



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Women in Prison respond to the ‘devastating’ increase in self-harm in women’s prisons

Today, Thursday 28 January, the Ministry of Justice released new figures on self-harm in prison to September 2020, which show an 8% increase in total self-harm incidents in women’s prisons, taking the figure to the highest on record for the decade. Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance increased by 35% to 331 in women’s prisons in the latest 12 months. There was also a 24% increase in the number of women self-harming on the previous quarter.

CEO of Women in Prison, Dr Kate Paradine, said: *“These statistics are a devastating reminder of the damaging impact of Covid-19 on women in prison. We’ve seen over a third increase on the number of women admitted to hospital for self-harm in the last year – highlighting the worryingly rapid decline of mental health.*

“Many women haven’t seen their families in person for over a year, and are confined to their cells for up to 23 hours a day. It doesn’t have to be like this - the Government can honor its promise and resume its early release scheme allowing women to safely isolate in the community. For people not eligible, we need to prioritise the vaccinations so women can spend more time outside their cells and visits can eventually resume safely.”

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS :

CEO of Women in Prison Dr Kate Paradine is available for interviews.

For media enquiries, please contact Molly Fleming at press@wipuk.org, Phone: 07860 695 752

Read Women in Prison’s [briefing plan for tackling Covid-19 in prisons here](#) and for [key facts on women in prison here](#).

Women in Prison (WIP) is a national charity that delivers support for women affected by the criminal justice system in prisons. We work in prisons, the community and ‘through the gate’, supporting women leaving prison. We run three Women’s Centres and ‘hubs’ for services in Manchester, Surrey and London) and campaign to end the harm caused to women, their families and our communities by imprisonment

See www.womeninprison.org.uk for more information. Twitter: @WIP_live