

Professor Sir Bruce Keogh
National Medical Director
Skipton House
80 London Road
SE1 6LH

Mrs Heidi Connor
Assistant Coroner
Nottingham Coroner's Court
The Council House
Old Market Square
Nottingham
HG1 2DT

26 June 2017

Dear Mrs Connor

Re: Regulation 28 Report DENNETT

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report following the inquest into the sad death of Teresa Dennett. I would like to express my deep sympathy to Ms. Dennett's family.

In your Regulation 28 Report you asked NHS England to consider whether it should change its countrywide policy in relation to neurosurgical emergencies.

Following receipt of the report NHS England has sought assurance from both Specialised Neurosurgical Centres and their referring non-specialised hospitals that the appropriate protocols are in place to ensure patients requiring a life-saving surgical intervention will be referred to the appropriate surgical centre regardless of the availability of a Critical Care Bed. This process has been led by the Midlands and East and North Regional Clinical Directors for Specialised Services as the incident to which this report relates involved hospital trusts from within both regions, although we acknowledge that the Coroner suggested that country-wide changes were to be considered.

Process Undertaken

The Medical Directors of all acute hospital trusts within Midlands & East and North regions were asked to assure NHS England that the appropriate pathways are in place and, if protocols had been agreed between themselves and referring hospitals, to ensure that no critical surgical transfer would be refused on the grounds of availability of a critical care bed. Responses have been received from all Midland & East and North Neuroscience Centres confirming that these protocols are in place and are being adhered to. Where there are currently only informal agreements, we have asked that the appropriate written protocols are agreed and signed off by both the neuroscience centres and referring trusts. This process will be rolled out to London & South regions between September and December 2017.

Individual responses have been sent to yourself from both Nottingham University Hospitals and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust regarding this individual incident with full reviews having been undertaken within both trusts. Both Trusts have revised their current protocols to reflect the Society of British Neurosurgical

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Surgeons guidelines and have been signed off by the Trust Boards. NHS England has had sight of these protocols and note that they are in line with the recommendations from your Regulation 28 report.

NHS England Position Going Forward

NHS England has been working closely with the Neurosciences Clinical Reference Group (CRG), the Adult Critical Care CRG and the Society of British Neurological Surgeons (SBNS).

The following actions have been agreed:

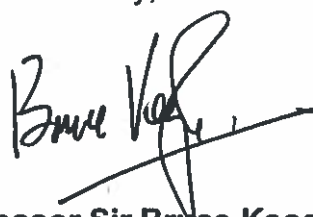
- The Neurosciences CRG are in the process of reviewing the Neurosurgery Service Specification and will require all services to meet the guidelines issued by the SBNS. This review will be complete by 31 March 2018.
- A National Coroners Regulation 28 Working Group has been established within NHS England to review Regulation 28 reports and to disseminate actions raised where considered appropriate.
- The Society of British Neurological Surgeons has re-circulated their guidelines on the transfer of patients requiring emergency treatment, the link to which is below;

http://www.sbns.org.uk/index.php/download_file/view/975/87/

NHS England will continue to monitor the relevant healthcare sector to endeavour to ensure that pathways and protocols are being met.

I do hope the above sets out the actions that were required of NHS England and provide assurance this concern has been addressed with the importance required. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further evidence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Keogh', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Professor Sir Bruce Keogh KBE, MD, DSc, FRCS, FRCP
National Medical Director
NHS England