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**Feedback from police custody**

**Introduction**

The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) leads, supports and represents independent custody visiting schemes across the UK. ICVA is requesting additional feedback from schemes throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. ICVA is sharing this monitoring with national bodies to help to identify strengths and challenges and help to resolve problems.

**Feedback**

The following feedback summarises responses from independent custody visiting schemes across July 2020. ICVA received 33 forms of feedback from 22 police force areas across this time.

Key messages

* Detainees are generally accessing safeguards, but some schemes are concerned that solicitors are not attending custody suites.
* Some schemes report concern that detainees are not given the opportunity to provide informed consent to access remote legal advice.
* A number of schemes express concerns around Video Enabled Justice, namely:
  + The additional demand placed on suites due to the additional time that virtual courts take. We have received feedback that custody suites have closed to new detainees because of this increased demand.
  + Additional strain on running custody suites e.g. additional cleaning.
  + Impact on detainee care e.g. time spent in cells and challenges accessing prescriptions after courts.
* Some schemes report that custody suites are becoming busier and note that this is challenging as the restrictions and processes required to reduce risks from COVID19 take additional time.

**Using feedback**

ICVA has previously raised concerns around Video Remand Hearings, which have been fed into national planning and will continue to reiterate these in future meetings. ICVA has responded to the consultation on PACE Codes C and E, highlighting the importance of solicitors attending suites when it is safe for them to do so as well as underlining the importance of informed consent. We will continue to do so.