



Ministry  
of Justice

Rory Stewart OBE MP  
Minister of State for Justice

Bob Neill MP  
Chair of the Justice Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

MoJ ref: 180501

21 May 2018

Dear Bob,

## FOLLOW-UP TO EVIDENCE ON THE TREATMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Thank you for your letter of 1 May 2018, requesting further information on the treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system.

As Dr Phillip Lee underlined in his letter dated 27 February we share a commitment to improving the experience and outcomes for young people in custody and the community. We also recognise that young people have a distinct set of needs and, as you are aware, work is underway to better understand and respond to them.

With regards to your question on pre-sentence reports, the official published statistics on the number and proportion of 18-25 year olds for 2016 and 2017 are provided in an annex to the letter.

With regard to the maturity screening tool, the research behind the development and validation of the maturity screening tool has been published on gov.uk (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-and-validation-of-a-screening-assessment-of-psychosocial-maturity-for-adult-males-convicted-of-crime>).

The screening tool uses ten items from the commonly used assessment, OASys, to identify whether individuals fall into a low maturity group, and was originally designed to support commissioning decisions and inform practice in prisons and probation. We believe that better screening will help providers determine how many young adults under their care are likely to require services or interventions to promote maturation. The tool has been incorporated into the MOJ segmentation tool, which helps prisons and probation providers profile their populations in terms of maturity. It is available to commissioners and through them, prisons and probation. The intention is that on a population level the tool will aid in commissioning decisions, and on an individual level it could aid identification of those most in need of support to promote their maturity.


The maturity screening tool and segmentation data was used in the identification of pilot sites for the Maturity Resource Pack and expressions of interest were sought. The pilot for the pack was extended from February 2018 to April 2018, to allow delivery sites additional time for implementation. Staff were

originally identified at two of the pilot sites (HMYOI Aylesbury and HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall) but were unable to engage due to limited resources, which delayed the process. Extending the pilot by two months allowed the identification of a third pilot site (HMP/YOI Forest Bank) to help complete a second group.

The aim of the pilot is to review the process and content of the Pack using the data collected to inform any changes which may be required, and making it more widely available to custody and community sites from June 2018. Due to the small scale of initial delivery, we do not plan to publish the findings from the data that was collected in April from the three pilot sites.

Finally, I am attaching the delivery plan of the young offender governance board. The plan specifies age groups where relevant.

I am very grateful for the continued interest of the Justice Select Committee in this particular area of work.

*SA* *with*  
  
RORY STEWART OBE MP

**PSRs prepared in 2017, by age group and type of report**

	Fast Delivery PSR written	Fast Delivery PSR oral	Standard PSR	All PSRs
18-25 year olds	13,589	19,397	1,237	34,223
All ages	49,415	75,488	4,739	129,642
Proportion of 18-25 yr olds (%)	27	26	26	26

**PSRs prepared in 2016, by age group and type of report**

	Fast Delivery PSR written	Fast Delivery PSR oral	Standard PSR	All PSRs
18-25 year olds	17,891	20,630	2,607	41,128
All ages	62,977	75,723	9,596	148,296
Proportion of 18-25 yr olds (%)	28	27	27	28