



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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

Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
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Your reference: 31479
Our reference: PFD 1129071

Mr David Ll. Roberts
HM Senior Coroner, County of Cumbria
The Coroner's Court
Fairfield
Station Street
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 9PT

19 June 2018

Dear Mr Roberts

Thank you for your letter of 16 April to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care about the death of Miss Karen Jane Edgar. I am responding as Minister with portfolio responsibility for mental health and I am grateful for the additional time in which to do so.

I would first like to explain that the commissioning of mental health services in Cumbria is a matter for the local NHS. I note that you have issued your report to local commissioners, the North Cumbria and the Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), as well as the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation trust, and I hope their response will be helpful.

I am advised by local commissioners that they acknowledged that service provision for children and young people with emotional mental health and wellbeing problems needed to be increased, and in the last eighteen months, there has been considerable investment made to services. This has included service improvements for example, to the enhanced crisis service, the development of a community-based eating disorder service, earlier intervention services, preventative work and mental health promotion.

I am further advised that local commissioners acknowledge that there have continued to be delays in referrals for therapy, including family therapy, and that there are challenges with recruiting the specialist workforce, both medical and nursing. The

Cumbria Transformation Plan¹, sets out how the local health system will improve the quality of access and care in mental health services for children and young people, and I understand, continues to be refined according to local need.

Your report makes the point that many of the failings identified in the care and treatment provided to Miss Edgar were resonant in the publication of the Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) inspection report early this year². This is, of course, concerning and we are clear that the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and its commissioners, must take action to ensure the provision of high quality, safe, sustainable care.

I am informed that local commissioners are working with the Trust to develop commissioning intentions for children's and adult mental health services that include the consideration of strategic partnerships with the Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust and the Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust with the aim to deliver more sustainable and robust services.

I am also assured that the CCGs are working to implement an action plan to address the issues raised in your Report.

At a national level, I would like to assure you that improving the quality of access and care in mental health services for children and young people is a key priority for this Government, as set out in *Future in Mind*³, the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health⁴, and, most recently, the Green Paper on transforming children and young people's mental health services⁵. We are committed to ensuring our children and young people, and their families, get the support they need at the right time.

The Government is already making an additional £1.4 billion available, which includes £150 million for eating disorders, to improve mental health services for children and young people with mental health problems.

¹ <http://www.northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/about-us/key-policies-and-documents/policies/cumbria-local-transformation-plan---cyp-ewmh-refresh-180224--final.pdf>

² <http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RNN>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-mental-health-services-for-young-people>

⁴ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>



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The Green Paper includes plans to improve access to services and mental health support in schools including:

- Incentivising every school and college to identify and train a senior designated mental health lead to improve prevention work;
- Creating brand new mental health support teams working directly with schools and colleges; and
- Piloting a new four week waiting time for NHS children and young people's mental health services.

Additional funding of over £300 million will be made available post consultation. The consultation closed on 2 March 2018 and we are currently finalising the response to the consultation, which will be published in due course.

Furthermore, NHS England has developed a major service transformation programme, Children and Young People Improving Access to Psychological Therapies⁶, to significantly reshape the way services for children and young people are commissioned and delivered. This includes, in partnership with Health Education England, the training of existing staff to deliver evidence based interventions.

As part of the programme, services in Cumbria receive outreach service development support from the training provider to embed the principles of collaborative, evidence-based and outcome-focused care across all teams and services delivering care (NHS, local authority and voluntary sector).

In addition, NHS England has invested in the children and young people's Mental Health Improvement Team (MHIT) which consists of one national team and a local team in each clinical network. The MHIT provides local support to individual and groups of CCGs, Sustainability Transformation Programmes and Integrated Children's Systems which support the implementation of national policy into local delivery.

On the matter of funding for mental health services, I would like to point out that spending on mental health has gone up faster than overall NHS funding and is set to continue to rise. Spending on mental health is planned to have increased to a record £11.86 billion in 2017/18.

⁶ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/cyp/iapt/>



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The recently published NHS planning guidance⁷ states that all CCGs must meet the Mental Health Investment Standard (MHIS) which requires all CCGs to increase their mental health expenditure. We have introduced much greater transparency about mental health expenditure. The Mental Health Five Year Forward View Dashboard⁸, available online, provides detailed breakdown on spend, including by individual CCGs, for the past two financial years.

I hope the information I have provided is helpful. Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention.

JACKIE DOYLE-PRICE

⁷ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/refreshing-nhs-plans-for-2018-19/>

⁸ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/taskforce/imp/mh-dashboard/>