What is your long-term (up to 24 hrs) family visit policy?

What is your testing policy and why? (who, when, where and why?)

Feedback Collection

COVID-19

31 July 2020

Latvia

In Latvian prisons, if a prisoner is suspected of having a COVID-19 infection, material is taken from the nostrils and throat for analysis on the COVID-19. The material is sent to the National Reference Laboratory. Testing is performed at the expense of the state budget. The answer is provided within 24-48 hours to both the prison and the Health Management Center.

Estonia

In Estonian prisons in case of fever, cough or other cold-like symptoms, the person (staff or prisoner) is always tested. Also, in all prisons once a week, a random sample testing of staff takes place, in order to detect possible asymptomatic carriers and prevent the emergence of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Spain

In Spanish Prison Service, we are testing new inmates when there are reasons to consider they can have COVID-19. The policy is to test these inmates and the ones which were in contact with them. Usually, the test are made by prison sanitary services. Also, officers were declared priority group to be tested.

Austria

In Austria, inmates are tested before transfer from the access departments. Furthermore, in case of suspicion of an infection (staff/ inmate), testing is always carried out in coordination with the responsible health authority. However, collective tests are also carried out by the Austrian prison medical service. Some prisons also have sufficient capacity of their own to carry out tests independently.

France

National orientations have been given by the Health Department. - New inmates: tests are systematically organized on the 7th day. If negative, the quarantine can be lifted. If positive, isolation is organized in a dedicated part of the prison. PM, we (i.e. the penitentiary administration) would prefer new detainees to be tested on the very first day upon arrival: some medical staff plan it this way (on their own decision). But the national orientations by the Health department are the 7th day (as mentioned above). I can also mention that the CPT has visited France to assess the procedures followed during the COVID- the CPT also recommends tests to be achieved on the 1st day upon arrival. - Otherwise, for the other detainees, tests are also decided by the medical staff in case of doubts, or if the detainees present some symptoms. Other precautions: - if a detainee is positive (clinically assessed or assessed with a test), all the penitentiary staff members have to be tested; detainees in contact with the detainees have to be tested. - If a penitentiary staff member is tested positive: all the penitentiary staff members of the prison have to be tested.

Slovenia

Health Service in Slovenian prisons is provided by the Public Health Network; testing for COVID-19 is equivalent to that of general population. All inmates with particular symptoms are tested when the doctor who operates in the prison decides so. Decision about implementation of quarantine is also handed over to the doctor. If test is negative, the quarantine is lifted.

Catalonia

In the Catalan prison system RT-PCR tests are performed in the following situations: All newly arrived inmates; Inmates with symptoms compatible with covid-19 as assessed by health staff; Inmates that have been in close contact with other inmates that have tested positive as assessed by health staff. While waiting for the results, the inmates that have been tested are being placed in quarantine in different dedicated units in the prison to prevent potential spread. The testing is conducted by the health staff regularly working the prison and sent to the appointed labs as it is done with the testing carried out with people in the community. Prison testing is being adapted in contact with the health authorities to be applicable in the community which are quite similar.

Northern Ireland

Staff. We have a testing protocol in place (from 03/04/2020) where all staff and their household members who become COVID-19 symptoms can be tested through 2 dedicated test sites (one in Belfast and one in Ballinena). Testing is managed by the NIPS Fusion Cell in HQ, with a single point of contact within each prison/PECCS and NIPS HQ. Testing is completed through the Bellast and Northern Health and Social Care Trusts. NIPS staff are encouraged not to use the online testing service due to security issues and uncertainty around the reliability of self-tests. Prisoners: All symptomatic prisoners and new commitments are tested for COVID-19. We have no confirmed COVID-19 cases within our prison population since testing began.

Sweden

We do not conduct any testing of staff through the SSPS. Our staff members can get tested through ordinary health care facilities around the country. Inmates: - We conduct tests on all clients that are showing symptoms. This is done through PCR-testing and has been successful in most parts of the country. However, the laboratory capacity in some regions has been limited and therefore delayed the testing. PCR-testing is also conducted on inmates admitted to one of our prisons directly from the outside. Inmates that arrive straight from another prison or from a remand prison are not tested unless they show symptoms. New admissions, without symptoms, to all prisons are tested at least once a year. The reason for this is that they are in seclusion to the extent that we can monitor them during their quarantine time. We are also trying out testing for antibodies within the prisons in the Stockholm region. The reason for that region is that we have had the infection in many of the facilities. An assessment of the antibody testing will be conducted, considering the results from the testing in Stockholm. After the assessment has been conducted, a policy decision will be made with or without the antibody testing will be rolled out to all prisons around the country. The reason for testing is that we are following the advice from the Public Health Agency of Sweden. According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden anyone who have been tested for antibodies or who have been cured after having positive test on a PCR-test should be immune from the infection for at least six months. Therefore we will be able to ease the restrictions for inmates with antibodies or who has been cured after a verified infection.

Czechia

The testing policy for prisoners does not differ from the policy applied to general society/population. The rules for testing are set by the Ministry of Health (Mob). 1. Prisoners: the Prison Service itself can perform testing (only in particular prisons, see below) or a mobile public health authority (e.g. for the hygiene-authority team is called). 2. Personnel: mostly their GP (general practitioners) or regional public health service ensures testing, not the Prison Service.

- Who is tested? - Everyone showing indication criteria (see below). - Epidemiologically significant contacts - Individuals with COVID-19; - Individuals in quarantine; - Inmates to be extradited from the Czech Republic (quick serological testing); - Inmates that are transferred to a different prison (finger-prick tests; determination of IgM and IgG antibodies; covered by the prison service).

- Why (reasons to be tested): - Suspected cases among inmates immediately after suspicion = meeting indication criteria (see below) - Measuring contact tracing and assessment; - expense for antibodies within the prisons in the Stockholm region. The reason for that region is that we have had the infection in many of the facilities. An assessment of the antibody testing will be conducted, considering the results from the testing in Stockholm. After the assessment has been conducted, a policy decision will be made whether or not the antibody testing will be rolled out to all prisons around the country. The reason for testing is that we are following the advice from the Public Health Agency of Sweden. According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden anyone who have been tested for antibodies or who have been cured after having positive test on a PCR-test should be immune from the infection for at least six months. Therefore we will be able to ease the restrictions for inmates with antibodies or who has been cured after a verified infection.

Slovakia

Prison officers and inmates are currently being tested for COVID-19. The decision of the prison general practitioners (finger-prick tests; determination of IgM and IgG antibodies; covered by the prison service) is taken. Testing for antibodies is done after isolation of the confirmed COVID-19 cases or persons who arrived from risk countries (no later than the 5th day after their arrival to Slovakia). On the basis of the recommendation of the Public Health Authority (right-prick tests; determination of IgM and IgG antibodies; covered by the prison service), tested persons are mostly probable contacts of the confirmed COVID-19 cases. On the basis of the decision of the prison general practitioners (finger-prick tests; determination of IgM and IgG antibodies; covered by the prison service), tested persons are those with symptoms of respiratory disease, who may have been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases (arrival from the risk country, if the PCR-RNA test has not yet been ordered by the Public Health Authority or alternatively these persons live in the region with the increase of occurrence of the positive COVID-19 cases) or other significantly increased infection of the particular risk group is stated by their case amnesticus. At present, there is carried out no spread screening on COVID-19 prison officer, inmates or all inmates on admission to prisons. Inmates on admission to prisons (to serve pre-trial detention/prison sentence) are separated from other inmates for the first 14 days after their admission (modified performance of quarantine), if the capacity of the particular prison allows that.
Regardless of the measures related to the COVID-19, the current valid legislation of the Slovak Republic regulating the prison sentence execution does not allow 24-hour visits of inmates (i.e., long-term family visits) in the premises of the prison facility (i.e., with joint accommodation of inmates and civilians). It should be stated that CPT has not objected to such national legislation during its regular visits. At the same time, in addition to a significant security risk, their possible implementation is also hindered by material-technical conditions related to the long-term filled accommodation capacities of convicts. Other problems can be related to ensuring e.g. hygiene or possibly other organizational-technical, moral and ethical issues.