific notes around Gluten Free (GF) meals/foods

- 10.1 The bakers make GF bread once per fortnight. TPS kitchen staff reported the kitchen is cleaned and sanitised before that. Mixer is cleaned down before use and cleaned after. Separate tins are used to bake GF bread and they are stored under a tarp in bakery.
- 10.2 We were told all gravy is GF and many condiments, including most sauces on meals. If any say 'may contain', they are not used for GF.
- 10.3 Coeliacs are [REDACTED] (inmates). There is more comment on the issues around gluten free foods and coeliac diets impacting individuals in the next point and at 19.8
- 10.4 I am concerned that the production of GF bread by prisoner bakery staff with no specialised training in the requirements and the meticulous production processes required for the safe production and storage of gluten free foods may not be safe for those with true Coeliac Disease. Even the most minute cross contamination with gluten-containing flour or food can be dangerous. The consequences of not adhering to a strict Gluten Free diet on long term health outcomes can be disastrous for individuals and very costly for the health system.

- 10.5 TPS needs a dietitian with food service skills or a food systems auditor with strong knowledge of the systems required to ensure Gluten Free foods are able to be produced safely to audit the systems and processes in place around this. That could also be the dietitian sourced to provide nutrition education and support within TPS, but is separate from the menu review process unless that review includes comprehensive on-site assessments of practices within the kitchen.
- 10.6 Within the kitchen there was a feeling there is maybe only 'one true coeliac' and that it was possible to have more or less serious coeliac disease.

11. Food quality

- 11.1 There is now usually only one frozen meal a week, on Saturday night. Because of this it is important that the choice of that meal is carefully made as some vegetables especially freeze better than others. For example, cauliflower tends to grey on freezing and reheating so could be avoided in meals which will be frozen.
- 11.2 Fish still an issue regarding amount of batter vs fish but we did not observe a fish meal so are unable to confirm inmate concern re this.

12. Reheating meals

- 12.1 There are possible issues with meals being kept and eaten at a later time. I am loathe to even mention this because inmates choose to save meals to use them in making other meals and it adds to variety and a knee-jerk response to this risk by clearing meals out of rooms etc would be unfortunate. But quite apart from degradation of some nutrients, there are some potential food safety issues where meals are kept unrefrigerated in rooms. In the case of any that have previously been frozen, they would have been reheated for delivery then, if not eaten, kept and reheated or reconstructed into another meal more than 24 hrs later.

13. Issues around smoking vegetables/restrictions on tea bags

- 13.1 It is well known that since smoking bans were introduced throughout Australian prisons, prisoners use tea (when available) which is soaked to infuse it with nicotine from patches or crumbled lozenges and re-dried to be rolled into a cigarette.
- 13.2 In TPS, tea bags are no longer made available except in limited amounts through buy-ups (canteen) I gather in an attempt to discourage this practice.
- 13.3 However, prisoners instead dry and use various vegetables (lettuce and broccoli are most often mentioned) for the same purpose.
- 13.3 Even if it were a safe and/or effective method of nutrient intake which is highly questionable, I have been unable to find research that demonstrates the nutrients these vegetables offer are absorbed in this way. I believe it to be much more likely

the inhalation of tars, similar substances and other components in vegetables with unknown health impacts when inhaled after being burnt, contribute to a net health negative.

- 13.4 So, assuming there is no net nutritional gain from inhaling smoked/dried vegetables, the use of vegetables in this way represents a significant waste – both in terms of food wastage overall and in squandered nutritional benefit.
- 13.5 The decision to remove tea bags therefore seems to be counterproductive. Unless TPS is able to completely stop smoking of any sort of substance occurring, I advise that it would be better to reintroduce tea bags. That would fulfil two aims – allowing prisoners access to a cup of tea should they choose that instead of coffee, and it would increase the chance that vegetables containing valuable nutrients are in fact eaten.
- 13.6 It may be that prisoners will continue to find ways to smoke so-called ‘teabacco’, but that is an issue of management and hopefully effective smoking cessation education. The TPS kitchen has done a very good job increasing the vegetable content of meals and sandwiches, and of providing more salads to increase nutritional value across the menu and their efforts should not continue to be undermined by an action which has after all, failed to stop prisoners smoking. This was particularly an issue at LRP where we were told during this inspection by at least 2 people that salads were no longer available there because they were being smoked instead of eaten.
- 13.7 Food cannot be nutrition unless it is eaten and the nutrients in lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum (and others I have been told can be dried and smoked successfully), need to be eaten to be of benefit.

Notes on specific areas within RPC:

14. Medium security in RPC:

- 14.1 One inmate () reported he has Crohns disease and also has a Lapband and said he doesn't get the meals requested. If he does have Crohns then addressing his dietary needs is urgent and vital as the malabsorption resulting from the disease can easily induce malnutrition. This can be quite a specific diet and requires individual dietary planning from a qualified dietitian
- 14.2 an older inmate in medium. T1 Diabetes but sick of getting diet jelly everyday
- 14.3 We were shown a meal (chicken and mushroom) on Monday which had been in the fridge since delivery. The inmate poured quite a lot of liquid from the meal onto the ground (I would estimate perhaps half a cup). Inmates keep meals and take components from them to make their own cook-ups on the 'Breville' (electric sandwich press) on another day – this is a good idea generally, but in this case the meal was from last Wednesday (5 days). It was apparently put straight in the fridge

then, but these are not commercial fridges – they are small fridges in units, constantly being opened. This is a dilemma because being able to concoct personalised meals from the food provided from kitchen is a good idea – increasing variety and keeping inmates interested in food, but of course it poses a significant food poisoning risk.

- 14.4 Food handlers here commented they were often short on meals but we didn't observe that at our visit. This again could be minimised by better communication so that the kitchen is efficiently notified about inmates not being in their unit at a mealtime for any reason.
- 14.5 The installation of the 'Brevilles' (sandwich press) and microwaves is good. It allows inmates more flexibility in meals as they can use ingredients from meals, sometimes combine them with canteen purchases and make things they enjoy eating. The benefit is that there is less wastage of meals they might otherwise not eat, the disadvantages include potential food safety issues and the fact that things like vegetables in meals are often discarded (but that would likely happen anyway).
- 14.6 A staff member commented that the purchase of microwaves designed for home use was not appropriate here because those appliances are not able to cope with the rough use they get so money is wasted when they are damaged or need to be replaced. Appliances have also been removed in some instances from common areas and put in inmate rooms but that is being stopped by hard wiring appliances rather than the usual plug in socket.

15. Division 7

- 15.1 This area is now dedicated to some of the older inmates and a few carers. These detainees need somewhat different nutrition and this was agreed by [REDACTED] (CPHS nurse) to those who are younger but that is not really supported.
- 15.2 They need additional protein and attention to textures of meals. In general they don't enjoy the more 'modern' meals on the menu, but one inmate said he doesn't like roasts so it's difficult to please everyone.
- 15.3 [REDACTED] (inmate) complained about water quality in here saying it tastes bad. He also said he doesn't eat most meals and instead cooks toast and enjoys packets of chips – very poor nutritionally of course.
- 15.4 [REDACTED] (inmate) said many do not eat meals. Many are long time residents and are bored with the food and many have dental issues impacting their ability to eat. He also commented on the bad taste of potatoes, especially mash.
- 15.5 One inmate said he had dental/oral issues – broken/ absent teeth and couldn't eat many meals or foods but wasn't able to access the dental care needed, so often resorted to soft sandwiches.
- 15.6 There is a GP just for these inmates – currently a locum but is likely to stay he understands. So there is a better focus on the needs of this long term group. Weight

monitoring is done routinely with this group (not elsewhere unless specifically required by nursing or medical)

- 15.7 [REDACTED] (inmate) - Food better than 3 years ago. Grey cauliflower and many meals with veg on side don't present well. Need to look more carefully at what they freeze. Some try take spare meals left over and then reheat a few days after. Not a good idea. Also feels diabetic options are too limited
- 15.8 Issues with constipation and most foods are low fibre – could do with prunes/psyllium.

DERWENT UNITS

16. Derwent A

- 16.1 Staff and prisoners commented that maybe 80% of food goes in the bin.
- 16.2 Not allowed to have kettles here so can't make cup of soup etc. There is a Breville and microwave but can't access that after lockdown. Can't get eggs.
- 16.3 [REDACTED] (inmate) still having roast after roast after roast.
- 16.4 Buying pasta and protein powder is okay only for those who have money: pay is \$25 but protein powder is \$20 – allowed once per fortnight.

17. Derwent B

- 17.1 Comments "Food is awful". "Still full of water." "Chicken is pink inside."
- 17.2 Enjoyed meals including beef pasta bake, tuna moray.
- 17.3 [REDACTED] (inmate) can't tolerate milk but says no action from health staff – says it's been 12 months since he's seen a doctor.

18. RBP

- 18.1 Comments: "same meals for 6 months", "very little change with seasonal menu". "Fish only once per month" – some would like more.
- 18.2 Canteen has been the same for 4 years: need healthy options. Yoghurt maybe, fresh veggies and meat packs. There have been issues with getting rice due to COVID.
- 18.3 Would like more fruit variety.
- 18.4 No milo in minimum. No sugar rations either, only sugar in breakfast packs 6 x 1/2 teaspoon.

- 18.5 Chicken Kiev/Cordon blue were being stolen out of kitchen so they were removed from menu altogether.
- 18.6 Div 1 to 4 get chilled meals they reheat themselves so many eat later than when meals are delivered. But div 5 and 6 (medium/low) get meals reheated in the kitchen so receive them around 5pm due to being locked down earlier. Meals need to eaten early as they can't reheat, meals are of lower quality and it seems strange that inmates who have moved up in status actually have their food supply reduced in status?

19. MHWP

- 19.1 It is certainly pleasing that the kitchen here is up and running potentially allowing better access to fresh food. There are some issues with ingredient supply to facilitate that to its full potential as outlined below.
- 19.2 The menu is set by RPC and MHWP have some flexibility to use supplied ingredients to create different meals. Wraps are made fresh and mostly each person gets a full wrap (men get half and a sandwich usually)
- 19.3 The women enjoy salads and soups and food is a bit more flexible here – they might use ham supplied for minestrone soup in Caesar salad for example. \
- 19.4 Issues with special diets however:
- 19.5 [REDACTED] (inmate) is Muslim and is not convinced there is no pork in processed meats – would like to have a chicken/fish only option in meal selection. Would be happy to have at least one non-meat meal a week also.
- 19.6 [REDACTED] (inmate) has a lap band and has been given a chit for soft foods but says they don't send anything appropriate. Kitchen here make a banana smoothie for her every day, but she reports to them it's not enough for her. She would like to get extra soup, custard or similar foods and extra milk. Sometimes she is able to eat mashed veggies and small amounts of usual meals, but mostly normal-textured meals are not tolerated.
- 19.7 If someone has previously been in (and therefore has had a chit for a lapband), they have to wait again for a medical chit if they return to prison.
- 19.8 [REDACTED] (inmate) has problems with being sure there is no gluten in her meals/food. We asked [REDACTED] (nurse) to check her records to determine if she had been tested for coeliac disease as he didn't know and we felt that there was some scepticism among kitchen and custodial staff (including nursing) about her diagnosis. [REDACTED] (inmate) medical records confirm she has coeliac disease confirmed by duodenal biopsy.
- 19.9 Coeliac disease must be treated seriously and people who have this must follow a strictly gluten free diet. I have concerns that this is really not possible within the

confines of the kitchen as it is set up. (see notes under special diets) We got the impression that not all in the kitchen take food allergies as seriously as is required.

- 19.10 Older prisoners are not provided a different diet.
- 19.11 [REDACTED] (inmate kitchen worker) suggests they should receive fresh (whole, not pre-cut, bagged) veg to cut up and cook themselves. She commented the cooked veg we get are cooked so much sometimes they are grey but can still sometimes be rock hard. They are required to reheat above 65 degrees after them having previously cooked and there is concern that by then, the goodness is gone.
- 19.12 There is a lot of waste: people quite often throw out meals and then eat bread, or buy noodles and pasta.
- 19.13 They enjoy salads but having fresh vegetables means they could create more variety. There were comments that “veggies (are) sprayed with something to keep them good, (but) it stinks really bad.” They would prefer to get the veggies and prepare themselves. They wash the veggies to get the spray off them: for example, they wash a whole 10kg bag of stir fry veggies when supplied before cooking them and the smell dissipates. They asked why, if the mothers and babies get sent fresh veggies, is it not possible for them?
- 19.14 They find it very hard to get supplies they could use to cook different meals: this includes vegetables, meat, eggs, pasta, oil for the fryer (they have filtered it off and reused it but they know it’s a problem doing that too often), flour (took 6 months of asking)
- 19.15 For variety, [REDACTED] (inmate) moves ingredients between meals when she can and buys stuff from canteen to make slices/cakes - pancake mix, make a choc cake with drinking choc pancake mix and rhubarb. They can make these in the VG unit in the oven there
- 19.16 On Fridays they do ‘free fruit Friday’ when they give out any left over fruits. Depending on how many prisoners some will get 2, 3 or 4 pieces.
- 19.17 Weight gain is a significant problem. People put on weight for a number of reasons including:
- “because all they eat is bread and the only things on canteen are sweets”
 - no education around food and nutrition,
 - no capacity to make better snacks (carrot sticks and hummus were suggested for example).
 - gym access is limited due to short staffing so that some units are locked down meaning limited activity options. Exercise classes are very limited: boot camp has come in 3x in 18 months. Used to have Volleyball regularly but not for 4 months
 - Portion sizes are men sizes. “If you put them onto a plate, they’re huge”

- Comments they get too much red meat for the preference of many there (although they commented the meat they do get is good quality)
 - There is no real substitute to allow a weight reduction plan – some go vegetarian, but this is not the answer and doesn't work for most as a weight reduction strategy.
 - Breakfast cereals are often the sugary/higher GI ones
 - Desserts are very sugary - fruit jelly, fruit in cup and jelly custard. Would like to make their own
- 19.18 [REDACTED] (inmate) said that meals have improved since she's been coming in but that pasta dishes don't reheat as well – they would like fresh pasta they can cook to go with sauces.
- 19.19 Would like to buy flour, it would be good to buy own meat packs and veg packs for VG unit. Purpose of unit is to be self reliant, why don't they let us use the kitchens?
- 19.20 There were concerns about the reliance on processed and low fat products: low fat versions often contain more sugars and other additives than the original food- examples are mayonnaise, milk, light sour cream, low fat ice cream when they get it. Processed cheese and luncheon meats are considered less healthy.
- 19.21 Interestingly there was discussion about a "new inmate smell" - specifically relating to abdominal bloating, farting and poo – when inmates first arrive their gut bacteria must need to adjust to the prison menu and that is manifest. This could also be related to the increase in food intake overall for those who have been engaged in drug taking and not eating much, but is a clear indication that there is a big difference between food on the outside and the inside. etc.
- 19.22 Vegetarian options are quorn and meat free pieces. They're really liked.
- 19.23 [REDACTED] (inmate) has a lap band and finds it difficult to get foods she can cope with: has lost 12 kg she hadn't intended.

20. Vanessa Goodwin units

- 20.1 These units have well equipped kitchens – frypans/pots etc – but are not supplied ingredients to use them.
- 20.2 They comment they are not getting what they need. Kitchen used to be running, making 3 meals per day. When kitchen ran effectively (with fresh ingredients supplied) there were really good, balanced meals, more suitable for women. They would like to be able to get a range of beans, chickpeas, natural yoghurt, real cheese as they once did as well as real butter (margarine is "unhealthy"), olive oil for cooking, dark chocolate (this could be a canteen item).
- 20.3 Only given frozen yoghurt now, which is just a dessert. They would like more condiments so they can flavour/prepare their own meals. Not getting any at all from

men's prison now, reason given is COVID. There's no shortage of supplies in the kitchen so they don't understand why they can no longer access them (there were some in cupboards here that [REDACTED] (inmate) has saved up).

- 20.4 Only very very small allowances are now made for pregnant women- needs to be addressed. Older women need more calcium – only cheese they can get is processed. Bone density is a big concern - you can't even get a test.
- 20.5 They feel that [REDACTED] (TPS kitchen worker) is very resistant to change
- 20.6 Whether MHWP kitchen hands out food depends on which inmate worker has been put in charge there – even if condiments, ingredients are supplied there, it can be hard to get them depending on who is there.
- 20.7 They would like to see the kitchen here cook more meals every night, instead of getting men's meals. A lot of meals go watery. Why can't they reheat them in the units at least?
- 20.8 Cereals are sugary, not healthy. Would like the option of oats, could cook them in the unit – why is this not an option here when it happens in mens'?
- 20.9 People who don't like spicy food have problems with the rice at canteen – most varieties are spicy and because you can't choose them, you get what you're given so that is a waste of their money.
- 20.10 They need their vegetable gardens rabbit proofed so they can grow food for themselves and to supplement the kitchen.

Other issues requiring highlighting:

21. GLUTEN FREE DIET – example of [REDACTED] (inmate)

- 21.1 This has been mentioned at 10.3, 10.4, 19.8 and 19.9 but requires a wider discussion.
- 21.2 There are significant issues here with TPS supporting [REDACTED] (inmate's) need for a strict Gluten Free diet due to diagnosed coeliac disease. There is unwarranted scepticism about [REDACTED] (inmate's) diagnosis among some in the kitchen, nursing had to check her record and there is additional disbelief that she is following a GF diet herself.

[REDACTED] (inmate) has argued with the men's kitchen about sending stuff that isn't gluten free – things like wedges and battered fish have been provided. Sometimes she is given a diabetic pack containing wheat biscuits. There is a lot of inconsistency: [REDACTED] (inmate) used to get peanut butter but kitchen now say it's not GF – but, unless they are providing something other than the individual portions I saw, it is GF. Many sauces and gravies used are GF but [REDACTED] (inmate) says she is usually provided with meat without sauce.

- 21.3 The meal labels in use at RHH were excellent during COVID when meals were supplied from the hospital.
- 21.4 Canteen is an issue as there are very few GF items and she is unable to select just plain chips for example, or to access plain dark chocolate instead of alternatives which may not be or can't be guaranteed to be GF.
- 21.5 There was a comment from nursing (and evidenced from canteen purchase lists subsequently provided) that [REDACTED] (inmate) buys non-GF items (Tim Tam biscuits for example) and I feel this is being seen as justification to not take her diet seriously. But TPS is obliged to ensure that anyone with a diagnosed serious auto-immune condition such as coeliac disease (which can have far ranging health consequences which are often unseen until they are well advanced) is provided by TPS with what they need to maintain their health.

There is no guarantee that non GF items purchased on canteen are for [REDACTED] (inmate) herself to eat and even if they were, what is needed is education and support from an APD dietitian to help [REDACTED] make appropriate choices. If [REDACTED] (inmate) makes the choice to eat gluten containing foods despite education and support, the actions of TPS cannot be considered to then have contributed to any negative health consequences in the future. That is as long as all has been done to ensure a completely gluten free diet is being supplied and [REDACTED] (inmate) or others with diagnosed coeliac disease are educated and supported to make good choices

I observed at this inspection, as at the previous, a significant amount of scepticism from some staff around prisoners requesting special diets. [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) suggested this was used by some as a way to differentiate themselves within the system. He commented that diagnoses of 'things like gluten sensitivity (are) way over top, (and are) essentially rubbish'.

- 21.6 When asked, [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) did not know if [REDACTED] (inmate) was coeliac but checked records and found she had been diagnosed by duodenal biopsy.
- 21.7 I am concerned more generally that there is a feeling among kitchen and custodial as well as health staff that gluten sensitivity can range from mild to serious. While I agree with [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) that many self-diagnoses of gluten insensitivity are somewhat fanciful, TPS must draw a clear line on Gluten-containing foods so as not to put those with diagnosed coeliac disease at risk.

22. Other special diet issues

- 22.1 [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) commented that prisoners like to, very often use special diet requests such as intolerance to soy or lactose to differentiate themselves.

- 22.2 He says the kitchen constantly whinge about the number of people on special diets. He says every few months he will get chits referred from kitchen for things he terms as 'silly'. These he says, have been written by doctors in the community and he often rescinds them. He feels these checks and balances work well.
- 22.3 If he thinks there is validity, he says he will do testing. It was not clear exactly what tests were easily accessible within CHHS.
- 21.4 There is a definite need for education around the Gluten Free diet.

23. Halal and processed meats products

- 23.1 The concerns of inmates here are valid (see points at 4)

24. Vegetarians

- 24.1 Vegetarians still facing some issues but getting better. Some would like to eat fish only but can't select that option and as a result choose vegetarian but feel they have to supplement with canteen tuna to get the protein they need.

25. Comment from [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) at health clinic

- 25.1 Feels special needs are accommodated appropriately mostly – sometimes inmates just choose different things to be 'noticed', that's why there needs to be a medical reason.
- 25.2 Weight gain generally due to removal of meth, many undernourished when they arrive. Feels the diet has excess carbohydrates - doesn't reflect a contemporary good quality diet. Lots who come in after using loads of meth are watched to see they're putting on weight. Can't think of anyone who hasn't. There's a massive risk of those people getting type 2 diabetes as they gain weight. It's a huge thing.
- 25.3 Access to a dietitian only through hospital system. Dr here will do some investigation for irritable bowel or lactose intolerant etc.
- 25.4 No specific food provisions are made for older prisoners at the moment. Higher protein needs for 65+ is not necessarily considered but maybe should be: sometimes recommend Ensure - people love it. Good thing that all the elderly are in Division 7, more monitoring at regular intervals, can respond when they need. More likely that weight loss would be picked up. Same GP up there now, so a lot better longitudinal view of the individual. [REDACTED] is the GP there
- 25.5 Young guy here with severe respiratory condition, very bad drug habits, we put Ensure in as a supplement to his diet. It's delivered by the nurse with the drug round. Using ensure predominantly around weight loss for this guy and the same for the elderly prisoners.

- 25.6 No regular malnutrition screening – only if risk identified, although it happens in Div 7 (older prisoners).
- 25.7 Considers that weight related ‘diets’ are not well managed but diets related to their medical conditions are.
- 25.8 What’s missing is a weight loss type diet - not a medical one but something that is more along the lines of the low carb diet. More need for education and strategies. Even focus on protein supplements, they need someone with nutrition background to speak to them about it and explain it.
- 25.9 Young blokes who want to bulk up, they don’t necessarily want to hear what we’d have to say about nutrition. But always interested in weighing themselves!!
- 25.10 They’re doing all the activities etc to bulk up but maybe there’s some role for intervention & education, more a health promotion role. Thinking how much focus there is in society on health and nutrition. Some might not be interested but those who are would be getting the right information.

26. HRP

- 26.1 Most inmates here are just off the street and are often very hungry when just off drugs – the 5 slices of bread are not enough for them. They need a bit extra to assist with behaviour as well as nutrition.
- 26.2 Most inmates here are short term but not all – menu and food plan fine for short term but for those there longer, issues can develop – mostly frustration with reduced variety of canteen options. ■■■ (inmate) has been here 14mths.
- 26.3 Other issue with that is no outdoor space – Vitamin D needs monitoring and supplementing.
- 26.4 Very inventive meals made from canteen and provided foods – dumplings with butterscotch sauce!
- 26.6 There are always spare meals/snacks available for arrivals out of wardsman hours and custodial staff can arrange food as needed.
- 26.7 Various concerns voiced by inmates here are varied and reflect those heard throughout the prisons around individual preference and quality.

27. LRP:

- 27.1 Local food sourcing:
It is pleasing that LRP now sources local bread, milk and fruit locally with deliveries of

milk daily (extra on Friday for the weekend), fruit Thursdays (Youngs Launceston) and bread (Cripps) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

27.2 Sandwiches/Salads/fresh vegetables:

27.2.1 Unfortunately, due to COVID, fresh sandwiches and salads have not been available at LRP and this situation has not yet changed.

27.2.2 There is an argument from management (mentioned by [REDACTED] at Risdon and [REDACTED] here, but we have heard it previously also) that fresh vegetables (including salad vegetables such as lettuce, also broccoli) are not eaten, but are dried and smoked, so that providing them is not worthwhile. However, during the COVID restrictions this has been far less of an issue according to nursing staff – most probably because of reduced interaction between prisoners.

27.2.3 Prisoners at LRP currently get no fresh vegetables (including salad vegetables): all meals supplied come up from Risdon on Wednesdays and are frozen on arrival for reheating by the wardsman.

27.2.4 They used to get meat and salad on Friday and that was looked forward to by most according to wardsman. Many used that with their bread pack to make sandwiches.

28. Meal variety at LRP:

28.1 The current wardsman is very organised with the meals supplied and cleverly manages them. Risdon sends up 20-25 meals. There can be up to 30 prisoners or fewer than 20. When numbers are low he can have quite a few not used and he works to use these up when numbers are higher but always manages meal selection carefully so as to avoid complaints from prisoners about getting different meals to others.

28.2 He also tries to vary meals each day from the weekly supply so that prisoners don't get the same sort of meal twice in a day. (eg: not 2 rice dishes or 2 pasta etc). If there is one meal on that most dislike, then he tries to make the other something most like – sausages or burger. He finds that reduces complaints and aggravation at mealtimes.

28.3 There are some fairly universally disliked meals - beef in black bean sauce is one, a recent chicken pasta dish also.

28.4 Prisoners who are used to Risdon menus can be unhappy that they don't get what they expected and what they know is being served at Risdon. LRP can't access all the desserts available at Risdon and often these are not in very good state when they arrive so cause complaints.

29. Meal quantity/quality at LRP

- 29.1 For most, the quantities are adequate, but some prisoners are still hungry and need to supplement with buyups
- 29.2 Those coming off drugs are often very underweight and after a couple of weeks have regained some weight and look much better according to nurses, but many continue to gain excessively (some antipsychotic medications also increase that risk)
- 29.3 Meal quality has improved but still some, when re-heated, contain obvious water – especially some vegetarian meals with things like eggplant.
- 29.4 Desserts here are the ones that can either be frozen (pastries, sweet pies, fruit buns, cakes, donuts etc) or are shelf stable (flavoured milk tetra paks) so variety is limited, and many have little or no nutritional benefit. It can be hard for the wardsman to supply options without complaint.
- 29.5 Coffee is supplied 5 times a day – pre made in kitchen with sugar – equivalent to 1-2 tsp sugar per cup.

30. Special diet provision at LRP

- 30.1 Vegetarian meals are available – there is always a stock maintained should there be a need but at times there are no vegetarians so these remain stored longer – this is an issue for some nutrients which degrade with storage. This wardsman [REDACTED] [REDACTED] pays attention and ensures meals are rotated and used up as soon as possible and that prisoners on vegetarian diets get variety – some wardsmen may not be able to manage this process as efficiently.
- 30.2 This continues to be an issue across all sites and is a result of failures of communication. I believe any such issues will thankfully be resolved when Justice Connect is implemented but that is a long way off at this juncture.
- 30.3 At this visit, the wardsman had not been informed that one prisoner who had arrived on escort was vegetarian. The prisoner informed him during meal delivery and he was able to reheat a frozen meal but in such instances the meal must be microwaved and the quality is not generally as good as the oven based reheating that otherwise would be employed. If this was an issue of food allergy it could be more of a problem than in this case.
- 30.4 The wardsman noted this is by no means an isolated incident.
- 30.5 It is also unclear to inmates or to the wardsman/custodial staff what the meal contains as there is no ingredient label on meals. This is more of an issue at LRP given the separation from the kitchen producing the meals. Again, this is being addressed and is commented upon later in this report.

- 30.6 Like at Risdon, there are sometimes prisoners requiring very soft of pureed meals. The wardsman can choose extra-soft options from the selection available in freezer, but if puree is needed the whole meal goes in the blender.

31. Taste testing of meals at LRP

- 31.1 The inspection team tried savoury mince, spaghetti bolognese, roast pork and the black bean meal.
- 31.2 The savoury mince was not good – pale coloured and looked dreadful, hard to say what the meat was and it tasted like nothing much.
- 31.3 While the black bean wasn't especially unappealing it had no resemblance at all to a black bean dish and was really just a casserole-style meat dish with rice.
- 31.4 The roast pork was good.
- 31.5 The main problem with disliked meals is that they are not eaten so are wasted, but also that the meal is replaced with buy-ups (if they have them).

32. Length of stay at LRP and impact on nutritional status

- 32.1 In the past the time individual inmates spend at LRP is quite short and the impact of any nutritional inadequacies are therefore relatively minor. But this has changed in recent times and some stay for much longer periods. One prisoner had been at LRP for 7 months.
- 32.2 I am concerned about the provision of some nutrients to prisoners who remain at LRP for more than 2 or 3 weeks. For these prisoners, the capacity to achieve adequate intake of folate, Vitamin D, Vitamin C, magnesium and potassium might be impacted. Fortified breakfast cereals can reduce these impacts somewhat, but the long-term lack of fresh vegetables likely to have an impact.
- 32.3 Apart from the wardsman who puts the rubbish out under escort, prisoners here never go outside so get no sunlight to make Vitamin D. Only longer term prisoners are on Vitamin D supplements.

33. Comments from [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) at LRP

- 33.1 [REDACTED] (CPHS staff) feel better food would benefit prisoners physical and mental health. Commented that prisoners are a captive audience and TPS should use that to enhance their nutrition, although contend that canteen is an issue.
- 33.2 They asked why LRP doesn't get meals from LGH (Launceston Hospital)? I am not aware of the meal quality at LGH but this may be worth considering given the pressure on Risdon already to supply all sites.

- 33.3 They commented that meals used to be prepared on site and were much better but that the kitchen was dismantled to build the one at Mary Hutchinson – the rationale apparently being cost saving and that this is only a short term prison but that’s not necessarily the case now.
- 33.4 They have no access to a dietitian locally as far as they are aware
- 33.5 Diabetes diet is an issue – an appropriate low GI diet is not well supported. Prisoners can also access buyups that are not the best choices.
- 33.6 Comments that drugs getting into the prison is a big issue for them and that TPS should be putting processes in place to stop (significantly reduce) that ‘rather than worrying about broccoli being smoked’. There should be a full body scanner in place.
- 33.7 Interestingly there have been some ‘benefits’ from COVID here. This is an isolation prison, so visits haven’t been allowed. Nurses feel there have been fewer drugs accessed. Prisoners say when they first got COVID meals they were better than usual. Some of those would have been RHH (Hobart Hospital) meals

34. 34. CANTEEN: [REDACTED]

- 34.1 Of all the interactions within the prison it is this area where there seems the greatest resistance to change and the least appreciation of the impact this service has on health of prisoners. Ironically, it is canteen which is responsible for a large proportion of the negative health impacts on inmates across all TPS facilities. In fact, the entire focus here seems to be on the logistical and budgetary limitations (perceived or real) with no mention made by either [REDACTED] (staff members) during our discussions of health of prisoners at all to my recollection.
- 34.2 Certainly, if inmates were not incarcerated, they would be able to make discretionary choices that may well not benefit their health and of course they do; but jurisdictions that manage prisons have a duty of care to not only provide adequate diets but also diets that do not knowingly contribute to a burden of diet-related disease.
- 34.3 Unfortunately it is the options available in the canteen which largely drive negative health outcomes – including obesity, type 2 diabetes, tooth decay and dilution of essential nutrient intake.
- 34.4 Having said that, inmates also have the right to make their own choices with their own money.
- 34.5 There is a lot of resistance to change in Canteen with limitations of ‘storage space’ in warehouse and of the A4 sheet used to order items. Certainly storage space is tight, but I am sure there are ways around the A4 sheet – for one thing having different sheets for clothing/toiletries etc and food items could work. Justice Connect will help fix this but it is a long way off.
- 34.6 Baked beans are great food but have been ‘impossible to get, apart from in cans. It is advisable to continue to attempt to source snap pots or sachets so these can be supplied again.

- 34.7 Comment made that a lot of foods we can get in supermarkets are not easy for prison to purchase as Coles/ Woolworths monopolise.
- 34.8 Honey is now all in plastic container so it could go to all areas.
- 34.9 Vegemite remains prohibited.
- 34.10 Fresh fruit is impossible to administer via canteen due to infrastructure limitations.
- 34.11 During COVID some dehydrated meals were kept as emergency rations – these now going to canteen and may continue but are expensive \$11 per pouch

Maybe a change canteen options with a prisoner vote.

35. Menu Review by TPS consultant dietitian [REDACTED] -

- 35.2 A menu review was commissioned by TPS as recommended in the 2017 Tasmanian Custodial Inspector report.

- 35.2 There are some issues with the outcomes of this menu review – not with [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietitian's) work as such but with how well it can be effectively applied within the TPS environment. Importantly:

- 35.2.1 During COVID some dehydrated meals were kept as emergency rations – these now going to canteen and may continue but are expensive \$11 per pouch
- 35.2.2 There was not a comprehensive site visit associated with the review. This is not in itself an issue usually but given the complexities of the prison system and especially the limits to the agility within the kitchen currently (due to increased demand and limited capacity to accommodate that demand) it may have been worthwhile because some recommendations of the review may be unachievable without also causing significant dissatisfaction within the prison environment.
- 35.2.3 This is not a criticism at all of the excellent work done by [REDACTED], (TPS consultant dietitian) who has provided an extremely thorough gap analysis of the menu she was supplied against benchmarks such as NHMRC/WHO nutrient and fat/sugar/salt recommendations. (I am not aware whether [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietitian) had access to the Inspection standards document (ref 1) but believe she did not).
- 35.2.4 These recommendations are of course an excellent benchmark, but in this population are somewhat aspirational and reflect the fact that a review of the menu off site without a wide understanding of the custodial system is not able to fully account for the capacity of that menu to support the needs of prisoners, detainees and the system more widely.

- 35.2.5 The population being served by this menu are predominantly from population groups who do not have good health literacy and whose usual food choices when not incarcerated are far from ideal in a healthy diet sense. That is not to say TPS should conform to the preferences of prisoners at all – TPS has a responsibility to provide a menu that is nutritionally adequate and offers the healthiest choices possible – but as mentioned above, there needs to be awareness and recognition of the expectations of prisoners and detainees as well as the unique prison environment.
- 35.2.6 An issue also with this menu review is that the menu [REDACTED] (TPS) supplied to [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician) for analysis was a 6 week menu. Unfortunately, that menu bears little resemblance to the menu being utilised at our unannounced visit which was displayed on the wall in the kitchen [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician).
- 35.2.7 There have been menu changes due to COVID preparedness but most of those were not impacting the menu on display in the kitchen by the time of this food and nutrition inspection.
- 35.2.8 The menu being followed at this visit was a 4 week cycle with just one meal from 'COVID stock' a week substituted for another off the menu.
- 35.2.9 We were told when we questioned the menu in use vs the 6 week one we thought was being used that 'there wasn't the storage capacity' for a menu with a 6 week cycle.
- 35.2.10 Effectively this means that the nutritional analysis of the menu done by [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician) is not really representative of what is being supplied to prisoners and detainees from the kitchen.
- 35.2.11 [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician) rightly comments that [REDACTED] (TPS) has overseen improvements in the areas identified in 2017 as requiring those and that most of the areas identified in 2017 as not having achieved the compliance have now done so.
- 35.2.12 [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician) makes a number of recommendations listed below along with suggestions for improvements the TPS should consider. Some recommendations made were already implemented by the time her review was finalised which is excellent. TPS will need to consider whether all are implemented at the next menu review. But, as outlined in my comments below, some recommendations made might be outside what is acceptable to prisoners and in recognition of the propensity for such issues creating disharmony within the custodial system, might be best modified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R 1 Adopt or consider the adoption of the recommendations of the QI Report provided by APD [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician) with the following comments from this inspection taken into consideration:

QI Report Ref	ACTION RECOMMENDED by [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician)	COMMENT based on INSPECTION
1	Reduce bread serves from 7 to 5	This is ideal nutritionally, but consideration should be given to the fact that this has been significantly reduced already, some prisoners consider they need more bread provided each day and that overnight when there is a long time between the evening meal and breakfast, bread offers an accessible snack
2	Replace GF white with GF wholegrain bread	Achieved
3	Replace lactose free full cream with lactose free low fat milk	Consider depending on supply capability
4	Ensure desserts have low to moderate GI, are fruit or dairy based and are standardised across all diets	Yes – kitchen may need assistance from a dietitian in this although some guidance is offered within [REDACTED] (TPS consultant dietician's) report
5	Replace potato with sweet potato in all wet dishes and use low GI potato and rice across the menu	Consider changing <i>some</i> potato to sweet potato, rather than all of it to minimise complaint, or trial some meals with this change. Low GI rice/potato may be more costly or not accessible on contract but should be considered.
6	Add lentils/legumes to wet dishes and salads	Achieved
7	Improve the nutritional balance of the diabetic pack by replacing 1 cheese slice and jelly with 120g peach/pear pack	Achieved
8	Replace Rice bubbles with a higher fibre cereal	Achieved
9	Ensure all soups contain 1 serve of protein	Achieved
10	Replace sandwiches on vegetarian menu with the soup option off the standard menu with appropriate adjustments	Achieved
11	Reduce total fat content of pastry and potato gems	Pastry has been altered Other changes should be considered
12	Shift service time of pre-heated meals from 4 to 5pm and prioritise logistics to enable all units across all facilities to reheat meals	This requires consideration of a wide array of factors if it is to be achieved
13	Consider introduction of portion management (eg lower and higher energy options) in future planning	There are possible issues with standover and similar concerns but providing a lower energy option for prisoners wanting to lose weight should be considered.

R 2 Provide the services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) to TPS

R 2.1 Adequate and appropriate nutrition is essential to assisting with physical and mental health of individuals and that is especially important within the custodial system. The services of an APD – a health professional trained to support those needs – are lacking in TPS.

R 2.2 APDs have been engaged to carry out menu reviews and are very occasionally sourced through Royal Hobart Hospital.

R 2.2 However, it is evident that there are limitations to the capacity of dietitians (APDs) brought in on an occasional basis by TPS especially, to fully appreciate the unique situation as regards achieving healthy nutritional outcomes for prisoners. That is in no way a criticism of the professionalism of any APD, but of the awareness I have gained in my (admittedly limited to a number of weeks) time carefully considering food and nutrition within TPS of just how different is the situation in the custodial system to that of the wider community.

Having a dietitian engaged within the custodial system facilitates necessary awareness of the complexities of the custodial system as well as the unique needs of the individuals who find themselves incarcerated there. That awareness is fundamental to provision of cost-effective nutritional support in menu planning, educational initiatives and supporting the needs of individuals.

R 2.2 At TPS, this role might best fit within the CPHS and be supplied under an arrangement with Department of Health

R 2.2 The appointment of an APD by TPS will allow for effective insight into the workings of the custodial/detention system and of prisoners and detainees; therefore enabling therapies and interventions that have greater chance of application within the custodial system to benefit prisoners/detainees as well as the health system.

R 2.2 The APD's role should include (but not necessarily be limited to):

- provision of nutritional guidance where required to individual prisoners including pregnant and breastfeeding women, older prisoners and prisoners with diabetes and/or special diet needs;
- ongoing interaction with the kitchen to ensure the nutritional needs of prisoners are met within logistical and budgetary constraints;
- provision of education around healthy eating and special diet needs including coeliac disease to staff and prisoners

R 3 Include malnutrition screening within health screening for older prisoners (65+)

R 3.1 Older prisoners are at higher risk of malnutrition due to factors including poor appetites, issues with dentition (supported by research findings – ref 3). Early identification of those at risk prevents escalation.

- R 3.2 This can be carried out in the usual screening and only where issues are identified is intervention by nursing, doctor or dietitian required.

R 4 Review and rework Canteen list

- R 4.1 It is the discretionary items on the canteen list which contribute most to poor nutritional outcomes for prisoners, not the food provided by the kitchen. There needs to be a better balance than is currently in place to facilitate both individual choices made by prisoners and accommodate additions/changes to the list which support better health outcomes
- R 4.2 There is resistance in this area of TPS to change, with issues such as lack of space on the printed form and limited warehouse space cited as reasons to minimise change. Given the potential negative impact of the poor nutrition choices made in canteen on health outcomes for prisoners (especially when compared to the improvements made in the kitchen), this is an area urgently requiring attention.
- R 4.3 TPS must initiate both a review of warehouse storage options and redesign of the canteen form(s) so that healthier choices and greater flexibility regarding flavour choices with some items (see R 4.9 below) can be accommodated.
- R 4.4 I concur that warehouse storage is severely limited with bulkier non-food items such as clothing taking up significant space. However, I urge TPS to seek a means to facilitate an increased list of healthy food items.
- R 4.5 The canteen form does have limitations but that should not be used as a reason to avoid improvements to the list of items available. I suggest TPS consider separate forms for food and non-food items. I know that Justice Connect has a 'kiosk' planned within it which will introduce significant agility, but its implementation is still a very long way off and believe a solution needs to be found for the interim.
- R 4.6 When the form is redesigned or a separate form implemented to that for non-food items, the TPS dietitian should assist in a review of items as well as involving prisoners in those choices.
- R 4.7 Items that have been requested to be added include a range of condiments to add flavour to snacks/meals prisoners make up from canteen food (often in combination with prison-provided food); plain nuts; freeze-dried fruit/vegetable snacks; dark chocolate; snack packs of carrot sticks or similar.
- R 4.8 It would be excellent also if the contracted food provider was able to source baked beans in sachets or other suitable packaging.
- R 4.9 One issue which needs attention immediately is that of the lack of ability for prisoners to choose flavours of crisps, rice sachets and similar items. I understand the challenges logistically in allowing that degree of choice, but not allowing it leaves individuals with food intolerances, special diets or individual preferences unable to accommodate their needs.

It could be argued that prisoners, given where they are, may not be entitled to 'individual choice' and in the food provided by TPS kitchens that is appropriate. But canteen purchases are made with their own money and thus choice should be available.

Prisoners who order pre-cooked rice sachets get a selection of flavours and some are quite spicy, so some individuals are unable to eat those choices. They can and often do swap items, but this is not always possible.

For a prisoner with coeliac disease, only *plain* potato chips are appropriate – they should be able to make that choice, not have to receive a variety of flavours that they cannot safely eat.

Similar concerns apply to other items on the canteen list.

- R 4.10 Ensure that resident (inmate) meetings continue and contribute to any future planning around items canteen available on canteen
- R 4.11 Consider options to reduce relative cost of healthier options compared to less healthy items on canteen without increasing prices.

R 5 Recommendations around provision of special diets

- R 5.1 Ensure that all processed meat products to be included in meals for those who are Muslim are guaranteed free of any pork product and are labelled as such.
- R 5.2 Initiate an audit by a suitably qualified food service nutrition professional to determine that gluten free food production by the kitchen is carried out according to strict guidelines, ensuring food provided to those with coeliac disease is guaranteed to be free from gluten.
- R 5.3 Implement a strict Gluten Free diet for anyone who chooses (and has a chit) to be on a gluten free diet. This means that there is to be no flexibility at all for individuals within the provision of food and drinks from the kitchen – there is no low gluten option. This is basically in place now but it must be made clear that there is no flexibility at all when the choice is made (and a chit provided) for a gluten free diet.
- R 5.4 When a prisoner requires a puree diet due to oral or facial issues or injury, Ensure brand commercial supplement (or substitute brand if applicable) should be provided routinely to support adequate nutritional intake for healing and maintenance of nutritional status.
- R 5.5 Consider the supply of psyllium or similar fibre supplement to assist with constipation which is especially an issue among older prisoners.

R 6 Advance the introduction of a meal labelling system

- R 6.1 The system in use at RHH (Royal Hobart Hospital) includes an ingredient list and identifies the presence or absence of gluten, lactose, soy and other allergens is ideal and was appreciated both by kitchen and prisoners when these meals were used during COVID preparations.
- R 6.2 Kitchen appreciate the ability to minimise complaints due to these labels.
- R 6.3 Prisoners appreciate the certainty these meals offer those with special diet needs.
- R 6.4 A labelling system should be implemented as soon as possible.

R 7 Reintroduce tea bags to reduce nutritional wastage of vegetables (see notes at 13.1- 13.7)

- R 7.1 TPS to adopt practices that facilitate prisoners access to tea as an alternative to coffee.
- R 7.2 The intent of this recommendation is reducing the nutritional wastage currently occurring when vegetables are dried to be smoked.
- R 7.3 It is recognised that tea is often smoked by prisoners, but its removal some time ago has not stopped this practice and has instead negatively impacted vegetables consumption.

R 8 Fresh vegetables at LRP

- R 8.1 Develop systems to allow prisoners at LRP access to fresh vegetables, salads and to reintroduce the making of sandwiches on site using supplied ingredients including salad.
- R 8.2 R7 will assist in avoiding misuse of fresh vegetables to eat but it is the responsibility of TPS to manage smoking without causing restriction of access to fresh vegetables/salad for all.

R 9 Review Vitamin D status of prisoners

- R 9.1 TPS should initiate analysis of Vitamin D status of prisoners across all sites. In the very least a representative sample of analyses could be carried out to determine if there is cause for concern. Vitamin D deficiency has wide ranging impacts on cognitive health.
- R 9.2 There is evidence from studies carried out in prisoner populations that Vitamin D intake is inadequate in 60% of prisoners. Living far from the equator combined with staffing issues at TPS and more recently the impacts of COVID restrictions, which have, I understand made lockdowns more common increase the chance of deficiency

due to limitations on sunlight exposure. Prisoners staying in LRP or HRP long term rarely, if at all, get sunlight exposure.

R 9.2 Unfortunately the recent (2019) menu review doesn't analyse the Vitamin D content of the menu but even so, adequate intake will most likely rely on consumption of all food provided by the kitchen, which is not always the case. In addition, prisoners who have low appetites, particularly older prisoners, are more vulnerable to deficiency.

R 9.2 The change to low fat milk (I am unsure how long low fat milk has been standard) was no doubt carried out to reduce saturated fat intakes. Hannan-Jones and Capra^{ref} suggest this also impacts Vitamin D status of prisoners but I am unable to confirm this in other research or in the TPS population as I have been unable to determine the Vitamin D content of Betta light vs full cream milk. Some light milk is fortified with Vitamin D but the brand used at TPS does not – Vitamin D fortified milks are however relatively costly.

R 9.3 However, while prisoners have commented they would prefer butter to margarine, the fortified margarine used is a good source of Vitamin D and generally a better source than butter. The individual portions (Meadow Lea lactose and gluten free individual portions) are a better quality product than the bulk version (Golden Award) but both have Vitamin D added.

R 9.4 Prisoners who supplement their food intake with tuna or salmon from canteen will have better Vitamin D intakes.

R 10 Consider outsourcing for desserts at LRP

R 10.1 This could allow for a better range of desserts containing fruit, dairy and thus being nutritionally superior to the range that is currently supplied (which tend to be pastries, breads, cakes because they can be frozen are easier to transport)

R 11 Additional food for those who are hungry

R 11.1 While excessive weight gain is a common problem, there are some prisoners – especially young men doing gym work – who remain hungry after meals. They can access buy-ups and those with the means often buy protein powder. I understand that provision of extra serves is likely to create an atmosphere of 'favouritism' and/or standover, but where meals might otherwise be wasted, a system to allow provision of additional meals could possibly be considered for such cases, as long as unhealthy weight gain is not a consequence.

R 12 MHWP Kitchen

R 12.1 Continue to progress the kitchen at MHWP to greater independence by providing more products they can use to cook meal of their choice. This could be providing more raw ingredients, eggs, a variety of sauces or condiments and vegetables.

- R 12.2 Provide MHWP with guidance on filtering and/or reusing cooking oil as appropriate and ensure they have adequate supply of oil to not have to reuse oil when it is not safe to do so.

R 13 Vanessa Goodwin Units

- R 13.1 Work towards providing VG Units with ingredients they can use to cook their own meals, especially given that they have well equipped kitchens that are currently underutilised

R14 Food Gardens

- R 14.1 Provide a rabbit proof fence for vegetable gardens in MHWP and elsewhere as necessary so that vegetables grown can be enjoyed by prisoners.

- R 14.2 Seek opportunities to introduce more gardens in the prison for growing vegetables

- R 14.3 The Director of Prisons undertook to investigate what we had heard that the RBP garden is not accessible at present due escape risk with walkway to old prison hospital. This should be resolved so this garden is able to continue to be used.

R15 Cafeteria

- R 15.1 The idea to develop a cafeteria to service visitors and staff was proposed during our inspection in meetings with the Food Services Manager and Industries and Facilities Manager and is an excellent way to help prisoners gain skills and confidence in food service and cooking and to improve the interface between the prison and wider community which will ideally assist prisoners to transition out of the custodial system and not return.

- R 15.2 In our meeting with the Director of Prisons this idea was also discussed as it seems [REDACTED] (prisoner advocate) has also suggested this to government

- R 15.2 This should be enthusiastically supported and advanced.

REFERENCES:

1. Inspection Standards Adult Prisons:
https://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/546278/FINAL-Inspection-Standards-for-Adult-Custodial-Centres-in-Tasmania-July-2019.pdf
2. Inspection Standards Youth Detention:
https://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/546279/FINAL-Inspection-Standards-for-Youth-Custodial-Centres-in-Tasmania-July-2019.pdf
3. Hannan-Jones, M and Capra, S. What do prisoners eat? Nutrient intakes and food practices in a high-secure prison. *British Journal of Nutrition* (2016), 115, 1387–1396
4. AIHW Report on Prisoners Health 2018:
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/prisoners/health-australia-prisoners-2018/contents/table-of-contents>



Appendix 3

Department of Justice response to recommendations

The Department of Justice (the Department) appreciates the work undertaken by the Custodial Inspector and his staff in relation to the Food and Nutrition Report. The Department also acknowledges and thanks the Accredited Practising Dietician, Ms Ngaire Hobbins, who consulted on this inspection on behalf of the Custodial Inspector.

The Report provides the Department with an opportunity to make changes to improve the health and well-being of prisoners and we are committed to working with the Custodial Inspector and other key partners, including the Department of Health (Correctional Primary Health Service) and TasTAFE to address the findings of the Report.

The Department appreciates the Custodial Inspector's opening comments that Tasmania Prison Service "staff were open, cooperative and welcoming" during the first unannounced inspections undertaken as part of developing this Report. The Department acknowledges that both announced and unannounced inspections are valuable tools in ensuring that we meet community expectations in terms of prisoner management.

The Department supports the premise that nutritious and varied food for prisoners is a fundamental right. However it is also acknowledged that complaints about the standard, quality, amount and variety of food is a common occurrence across Australian correctional facilities. The need to balance the health needs of prisoners, many of whom have specific requirements, with a degree of choice will always be a challenge. Notwithstanding this, continuous improvement and the opportunity to provide better health outcomes for those within our care is a key priority for the Department.

The Department therefore appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Report, particularly as the inspections were undertaken over 12 months ago. Given this passage of time there have been a number of matters that have been reviewed and updates provided as part of our response outlined below.

As noted by the Custodial Inspectorate in the Report, the TPS Catering Service has made significant improvements in recent times including:

- The implementation of new food thermal boxes to maintain higher food quality on delivery;
- The review of the cyclic menus and offerings; and
- The introduction of self-heat meals to allow prisoners to heat meals at a time of their choosing.

In addition, there are a number of key themes that have emerged from the Report that the Department appreciates an opportunity to comment on.

I. Future planned improvements

The Department has been exploring future infrastructure upgrades to kitchen facilities in the O'Hara Cottages, Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison, Hobart Reception Prison and to kitchenettes in Ron Barwick Prison.

All of these upgrades currently form part of the Department's Strategic Infrastructure bid and will be

considered through the usual budget processes.

It is also noted that Government has provided an additional \$15 million for a new kitchen for the Risdon Prison Complex and this expected to be online in 2022.

2. Self-catering options for prisoners

This Report, together with the Care and Well-Being Inspection Report, recommends that the TPS consider options, appropriate to their security and behavioural status, for prisoners to prepare their own meals.

The ability to respond to this recommendation is reliant on kitchens within the Tasmania Prison Service meeting standards for food handling which is governed under the *Food Act 2003*. The delegation for licencing kitchens sits with Local Government.

As the prison is identified as a “public institution” under the *Food Act 2003*, we are required to ensure all food that is prepared for consumption by prisoners, only occur in areas registered and deemed suitable for food preparation. To achieve this registration, all kitchens must meet commercial kitchen standards.

Previous advice from Clarence City Council was that independent living kitchens could not be registered without significant modification. Further, Council raised concerns as to whether prisoners and correctional staff are deemed to have the necessary suitable skills and knowledge to produce safe wholesome food. Therefore evidence of this would need to be provided prior to the areas becoming licenced. Finally Council sought evidence of protection of food from contamination from other prisoners. The TPS has recently written to Clarence City Council to seek advice on specifically what would be required in order to satisfy compliance. Once this advice is received further consideration will be given to this recommendation.

As mentioned above, we are exploring options for upgrades to our onsite kitchens through the current infrastructure budget process, which if funded will enable these kitchens to be assessed for licencing through the Clarence City Council.

3. Training, induction and education & TasTAFE partnership

Advice from the Clarence City Council is that prisoners currently working within the kitchen are only required to undertake ‘video awareness’ of food safety preparations. However TasTAFE, through the recently established partnership with the TPS has been undertaking Food Safety Awareness Training which is certificated training for staff currently working within kitchens for the past 12 months. Further, the TPS is currently exploring the option to embed food handling safety for all prisoners upon their initial 5 day induction to the prison.

The TPS has a regular scheduled meeting with TasTAFE as part of our partnership arrangements and will continue to discuss and explore what further opportunities can be provided in this area.

4. TPS Store and Canteen – opportunities for improvement and integration

There are currently 155 food items available through the Canteen and a further 110 sport and recreation items. Since the previous recommendations made in 2017, a further 20 canteen items have been introduced and further items were swapped to ensure healthier options were available. Examples can be provided to the Custodial Inspectorate upon request. Further, an additional seventeen sport and recreation items have been introduced in response to prisoner requests in the same timeframe.

The TPS does not have the capacity, nor would it be core business to meet every prisoner request on particular branded food. The TPS has responded to previous recommendations to provide healthier options and while some prisoners have complained about losing some options in place of healthier options, we believe the current arrangements strike the right balance between offering choice for prisoners and meeting our obligations to provide healthy options.

The Canteen Director's Standing Order is also scheduled for review early next year and recommendations regarding the form will be considered as part of that process, noting that Justice Connect is expected to make significant improvements in this area.

The infrastructure budget process as mentioned above also includes a submission for a new, purpose built, standalone store which will go a long way in managing the capacity to hold more items.

5. Department of Health – Correctional Primary Health Services relationship

I note that many of the recommendations sit within the remit of the Department of Health and I would like to assure you that the TPS has a strong working relationship with Correctional Primary Health Services. Monthly meetings occur between the senior management of both organisations and I have asked that Custodial Inspector recommendations be added as a standing agenda items to those meetings to ensure appropriate oversight and regular monitoring of the required actions, including the consideration of joint funding bids where appropriate.

6. Inter-jurisdictional opportunities for learning

I note in your report you reference examples from other jurisdictions and in response to this I have asked the TPS to undertake a jurisdictional review into food and nutrition across other states to assess where further improvements can be made.

7. Specific follow up

In respect to some specific issues raised in the report, I provide the following response:

Issue	Response
Pork Free Products	- All food products are purchased through the established Government contract. - As the Government contractor was unable to meet the pork free requirements, the TPS sought an exemption through Treasury to explore alternatively providers. 'Robbo's Meats' were selected to provide this product and this has resulted in TPS specific products being provided. This includes lamb and beef based salami and devon. - The reference to pork trimmings is understood to be in regards to standard salami products provided by 'Robbo's' not in respect to TPS specific products provided by 'Robbo's' and the TPS has been provided with assurances from 'Robbo's' regarding this.
Specific breakfast packs CSU	- The TPS has explored a range of options for the provision of food in the CSU to meet safety requirements. - Not all prisoners are fully restricted regarding the provision of cutlery in the CSU and the numbers relating to how many people would require a special pack in CSU on any given day fluctuates greatly. - Operationally, the most efficient way to ensure fresh food is to manage this is through the provision of safe cutlery or 'return cutlery' arrangements depending on the level of restriction.

	The TPS will continue to review this matter and provide further advice as appropriate, however it is noted that the safety and security of those in the CSU is paramount.
Meal labelling equipment	Meal labelling equipment has been procured and is currently under installation. It is expected to be in full use by the end of this calendar year.
Quality of fish meal	- Following prisoner feedback, the fish meal was removed from the menu approximately 12 months ago. While it was the best available product available through the Government contract, the TPS was unable to guarantee the thickness of the crumbing. It has therefore been removed. - Battered fish still remains on the menu once per week and is generally well received.
Medical certificate for vegetarian diet	- The Director's Standing Order was changed approximately 4 years ago to remove the requirement for a medical certificate for a vegetarian diet. - Prisoners are able to identify the requirement for a vegetarian diet during the initial TIER 1 assessment. If a prisoner wishes to switch to a vegetarian diet while in custody, this can be facilitated via a request form. There is no medical requirement necessary. - Prisoners are offered the opportunity to switch between vegetarian and non-vegetarian once within a 12 month period to prevent excessive changes.
Special diets – including gluten free, diabetes, coeliac, Crohn's, lap band surgery, pregnancy, etc.	While the example provided in the report in respect to a prisoner who had undertaken lap band surgery in Mary Hutchinson women's prison remains under investigation, special requirement diets are assessed via CHPS through the TIER 1 assessment process or at any time during a medical staff assessment.
Health and fitness program for women	- The TPS already provides the Get Active program in Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison. This is an 8 week program that runs every Friday. There are no limits on participant numbers and operates similar to a 'boot camp' or 'circuit training' program. However it also provides advice on healthy diets and healthy weight ranges. It is run by Womensport and Recreation Tasmania (Department of Health). - In addition to this, TPS run volleyball on Wednesdays in Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison as well as providing printouts of exercises that can be undertaken within accommodation areas, including during lockdowns, such as body weight routines. - During unlocked hours, general population prisoners can also access park and weight equipment.
Dietician/nutritionist 'on staff'	This matter will be further assessed through the regular meetings between CHPS and TPS, and will be subject to funding arrangements.
Review popularity of food options available for prisoners	The kitchen staff personally canvas prisoners regularly as to what is currently popular/unpopular. This is done both informally during walk throughs where prisoners happily volunteer their suggestions, as well

	as more structured sessions through 'Peer Panels'. Peer Panels are also consulted regularly on canteen options and changes. Once options are canvassed, any significant changes are further consulted through a nutritionist and assessed for appropriateness of inclusion.
Nutrients/vitamins	Multivitamins are offered through the canteen, and further supplements can be requested through TIER 1 assessment or any subsequent medial appointment.
COVID frozen meals	- There are no longer COVID meals stored. The kitchen now only stores two days of redundancy food in case of emergency (unexpected shutdown of power/equipment). - Fresh fruit is provided once per day and rotated based on a seasonal availability. - Frozen meals are provided at LRP upon request due to operational requirements, and noting that this is a short term accommodation facility that on average holds detainees for up to 72 hours. Further exploration of the matter of frozen meals at LRP remains under investigation. - HRP are delivered fresh meals daily.
Deep fryer oil in MHWP	The fryers in MHWP are in place for use in catering functions only. They are not intended for daily use and therefore the oil should only require changing after a catering event has occurred. The TPS will explore the option of regularly draining the fryers to ensure they are not being regularly used.
Potatoes in MHWP CI Report, p. 19	- The potatoes delivered to MHWP are the same that are in use across the rest of the prison. They undertake a daily quality assurance process. While they are treated to prevent early rot or blackness upon being peeled, simply washing the potato prior to use is sufficient and safe in removing this. - There are no health and safety risks associated with the product used to treat the potatoes. - MHWP kitchen will be reminded of this.
Microwaves	All electrical products are regularly tested and tagged ensuring they are appropriate for use.
Sugar sachets provided in LRP to accompany coffee	One sugar sachet is provided to accompany coffee in LRP which is in line with dietary recommendations.

8. Not supported recommendations

The two recommendations that the TPS are unable to support at this time both relate to the provision of fresh food at Launceston Reception Prison. The current arrangements were specifically requested to assist operational service delivery. As the Launceston Reception Prison is designed to accommodate people for no more than 72 hours on average, the provision of frozen meals to meet operational requirements appears at this time to be sufficient. Likewise, the deserts provided at Launceston Reception Prison are in line with those provided across the rest of the TPS.

However, I am aware that the reception prisons do have longer term residents who are employed within the facility and I have asked the TPS to consider the recommendation in relation to provision of fresh sandwiches

on site, or the ability for relevant prisoners to make their own, and will provide some further feedback to you in respect to this at a future time.

Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
1. Adopts, or considers the adoption of, the recommendations contained in the Quality Indicator Report prepared for Tasmania Prison Service by their Accredited Practising Dietician, taking into consideration the specific advice of the Inspector's external consultant provided in Appendix 2 to this report.	Supported in Principle The TPS utilises an external APD to provide nutritional assistance and advice. The appointment of a full time onsite APD has budgetary implications and will be dependent on the allocation of further resources.
2. Engages the ongoing services of an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) to assist TPS meet the nutritional needs of prisoners (noting that the APD referred to in Recommendation 1 was only engaged by TPS for a specific undertaking).	Supported in Principle The TPS utilises an external APD to provide assistance and advice regarding the diet or special needs of prisoners, particularly where issues are raised by Correctional Primary Health Service (CPHS) or TPS staff. Cyclic menus are reviewed every 3 years as part of the normal process. CPHS staff have provided nutritional training for prisoners in the past. TasTAFE have also been requested to make this training part of their service delivery and now have a catering staff member onsite on a full time basis.
3. Works with Correctional Primary Health Services to include malnutrition screening within health screening for older prisoners (aged 65 and over).	Supported in Principle The TPS will initiate discussions with Correctional Primary Health Services regarding this recommendation, however ultimate responsibility for such initiative will sit with the Department of Health.
4. Reviews and reworks the canteen list so that there is better balance to facilitate both individual choices made by prisoners, and to accommodate additions and changes to the canteen list which support better health outcomes.	Supported - Existing Initiative A traffic light type system will be introduced with the kiosks that are scheduled to be delivered through the Justice Connect Project, which will assist prisoners to make healthy choices. The canteen list will be submitted to the external ADP for input. In addition, the mark-up on these (healthy choice) items will be removed to encourage prisoners to choose healthier options. The TPS is currently researching the introduction of peanut butter, rolled oats and dark chocolate.

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
5. Ensures that all processed meat products included in meals for those who are Muslim are guaranteed free of any pork product and are labelled as such.	Supported - Existing Initiative All food items, including processed meats, are procured via the government approved suppliers under the Department of Health (DOH) food contract. All certification is available via the individual contractors and is screened on receipt at two points, the store delivery point and the Catering Services loading dock. DOH staff monitor the compliance of the suppliers. A new labelling system is in the process of being procured to further assist staff and prisoners in relation to increased awareness via the attached labels.
6. Initiates an audit by a suitably qualified food service nutrition professional to determine that gluten free food production by the kitchen is carried out according to strict guidelines, ensuring food provided to those with coeliac disease is guaranteed to be free from gluten.	Supported - Existing Initiative This is currently achieved via the yearly external Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) audit for HACCP accreditation. The menu is also reviewed as part of the three year external dietician's review with a focus on all diets and compliance to them. Catering staff utilise the cyclic menu and set recipe cards to ensure there is no cross contamination of the gluten free and other dietary requirements. The success of the current process is monitored via the TPS internal complaint process and CPHS declaration of any food borne illness that is determined within all TPS facilities.
7. Considers the supply of psyllium or a similar fibre supplement to assist with constipation, which is especially an issue among older prisoners.	Supported in Principle This recommendation falls under the remit of CPHS. Cyclic menus are approved by a dietician and this is a factor that is considered in the development and approval of the menus. Canteen items have also been increased to provide options for prisoners to procure items to assist with aging conditions.
8. Routinely provides prisoners requiring a puree diet due to oral or facial issues or injury with <i>Ensure</i> brand commercial supplement (or an equivalent substitute brand if applicable) to support adequate nutritional intake for healing and maintenance of nutritional status.	Supported - Existing Initiative Current process is for CPHS staff (via relevant dentist or medical staff) to send a diet request for this service to TPS Catering Services. All meals provided are as close to the cyclic menu to ensure the prisoner receives the agreed daily nutritional intake as set by the dietician. This is a common practice in all health care facilities. If additional nutritional supplements are required these are supplied via CPHS under the direction of the doctors.

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
9. Reviews what a finger food diet comprises for prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm, and provides specific instructions to the TPS main kitchen about the types of food that should be provided that are suitable for consumption with a cardboard spoon.	Supported - Existing Initiative An agreed process for the management of finger food diets has already been established between Therapeutic Services and the Catering Service. The initial finger food that is provided is restricted to ensure that it is suitable. Re-assessment occurs after 72 hours with the aim of progressing to meals with safe cutlery or standard meals. Current monitoring of the prisoners requiring this service is undertaken by CPHS and Therapeutic Services.
10. Introduces as a priority a meal labelling system which includes an ingredient list and identifies the presence or absence of gluten, lactose, soy and other allergens.	Supported - Existing Initiative A new labelling system is in the final stages of procurement which will meet and exceed all the legal requirements while also providing TPS staff and prisoners with a clear and easy identification of meal suitability to the full range of diet requirements and allergen contaminants.
11. Reintroduces tea bags to assist with the reduction of nutritional wastage of vegetables.	Supported The TPS will consider options for the reintroduction of tea bags more broadly. Tea bags have been reintroduced to the canteen.
12. Develops systems to allow prisoners at Launceston Reception Prison access to fresh vegetables and salads, and to reintroduce the making of sandwiches onsite using supplied ingredients including salad.	Not Supported Operational issues resulted in the reversion of lunch and dinner meals to reheated meals. These meals are part of the cyclic menu and cover the nutritional needs of the prisoners. The facility is a high turnover facility with an average accommodation time period of 72 hours before prisoners are moved to a facility that provides the normal fresh cyclic menu.
13. Initiates an analysis of the Vitamin D status of prisoners across all sites.	Supported in Principle The TPS will initiate discussions with Correctional Primary Health Services regarding this recommendation, however ultimate decisions regarding this recommendation will be determined by the Department of Health.

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
14. Considers outsourcing the supply of desserts at Launceston Reception Prison to allow for a better range of desserts containing fruit and dairy and thus being nutritionally superior to the frozen range that is currently supplied.	Not Supported All desserts that are provided to the facility are made in accordance with the approved cyclic menu. Dairy and fruit desserts are provided as part of that cycle. The produced desserts are also made to ensure recommended daily sugar levels are maintained. Catering staff will review the weekly issue to ensure that there is adequate numbers of fruit and dairy desserts sent to the facility. There is nothing that can be achieved from a local procurement that is not already achieved through the TPS Catering Service.
15. Continues to progress Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison kitchen to greater independence by providing more raw ingredients, eggs, a variety of sauces or condiments and vegetables so that prisoners cook nutritional meals of their choice.	Supported in Principle Existing plans are being considered to reinstate the kitchen at the Mary-Hutchinson Women's Prison. Noting that these works have significant budgetary implications which will be assessed through normal budget processes. Catering staff are required to be present to meet the HACCP and increased licencing requirements, as current licence is restricted to ready to eat foods only not full catering as the current facility and supportive infrastructure will not support a fully operational kitchen. Approved cyclic menus will still need to be in place to ensure that daily nutritional requirements are being met.
16. Provides Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison prisoner kitchen workers with guidance on filtering and/or reusing cooking oil as appropriate and ensure they have an adequate supply of oil so that they do not have to reuse oil when it is not safe to do so	Supported in Principle Current cyclic menus do not require the use of deep fat fryers. The TPS will review the use of the equipment in the facility, until such time as the kitchen is reinstated as per above comment.
17. Provides prisoners accommodated in the Vanessa Goodwin Units with ingredients they can use to cook their own meals in the well-equipped unit kitchens that are currently underutilised.	Supported in Principle While the Department continues to explore options in respect to self-catering, it is noted that this comes with significant budgetary implications as referenced above. TPS Catering Services and facility staff have an established system to ensure mothers are provided with fresh ingredients to produce meals for any babies or infants that may be accommodated in the units.
18. Installs a rabbit proof fence for the vegetable gardens in Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison, and elsewhere as necessary, so that the vegetables grown can be enjoyed by prisoners.	Supported Work has already commenced on this recommendation.

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
19. Seeks opportunities to introduce more vegetable gardens in all adult prisons.	Supported in Principle The TPS will progress discussions with TasTAFE to determine whether more vegetable gardens can be developed as part of the horticulture course.
20. Considers developing an onsite cafeteria at the Risdon site to service visitors and staff so as to help prisoners gain skills and confidence in food service and cooking and to improve the interface between the prison and wider community.	Supported in Principle This is part of the long-term plan for the Catering Service, who are working with TasTAFE and the Department to have this option further assessed and implemented. Options including the possibility of a mobile food van are being explored as a starting point. Noting that these works have significant budgetary implications which will be assessed through normal budget processes.



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