

**For immediate release 5 October 2007**

## **INQUEST BEGINS INTO THE DEATH OF 25 YEAR OLD MAN AT HMP BLAKENHURST**

**10.00 am Tuesday 9 October**

**At the Coroners Court, Bewdley Road, Stourport, Worcester, DY13 8XE  
sitting before HM Coroner for Worcestershire Geraint Williams**

The inquest into the death of 25 year old Martin Green will begin on Tuesday 9 October 2007, nearly five and a half years after his death. The hearing is scheduled to last four weeks.

Martin Green was found dead in his cell in the healthcare centre at HMP Blakenhurst on 15 July 2002. The cause of death was dehydration and electrolyte imbalance, as a consequence of repeated vomiting. He was also found to have two duodenal ulcers. Martin, who was 6ft 2in (188cm), weighed just 6st 10lbs (43kg) at the time of his death.

Martin was serving a one year sentence for driving offences and had arrived at the prison eleven days earlier on 4 July 2002. At induction he advised staff he was a methadone user and confirmed that he would like to be placed on a detoxification programme. It soon became apparent that Martin, who had a history of stomach problems, was not coping with the detoxification programme. On 8 July 2002 he was seen three times by healthcare staff to whom he complained of stomach pains and stated he had not eaten for six days.

Over the following days Martin's condition continued to deteriorate and he was seen repeatedly by prison and health care staff who noted his severe and continuous vomiting, dramatic weight loss and lack of energy. On more than one occasion Martin requested to be taken to hospital. On 14 July a doctor was sufficiently concerned that he arranged for Martin to be taken to an outside hospital for intravenous fluid treatment. This proposed transfer did not happen and Martin was found dead in his cell on the morning of 15th July 2002.

Following an investigation into the circumstances of Martin's death the case was referred to the Crown Prosecution Service in January 2003 who decided in December 2005 that no one at the prison should face criminal charges relating to Martin's death.

His family believe his death was unnecessary and avoidable and hope that the inquest will look carefully at the standard of care provided to him whilst in prison, how his illness was managed and treated and in particular why he was not given intravenous fluids. They also hope the inquest will examine whether the staff at the prison should have transferred him to hospital for appropriate treatment and why the proposed transfer to hospital on 14 July was blocked.

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Pamela Green, Martin's mother commented:

*“The five and a half years since Martin's death have been a terrible ordeal for all the family. We have many questions about what happened to Martin which we hope will be answered at the inquest. However, we will never be able to understand how those with the responsibility to care for Martin could have allowed him to die.”*

Deborah Coles, co-director of INQUEST said:

*“The lack of timely public scrutiny of the shocking circumstances of Martin Green's death undermines the preventative potential of the whole inquest process. The opportunity for identifying what went wrong and learning lessons to prevent future deaths is lost. The shocking circumstances of this death raise very serious questions about the quality of medical care afforded prisoners in the custody and care of the state.”*

Martin Green's mother is being represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members Nighat Sahi of Christian Khan Solicitors and barrister Colin Hutchinson of Garden Court Chambers.

#### Notes to Editors

INQUEST is the only non-governmental organisation in England and Wales that works directly with the families of those who die in custody. It provides an independent free legal and advice service to bereaved people on inquest procedures and their rights in the coroner's courts.

Further Information	<a href="http://www.inquest.org.uk">www.inquest.org.uk</a>
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