



Home Office



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Home Secretary

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Alan P Walsh
Area Coroner
Manchester West

By e-mail

6 June 2016

CASE OF JOYCE CARNEY

Thank you for your letter of 8 April, covering your report under Regulation 28 regarding the sad circumstances surrounding the death of Joyce Carney.


The arrest, detention and supervision of individuals by police whilst they are patients in hospital is an operational consideration for the chief officer of each police force. In carrying out their duties, the police should follow the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) - Detention and Custody, which covers risk assessments when a person is detained in non-police custody settings, including hospitals. The College have also produced dedicated APP on risk, which focuses on planning for, and anticipating, risk in a variety of operational contexts.

It is important that the police adhere to Authorised Professional Practice in these circumstances to avoid these sorts of tragedies. It is for this reason that I have asked the Minister for Policing, Fire, Criminal Justice and Victims to write to the National Policing Lead for Custody, Chief Constable [redacted], to raise this matter with Chief Constables across England and Wales. They must be able to satisfy themselves that the relevant procedures, including risk assessments, are in place.

Police officers regularly attend health settings, for a variety of purposes, and you raise the important issue of how they work with NHS organisations to manage any risks in those settings safely. I agree with you that it is important for those agencies to come together to make sure that the right relationships and precautions are in place in their locality. This case highlights the importance of that joint working, and the Minister will also be raising this.

You may be interested to know that the College of Policing is leading a programme of work aiming to set a national framework clarifying the roles and responsibilities of health and policing partners to maintain safety in mental health settings. I understand that a second phase of this work, starting later this year, will broaden the consideration to all health settings. Hopefully this will ensure a consistent approach to managing risk when the police attend any health setting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa May', written in a cursive style.

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP