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WATERSIDE MEDICAL CENTRE

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RECEIVED
27 JUN 2014
BY H.M CORONER



Our ref: CB/mlo

23rd June 2014

Mr David Horsley
Senior Coroner for Portsmouth and SE Hants
Coroner's Office Room T20
The Guildhall
Guildhall Square
PORTSMOUTH
PO1 2AB

Dear Mr Horsley

**Re: Miss Courtney Mills, DoB 12/06/2002
42 Forton Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 4TH**

We received your letter on 13.5.2014 regarding a Regulation 28 Report on Courtney Jordan Mills.

An inquest had been held on 24.3.2014 into the death of Courtney Mills and I believe that copies of computer records of Courtney's GP notes were sent to you on 28.10.2013.

Courtney's registered GP was [REDACTED] who attended the inquest and at that time provided information about matters of concern listed on Section 5 of Regulation 28. [REDACTED] has now left the Practice and is currently having a year of adoption leave.

My involvement was as follows:

Friday 15th March 2013: I received a telephone call from the pharmacist regarding a prescription for Clonidine tablets which had been issued two days earlier by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] notes from the 13th March when she was doing that prescription state, "Medication requested. New meds from hospital so script done".

I assume from this that [REDACTED] had done the prescription based on the hospital's recommendation although I cannot find a hospital discharge letter from that time in Courtney's notes.

The pharmacist was querying the prescription as Courtney had been on Clonidine liquid in hospital and mum had told her that Courtney could not swallow Clonidine tablets. The pharmacist was concerned as she was unable to get Clonidine liquid immediately as it is available only as a special order and would take five days or so to arrive.

Courtney had completely run out of her Clonidine liquid and it was Friday afternoon, so the options were very limited.

I rang the paediatrician on call at Southampton General Hospital, as [REDACTED] had come into the surgery late on Friday afternoon to try and resolve this. The paediatrician on call discussed Courtney with Courtney's consultant at Southampton General and they decided that it was not ideal to crush the tablets, and they suggested instead increasing her Chloral Hydrate solution instead of having the Clonidine.

They were due to see Courtney on the following Monday so they planned to give Clonidine liquid from the hospital pharmacy at that appointment. They also suggested that [REDACTED] could go across to Southampton to get a new supply from them straightaway but she was unable to get to Southampton to do this.

I was next involved on the 12th April 2013 – also a Friday. [REDACTED] had come to the surgery that afternoon, again needing a prescription of Clonidine solution. Mum said that she had a new discharge letter from Southampton Hospital which she had not yet dropped into the surgery but she said that it instructed that Courtney should take an increased dose of Clonidine solution.

At that point [REDACTED] told me that they had enough Clonidine solution to last for another week and when we contacted the pharmacy they again said that it would take at least a week to get this medication. At that time mum said she would ask at the hospital appointment at the end of the month whether any sort of patches could be used instead of Clonidine solution. I supplied a handwritten prescription for a thirty days supply of Clonidine oral solution. This product is not available on the computer formulary as it is a special order and has to be specially ordered in by the pharmacy.

Because of the difficulties in obtaining Clonidine solution, [REDACTED] wrote to [REDACTED] the consultant paediatric neurologist in Southampton, on 15.04.2013 to ask for some clarification about the medication, and to explain the difficulties we were having obtaining the medication in the community.

[REDACTED] then spoke to [REDACTED] on the telephone on 18.04.2013 regarding the Clonidine prescription. They discussed the transdermal option but [REDACTED] felt there were medico-legal issues as it was off licence. [REDACTED] felt that it was more appropriate that Southampton carried on supplying the medication and explained the difficulties to [REDACTED] these being that there was a week's delay, minimum, in sourcing Clonidine solution in the community and it was also impossible to issue it via the computer.

[REDACTED] said that she would discuss the matter further with the hospital pharmacy.

I can completely understand how frustrating this has been. It may not have been obvious how much hard work had gone on behind the scenes to try and obtain and find an answer to the problem of getting Clonidine solution. It was always readily available at Southampton hospital pharmacy but was never easily available in the community.

I would respectfully suggest that the delay in obtaining the medication was not due to communication difficulties between ourselves and the hospital. I believe that it was because the medication simply was not available in the community except with a week's notice to the pharmacy.

The GP's at Waterside Surgery have spent some considerable time trying to sort this out with the pharmacies and with Southampton. We have clearly documented in Courtney's notes the many occasions on which this has happened.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]