



Department
of Health

Our reference: PFD-1094055

*From Jackie Doyle-Price MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Care and Mental Health*

*Richmond House
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Mr Andrew Walker Esq.
HM Senior Coroner Northern District of Greater London
North London Coroners Court
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27 September 2017

Dear Mr Walker

Thank you for your letter of 26 June, received by the Department of Health on 8 August about the death of Mr Jonathan Daniel Zucker. I have been asked to respond.

I was very saddened to read of the circumstances surrounding Mr Zucker's death. Please pass my condolences to his family and loved ones. I appreciate this must be a very difficult time for them.

In your Report you raise concerns that there was no requirement or system in place for a lead clinician from either the private or NHS mental health services to oversee and co-ordinate Mr Zucker's care.

You issued your Report to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, as well as the Department, and officials have liaised with the Royal College on this matter of concern.

While it is difficult to comment without further detail on the individual circumstances that have given rise to this area of concern, I can set out the expectations and guidance in place around care planning and continuity of care for patients receiving mental health care.

To ensure a smooth transfer when patients transition through care pathways and settings, including between private and NHS services, we expect clinicians and their teams to follow best practice on communication, accountability and effective co-ordination of care.



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where appropriate. The Royal College of Psychiatrists points to the General Medical Council (GMC) guidance on *Continuity and coordination of care* published in 2013, and the consensus statement on information sharing and suicide prevention published in 2014.

Finally, I am aware that the Royal College of Psychiatrists intends to ask its Professional Practice and Ethics Committee to consider the concerns you have raised, and to determine if more can be done in the areas of consultant accountability, ownership during transitions and care where more than one team is involved. I hope this information is helpful. Thank you for bringing the circumstances of Mr Zucker's death to our attention.



JACKIE DOYLE-PRICE