



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

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

*39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU*

020 7210 4850

Your Ref: 8339/CLB

PFD-1151095

Ms Alison Patricia Mutch
HM Coroner's Court
1 Mount Tabor Street
Stockport SK1 3AG

19th November 2018

Dee M Mutch

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 September to Matt Hancock about the death of Mrs Sheila Ann Hadfield. I am responding as Minister with portfolio responsibility for mental health.

My officials have made enquiries with NHS England on the matter of concern in your report.

From the information provided, it appears that the main issue is about the availability of appropriately trained and resourced social care services, including care homes with specialist mental health staff and seamless interfaces with secondary mental health services specialising in older people's functional mental health.

NHS England acknowledge that access to mental health expertise within care homes, whether through referrals, staff training or integrated teams, is not always adequate.

Older people in care homes typically have more complex health and social care needs than those living in their own homes, yet access to healthcare, and mental health care in particular, for this group of service users is not always adequate. There is evidence that care home residents can experience problems accessing NHS primary and secondary healthcare services, including GPs.

It is important that care homes ensure they have good links with GPs and referral arrangements in place so that healthcare services can be accessed easily and promptly as and when needed.

Quality Standard QS50, *Mental wellbeing of older people in care homes*¹ published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), recommends that *'older people in care homes have access to the full range of healthcare services when they need them'*, and that care homes ensure they *'...work in partnership with healthcare organisations to implement effective arrangements for access to primary, secondary, specialist and mental health services for older people in care homes'*.

At a national level, NHS England has taken steps to help improve healthcare in care homes through the roll out of 'Enhanced Health in Care Home' Vanguard² as part of the Five Year Forward View's New Models of Care Programme.

Many of the Vanguard sites have included some mental health components in their care models, with several reporting positive results and learnings that other areas could benefit from. For example, in sites that have incorporated mental health expertise into integrated care teams such as the Gateshead Vanguard, team members have highly valued the contribution of their mental health colleagues in improving the support delivered to people with complex and ongoing care needs. This has included support for older people with functional mental health needs such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Building on the experience of the Vanguard sites, the development of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) provides a valuable opportunity to strengthen collaboration between health and social care services in a local footprint, and to help improve the provision of mental health care in care homes. Such arrangements are for local areas to determine, according to the local need and the make-up of local services.

I hope this response is helpful. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.



JACKIE DOYLE-PRICE

¹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs50>

² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/new-care-models/about/care-homes-sites/>