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Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to June 2024 Self-harm and Assaults to March 2024

Main Points

Number of deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period



In the 12 months to June 2024, there were 308 deaths in prison custody, a **decrease** of 2% from 313 deaths in the previous 12 months. Of these, 85 deaths were self-inflicted, a **decrease** of 8% from the 92 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months.



In the most recent quarter, there were 78 deaths, an 11% **increase** from 70 deaths in the previous quarter.

The rate of self-harm increased in male and decreased in female establishments from the previous 12-month period



In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate of self-harm was 852 incidents per 1,000 prisoners (73,804 incidents), **up** 16% from the 12 months to March 2023, comprising of a 25% **increase** in male establishments and a 4% **decrease** in female establishments.



In the most recent quarter, self-harm incidents were **up** 8% to 19,418, and the rate was **up** 9% (a 2% increase in male establishments and a 29% increase in female establishments).

The number of individuals who self-harmed increased



There were 13,348 individuals who self-harmed in the 12 months to March 2024, **up** 19% from the previous 12 months. The number of self-harm incidents per individual **increased** from 5.3 in the 12 months to March 2023 to 5.5 in the 12 months to March 2024.

The rate of assaults increased from the previous 12-month period



In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate of assaults was 327 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (28,292 assaults), **up** 19% from the 12 months to March 2023.



In the most recent quarter, assaults were **up** 4% to 7,367 incidents and the assault rate was **up** 5% to 84 assaults per 1,000 prisoners.

The rate of assaults on staff increased from the previous 12-month period



In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate of assaults on staff was 114 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (9,847 assaults on staff), **up** 24% from the 12 months to March 2023.



In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff was **up** 3% to 2,602 incidents.

The rate of serious assaults increased 11% of all assaults were serious



In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate of serious assaults was 37 serious assaults per 1,000 prisoners (3,215 serious assaults), **up** 18% from the 12 months to March 2023. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **increased** by 16% to 27 per 1,000 prisoners (2,320 incidents), and the rate of serious assaults on staff **increased** by 24% to 11 per 1,000 prisoners (947 incidents) in the 12 months to March 2024.

If you are a journalist covering a suicide-related issue, please follow the Samaritans' [Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide](#) because of the potentially damaging consequences of irresponsible reporting.

If you are struggling to cope, please call Samaritans for free on 116 123 (UK and the Republic of Ireland) or contact other sources of support, such as those listed on the NHS help for suicidal thoughts webpage. Support is available around the clock, every day of the year, providing a safe place for you, whoever you are and however you are feeling.

Statistician's comment

In the 12 months to June 2024, we have seen a decrease in the number of deaths (2% decrease). In the 12 months to March 2024, we have seen a 24% increase in the number of self-harm incidents and a 27% rise in the number of assault incidents compared with the previous year. Self-harm is now at the highest level in the time series¹. Incidents of self-harm and assaults have increased in both male and female establishments over the past 12 months, with the number of assaults in female establishments and self-harm incidents in both male and female establishments reaching their highest level in the time series. Comparisons of these statistics with earlier periods will reflect the impact of Covid-19 restrictions as well as underlying trends.

The number of deaths has decreased from 313 to 308 in the 12 months to June 2024, with the rate of deaths decreasing from 3.8 to 3.5 per 1,000 prisoners over the same time period. There were 85 self-inflicted deaths in the latest year, a decrease from 92 in the previous year. The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to June 2018.

There was a 16% increase in the rate^{2,3} of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to March 2024, with the rate now peaking at 852 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. However, there continue to be notable differences in self-harm trends by gender. There was an increase in the rate of self-harm incidents in male establishments to a new peak (up 25% to 652 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) and a decrease in the rate in female establishments (down 4% to 5,577 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate is more than eight times higher in female establishments than male establishments. There was a decrease in the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed in female establishments, from 17.0 to 16.4, and the rate of females self-harming remained almost unchanged (a decrease of 0.4%) at 341 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners. For males, there were increases in both the rate of individuals self-harming (up 13% to 146 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners) and the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed in male establishments (from 4.0 to 4.5).

The rate of assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners increased 19% in the 12 months to March 2024, and the rate of serious assaults increased 18% over the same period. The rate of assaults was 71% higher in female establishments than in male establishments. In female establishments the rate increased by 25% to a peak of 544 per 1,000 prisoners, compared to an increase of 19% in male establishments (317 per 1,000 prisoners). However, the proportion of assaults in female establishments that were serious remains lower, at 7% compared with 12% in male establishments, despite the rate of serious assaults now being higher in female establishments (up 43% to a rate of 39) than male establishments (up 17% to a rate of 37) for the first time in the time series.

¹ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

² Rates reflect the changes in the number of incidents, as well as the changes in prison population over time. More information can be found in the accompanying guide. Data on population statistics are published in the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly publication <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

³ See *Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics* for a summary of how rates are calculated.

Background

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales, with figures in the summary tables in the quarterly publications presented on a 12-month rolling basis over an 11-year time series⁴. This release provides statistics on deaths of prisoners to the end of June 2024, and statistics on assaults and self-harm up to the end of March 2024.

The latest 12-month data for self-harm and assaults reflects the first full calendar year since the exit from the National Framework in May 2022, following the period of Covid-19 restrictions being implemented within prisons to limit and control the spread of the virus. These restrictions included the implementation of effective isolation of prisoners to reduce the spread of Covid-19, reverse cohorting of new prisoners into custody, and shielding of vulnerable prisoners. During this period, we saw the progression of establishments to different levels of the National Framework for managing Covid. This affects the comparability of statistics in recent years, due to the differing level of restrictions.

The total prison population fell in the period following the first quarter of 2020, more so for certain population groups, but started to increase again in the second quarter of 2021 and as at 30 June 2024 is now higher than pre-Covid levels⁵. On the 30th June 2024, the total prison population was around 4,700 or 6% higher than at the end of March 2020. The female population has increased 2% whereas the male population has increased by 6%. There was a large increase in the prison population during 2023, with the population on the 30th June 2024 being around 5,900 or 7% higher than at the end of December 2022 (7% higher in male establishments and 19% higher in female establishments).

These changes in population should be borne in mind when interpreting changes in the numbers of incidents over the past year. In the context of substantial population change, rates per 1,000 prisoners more accurately describe changes in the likelihood of incidents occurring⁶. Data on deaths, self-harm and assaults are routinely presented as rates of incidents per 1,000 prisoners (as well as numbers) for all prisoners and for the male and female estates.

In order to make the best use of capacity across the estate in the light of recent increases in the prison population, young people have routinely been retained in the Youth Custody Service (YCS) estate until their 19th birthday (rather than transferring to an adult prison on or soon after their 18th birthday, as previously occurred in most cases).

This means the age demographic in the young people's estate, but also in adult prisons, has been slightly different in the most recent few months, compared to previous years.

Supplementary annual tables, providing more in-depth statistics on a calendar year basis, underlying data files with pivot tables providing lower-level granularity, and a technical guidance document are also available alongside this bulletin, at www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics.

⁴ Data on deaths is published three months ahead of self-harm and assaults. Therefore, the deaths annual publication and tables are published alongside the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September publication.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>. Quarterly population data to December 2023 is published in Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, England and Wales Quarterly.

⁶ The comparability over the year of other measures that are based on self-harming individuals (such as the number of incidents per self-harming individual, or the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance) are not affected by changes in population size.

Changes for this publication:

Self-harming individuals by ethnicity

The annual self-harm tables were published in the previous release including the annual self-harm breakdowns for 2023. These included a breakdown of self-harming individuals by age and nationality. The annual tables are published alongside this release, and the self-harm tables are expanded to include an additional table on self-harming individuals by ethnicity.

Assaults by weapon

The annual assaults tables include a breakdown of assault incidents including a weapon. The table has been updated to now show the number of unique incidents involving a weapon, as well as a count of weapons by type of weapon.

1 Deaths: 12 months ending June 2024

Number of deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to June 2024, there were 308 deaths in prison custody, a **decrease** of 2% from 313 deaths in the previous 12 months.

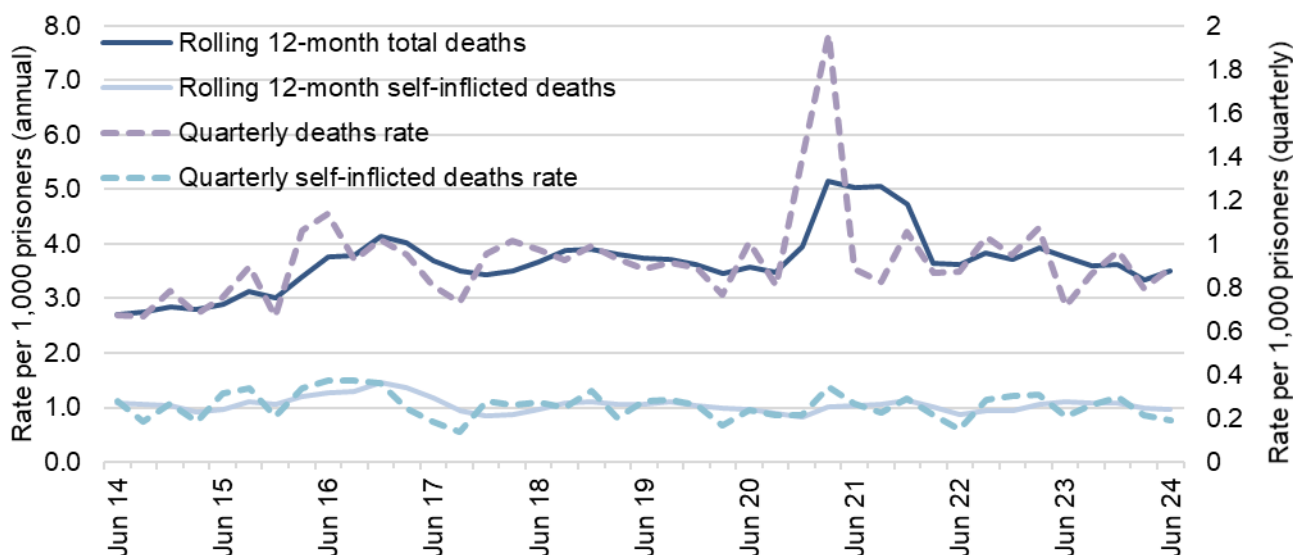
In the most recent quarter there were 78 deaths, an 11% **increase** from 70 deaths in the previous quarter.

Number of self-inflicted deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to June 2024, there were 85 self-inflicted deaths, a **decrease** of 8% from 92 in the previous 12 months.

There were 17 self-inflicted deaths in the most recent quarter, an 11% **decrease** from 19 in the previous quarter.

Figure 1: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of deaths per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending June 2014 to 12 months ending June 2024, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to June 2024, there were 308 deaths in prison custody (a rate of 3.5 per 1,000 prisoners), a 2% decrease from 313 deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 3.8 per 1,000 prisoners). Long-term trends and more detail are presented in the annual tables⁷.

Over the same period, there were 176 deaths due to natural causes (a rate of 2.0 per 1,000 prisoners), a 10% decrease from 195 deaths (a rate of 2.3 per 1,000 prisoners) in the previous 12 months.

There were 85 apparent self-inflicted deaths in the 12 months to June 2024 (a rate of 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease of 8% from 92 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 1.1 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to June 2018.

There were 47 deaths recorded as 'Other' in the 12 months to June 2024, 43 of which are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified. In some cases, the results of the toxicology

⁷ Data on deaths are published three months ahead of assaults and self-harm, therefore, the annual publication Deaths in prison custody for 1978 to 2023 is published in the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September 2023

and post-mortem tests are inconclusive, meaning classification cannot be arrived at until Coroner's inquest takes place (which can be a considerable time after the death). As a result, the number and rate of deaths in the individual categories are not directly comparable with earlier years: it is likely that numbers in some categories will be revised upwards once classifications have been finalised.

In the most recent quarter there were 78 deaths, an 11% increase from 70 deaths in the previous quarter. There were 17 self-inflicted deaths in the latest quarter, an 11% decrease from 19 in the previous quarter. However, quarterly death figures should be considered with caution due to greater volatility and the potential for seasonal effects⁸.

⁸ Seasonal effects refer to variation in timeseries data that occur at regular intervals (typically intervals shorter than a year e.g. monthly or quarterly).

2 Self-harm: 12 months to March 2024

The rate of self-harm incidents increased in the male and decreased in the female estate from the previous 12-month period

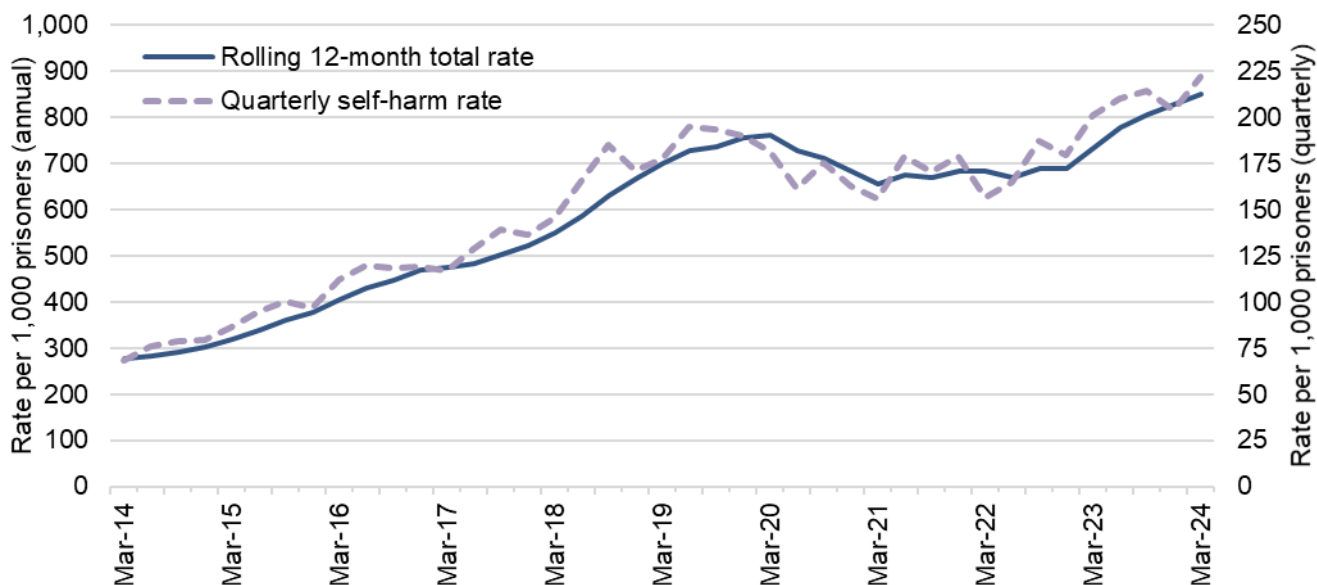
There were 73,804 self-harm incidents in the 12 months to March 2024, a 24% **increase** from the previous 12 months (a 32% **increase** in male establishments and a 5% **increase** in female establishments). Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **increased** by 25% in male establishments and **decreased** by 4% in female establishments.

In the most recent quarter, there were 19,418 self-harm incidents, **up** 8% on the previous quarter (a 1% **increase** in male establishments and a 30% **increase** in female establishments). Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **increased** 2% in the male and 29% in the female establishments.

The number of individuals who self-harmed increased 19% in the latest year.

There were 13,348 individuals who self-harmed in the 12 months to March 2024, a 19% **increase** from 11,223 in the previous 12 months. The number of self-harm incidents per individual **increased** from 5.3 in the 12 months to March 2023 to 5.5 in the 12 months to March 2024.

Figure 2: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending March 2014 to 12 months ending March 2024, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 73,804 reported incidents of self-harm (a rate of 852 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 24% from 59,720 in the previous 12 months. The rate of incidents in the latest 12 months increased 16% from the previous 12 months, and both the number and rate of self-harm incidents are now at their highest level in the time series⁹.

On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to March 2024 increased by 8% from the previous quarter, rising from 17,918 to 19,418 incidents. Additionally, the rate of incidents of self-harm in the three months to March 2024 increased by 9% from the previous

⁹ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

quarter, rising from 204 to 222 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. Both the number and rate of self-harm incidents reached a new peak in the latest quarter.

The number of individuals who self-harmed increased by 19% to 13,348 in the latest 12 months (a rate of 154 individuals per 1,000 prisoners), from 11,223 in the previous 12 months, the highest number of individuals within the time series. The rate, or proportion, of prisoners self-harming in the latest 12 months was 12% higher than in the previous 12 months. The number of incidents per self-harming individual in the latest 12 months peaked at 5.5, an increase from 5.3 in the previous year. A small number of individuals who prolifically self-harm have a disproportionate impact on this figure: just over a half (53%) of prisoners who self-harmed in the recent 12 months did so more than once.

The number of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance¹⁰ increased by 24% to 3,444 in the 12 months to March 2024 but decreased by 3% in the latest quarter to 828 incidents. The proportion of incidents that required hospital attendance has increased by 0.1 percentage points to 4.7% in the 12 months to March 2024.

Self-harm levels differ considerably by gender. Although the number of incidents in the female estate is smaller than in the male estate, the rate of self-harm per 1,000 prisoners is much higher. In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 54,152 incidents in the male estate compared with 19,652 in the female estate, representing a 32% increase in male establishments and a 5% increase in female establishments compared to the previous year. However, the rate of self-harm in the female estate (5,577 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) was more than eight times higher than in the male estate (652 incidents per 1,000 prisoners), following a 25% increase in male establishments and a 4% decrease in female establishments¹¹. The number of incidents and rate of self-harm in the male estate, and the number of incidents in the female estate are now at the highest level in the time series.

On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to March 2024 increased by 1% in male establishments and increased by 30% in female establishments compared with the previous three months. The number of incidents peaked in female establishments in the latest quarter, leading to an increase for the latest year as a whole despite decreases in the number of incidents in female establishments in each of the previous three quarters. The rate increased by 2% in the male and 29% in the female establishments over the same period.

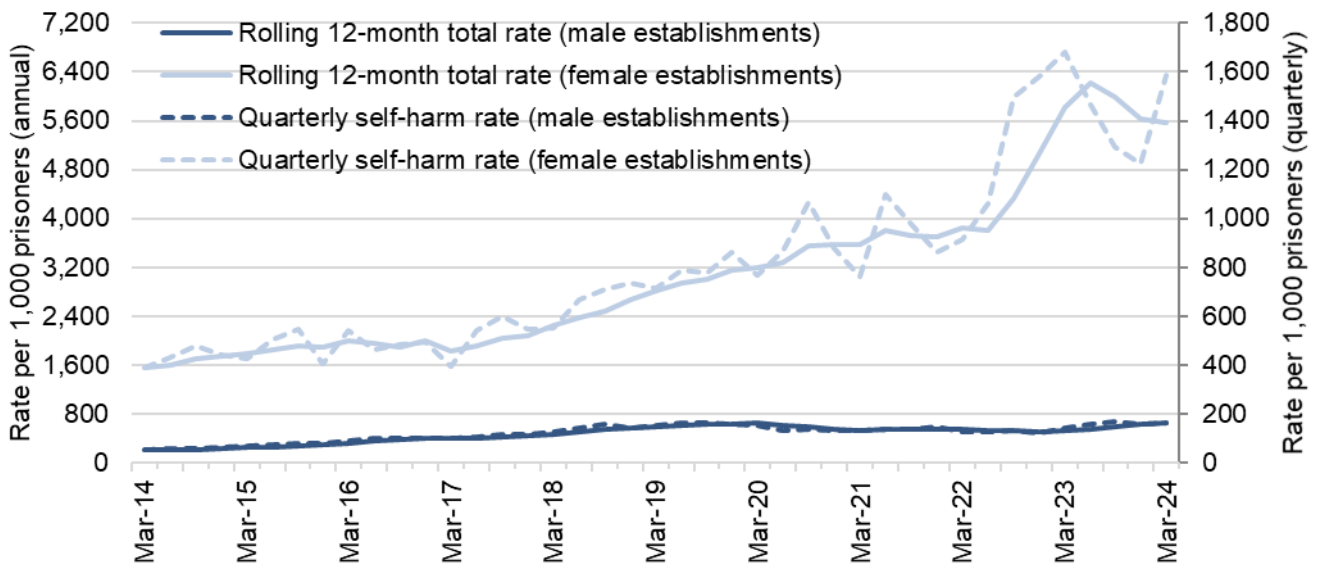
The number of incidents per individual who self-harmed in female establishments was over three times that in male establishments. In the 12 months to March 2024 there was 16.4 incidents of self-harm per self-harming female, a decrease from 17.0 in the previous 12 months, compared with 4.5 incidents per self-harming male, an increase from 4.0 in the previous 12 months.

The proportion of females self-harming in the latest 12 months was 341 individuals per 1,000 prisoners, a slight decrease from 342 individuals per 1,000 prisoners in the previous 12 months. The decrease in the rate of self-harm in the female estate is driven mainly by a decrease in incidents per self-harming individual (4% decrease to 16.4 incidents per individual), plus this small decrease in the proportion of females self-harming. The increase in the rate of self-harm in the male estate is driven by an increase in both the proportion of males self-harming (13% increase to 146 individuals per 1,000 prisoners), and the number of self-harm incidents per individual (10% increase to 4.5 incidents per individual).

¹⁰ An incident of self-harm requiring hospitalisation does not only reflect the seriousness of the incident. This also depends on the healthcare facilities at the establishment, which vary across the estate.

¹¹ The average female population increased 9% between the 12 months to March 2023 and the 12 months to March 2024, which meant that despite an increase in the number of self-harm incidents in female establishments (a 5% increase in the 12 months to March 2024), the rate per 1,000 prisoners decreased (a 4% decrease) in the same time period.

Figure 3: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners by gender of establishment, 12 months ending March 2014 to 12 months ending March 2024



Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance increased in male establishments by 23%, to 3,050 in the 12 months to March 2024, but the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance decreased from 6.0% in the previous 12 months to 5.6% in the latest 12 months. In the female estate 394 self-harm incidents required hospital attendance, a 30% increase from 302 incidents the previous year. The proportion of incidents in the female estate requiring hospital attendance was 2.0% in the 12 months to March 2024, up from 1.6% in the previous 12 months.

As Figure 3 shows, over the last decade there has been more variation in the quarterly rate of self-harm in the female estate than in the male estate. This may in part reflect the impact of the small number of individuals who engage in prolific self-harming being greater in the female estate. Fluctuations in the quarterly rates of self-harm in the female estate have been wider since the start of the pandemic.

3 Assaults: 12 months to March 2024

Assaults and serious assaults increased from the previous 12-month period.

In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 28,292 assault incidents, a 27% **increase** from the previous 12 months. Of these, 3,215 were serious assaults, **up 25%**. Rates of assault **increased** by 19% to 327 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, and serious assault **increased** by 18% to 37 in the latest 12 months.

Assaults **increased** by 4% in the latest quarter to 7,367 incidents while the number of serious assaults **increased** by 2% to 835 incidents.

The rate of assault per 1,000 prisoners remained higher in female than male establishments.

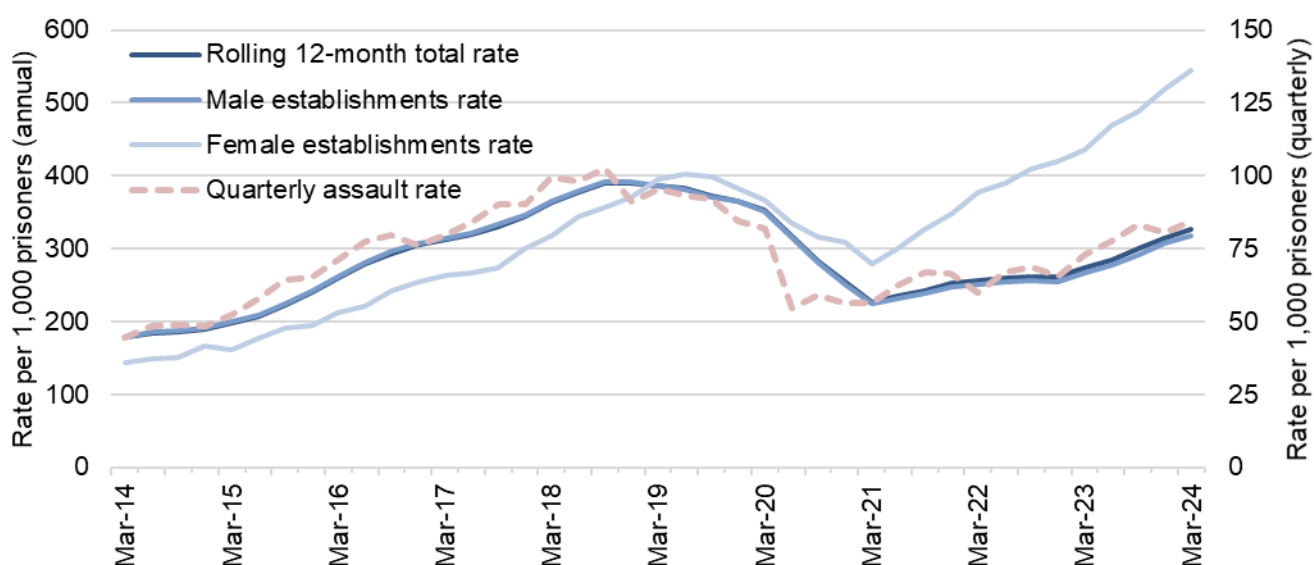
The rate of assault in male establishments **increased** by 19% from the previous 12 months, while the rate in female establishments **increased** by 25%. Assault rates for the 12 months to March 2024 remained higher in female establishments (544 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) than in male establishments (317 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). Both the number of incidents and the rate reached a new peak in female establishments in the latest 12 months.

Assaults on staff increased from the previous 12-month period.

There were 9,847 assaults on staff in the 12 months to March 2024, a 32% **increase** from the previous 12 months, and a new peak. In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff **increased** by 3% to 2,602 incidents.

In the latest 12 months, the rate of assaults on staff per 1,000 prisoners **increased** by 24% to 114 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. During this period, the rate in male establishments **increased** by 22% to 106 assaults per 1,000 prisoners and **increased** by 42% to a new peak of 286 assaults per 1,000 prisoners in female establishments.

Figure 4: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total assaults by gender of establishment, 12 months ending March 2014 to 12 months ending March 2024, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to March 2024, assault incidents increased by 27% to 28,292 (a rate of 327 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of assaults in the latest 12 months was 19% higher than in the previous 12 months. The number and rate of assault incidents still remain lower than pre-

pandemic levels, with the rate of assault incidents in the latest year being 8% lower than the rate of assaults in the 12 months to March 2020.

In the latest quarter there were 7,367 assaults, up 4% from the previous quarter. The number of assaults and the quarterly rate remain lower than their peak in the July to September 2018 quarter.

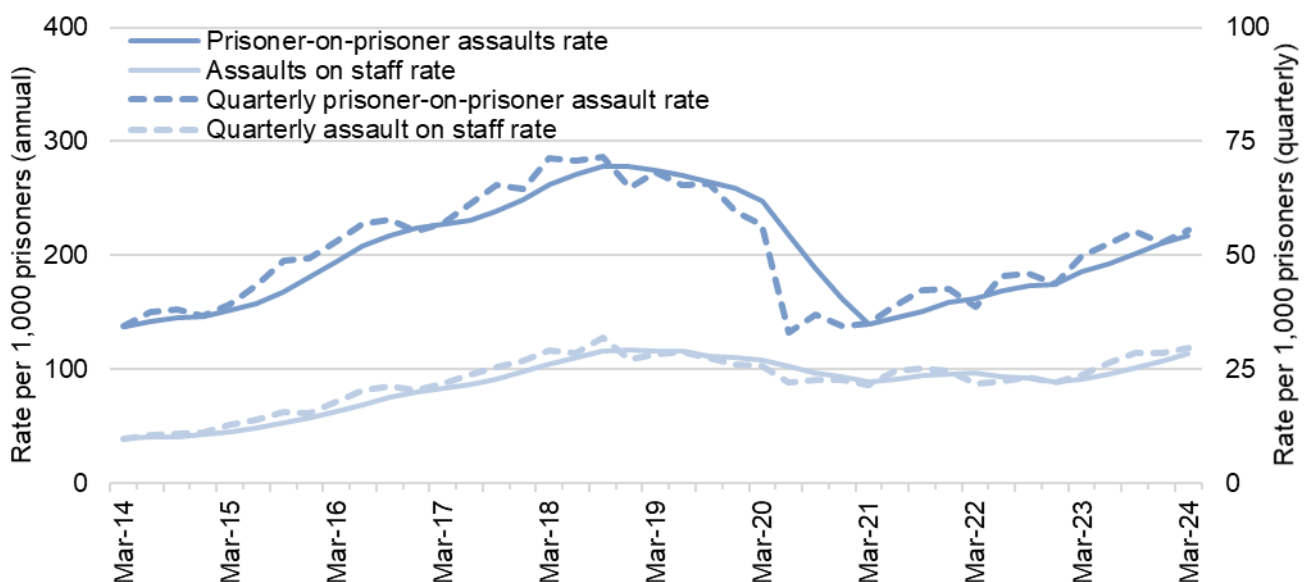
The number of incidents in male establishments increased by 26% to 26,375 in the 12 months to March 2024 (a rate of 317 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of assaults in male establishments in the latest 12 months was 19% higher than in the previous 12 months.

The number of incidents in female establishments increased by 36% to 1,917 incidents in the 12 months to March 2024 (a rate of 544 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of assaults in female establishments in the latest 12 months was 25% higher than in the previous 12 months. The rate and number of incidents in the female estate are now at their highest level in the time series¹², while remaining lower than pre-pandemic in male establishments.

Assault rates have been higher in female establishments than in male establishments since the 12 months to March 2019, with the difference extending each year, after previously being higher in male establishments.

In the latest quarter, the number of assaults in male establishments increased by 4% to 6,870 incidents, and the number of assaults in female establishments decreased by 3% to 497. During this period the rate of assaults increased by 5% to 84 assaults per 1,000 prisoners, comprising a 5% increase in male establishments (to 82 assaults per 1,000 prisoners) and 3% decrease in female establishments (to 137 assaults per 1,000 prisoners).

Figure 5: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, 12 months ending March 2014 to 12 months ending March 2024, with quarterly rates



There were 18,788 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults¹³ in the 12 months to March 2024 (a rate of 217 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 24% from the 15,099 assaults in the previous 12 months. The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 17% higher than in the

¹² The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

¹³ This figure includes any prisoner-on-prisoner assaults where there may also have been an assault on staff.

previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 4,863 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, a 4% increase from 4,655 in the previous quarter.

There was a new peak of 9,847 assaults on staff¹⁴ in the 12 months to March 2024 (a rate of 114 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 32% from the 7,461 assaults in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults on staff in the latest 12 months was 24% higher than in the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 2,602 assaults on staff, an increase of 3% from 2,518 incidents in the previous quarter.

The proportion of assaults on staff¹⁵ increased to 35% of all incidents in the 12 months to March 2024. In the 12 months to March 2024, the proportion of assaults that were on staff remained higher in female establishments (53%) than in male establishments (34%).

In male establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 25% to 17,861 incidents (215 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2024, and the rate increased by 17%. Assaults on staff increased 30% to 8,838 incidents, and the rate increased by 22% to 106 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners.

In female establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 22% to 927 incidents (263 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2024, and the rate increased by 12%. Assaults on staff increased by 55% to 1,009 incidents (286 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2024, and the rate increased by 42%. In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate and number of both prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff in female establishments reached a new peak, with the increase in assaults on staff being much larger.

¹⁴ There was a change in how staff assaults have been recorded from April 2017, this has simplified how incidents involving staff are identified, however it is possible this has increased the recording of incidents. Please see the Guide to Safety in Custody statistics for further information

¹⁵ Some assault incidents may be recorded as both a prisoner-on-prisoner assault and an assault on staff, so the sum of the two categories may exceed the total number of assaults

Serious assaults

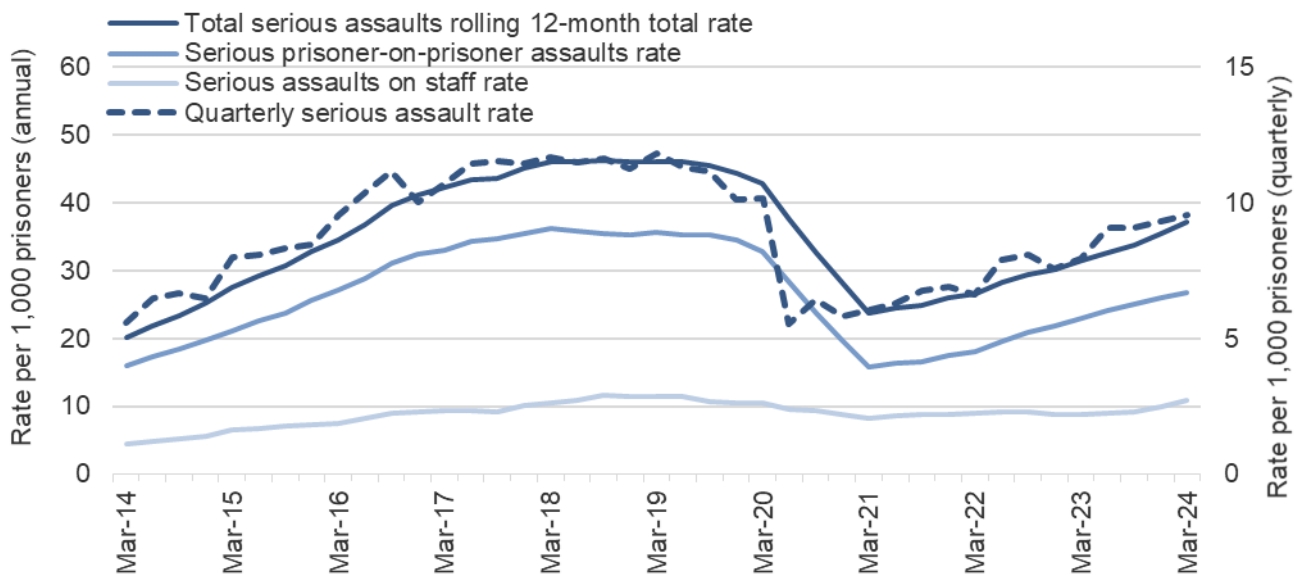
Of the 28,292 assault incidents, 3,215 (11%) were serious.

In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 3,215 serious assault incidents, a 25% **increase** from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults **increased** by 18% over the period.

Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **increased** by 24% to 2,320, and serious assaults on staff **increased** by 32% to 947 in the 12 months to March 2024.

Serious assaults are those which fall into one or more of the following categories: a sexual assault; requires detention in outside hospital as an in-patient; requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries; or incurs any of the following injuries: a fracture, scald or burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites, temporary or permanent blindness.

Figure 6: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total serious assaults, serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending March 2014 to 12 months ending March 2024



In the latest 12 months, 11% of assaults were serious assaults. This is unchanged from 11% in the previous 12 months to March 2023 and has remained broadly consistent throughout the time series. The proportion of all assaults that were serious remained higher in male establishments (12%) than in female establishments (7%).

In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 3,215 serious assaults (a rate of 37 per 1,000 prisoners), a 25% increase from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults in the latest 12 months was 18% higher than in the previous 12 months. Both the number and rate of serious assaults peaked in the latest 12 months in female establishments, and the rate was higher in female establishments than male establishments for the first time. In the latest quarter, there were 835 serious assaults, a 2% increase from the previous quarter.

There were 2,320 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (a rate of 27 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2024, a 24% increase from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 16% higher than in the previous 12

months. In the latest quarter, there were 584 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, the same as the previous quarter.

In the 12 months to March 2024, the rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults remains higher in the male estate (a rate of 27 per 1,000 prisoners) compared to the female estate (22 per 1,000 prisoners, the highest in the series). However, this is the closest they have been in the time series¹⁶ and represents an increase on the previous 12 months of 15% in the male estate and 43% in the female estate.

There were 947 serious assaults on staff (a rate of 11 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2024, a 32% increase from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults on staff was 24% higher than in the previous 12 months, and the rate increased by more in female establishments (a 46% increase, to a peak of 17 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) than in male establishments (an 23% increase, to 11 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). In the latest quarter, the number of serious assaults on staff increased by 9% to 267 incidents.

¹⁶ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

Further Information



Accredited official statistics status

National Statistics are [accredited official statistics](#)¹⁷ that meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's (UKSA) regulatory arm. The UKSA considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in March 2013. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled 'accredited official statistics'.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the UKSA promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Future publications

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content.

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data are collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to sentencing trends and background on the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter, and annual tables up to the latest calendar year.
- Underlying data files with pivot tables, giving lower level granularity.

¹⁷ Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

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