

Ms Briony Ballard
Assistant Coroner
Coroner for Inner South District Greater London
Southwark Coroner's Court
1 Tennis Street
Southwark
SE1 1YD

23rd October 2019

Dear Ms Ballard,

Thank you for the Prevention of Future Deaths Report, touching on the death of Owen Carey, which was received on the 10th October 2019.

The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) is the national, professional and academic society which represents the specialty of allergy at all levels. Its aim is to improve the management of allergies and related diseases of the immune system in the United Kingdom, through education, training and research. The BSACI's core aim is to improve allergy care by developing a range of allergy resources for its members in order to support this, including clinical audits and specialty guidelines and by organising educational meetings. A comprehensive list of UK Allergy clinics and the expertise these provide is also available on the public area of the website. www.bsaci.org The directors of the BSACI share all of the concerns raised in the report and acknowledge that there are significant areas of need around the current shortcomings in both awareness and appropriate safeguards for those who suffer from food and other potentially severe allergies. This is something that the BSACI has a long track record of advocacy around and we have, through the National Allergy Strategy Group, www.nasguk.org been actively lobbying for improvement.

We consider point 1 outside of our remit but fully acknowledge that the issue of staff training at catering establishment is a significant contributor to unnecessary allergic reactions and fully support rigorous measures to address this. Points 2 and 3 relate to the need for better allergen labelling on restaurant menus and again, the BSACI fully supports the need for a review and consultation by the Food Standards Agency to ensure that customers with food allergies are given the information that they need to eat safely. The recent consultation on allergen labelling in relation to food that is prepacked for direct sale has been an excellent example of effective consultation and subsequent positive change.

Point 4 relates to the need for a national registry for the recording and analysis of severe allergic reactions to food. This is another area where we share your concerns. The BSACI is mindful that Shahida Shahid, 18, died in hospital on January 12 2015, three days after collapsing following a visit to Almost Famous Burgers in Manchester city centre. She was known to have a milk allergy and had eaten a burger containing chicken that had been marinated in buttermilk. She has informed the waiter of her food allergies. The ticket (order) that went through to the kitchen contained Shahida's allergies, but these were missed numerous times during the preparation, construction and delivery of the burger. The potential for learnings from this death, to prevent further similar occurrences is clear.

The BSACI believes that there is a need for 2 distinct registries. The first is a national register for all anaphylactic reactions, that can be contributed to by any health care professional and would provide invaluable data on emerging patterns of reactions and their circumstances and effectively operate as an

early warning signal for new risks and highlight specific situations where risk is higher so that they can be actively mitigated. Such a registry already exists in Europe and the Food Standards Agency has recently issued a tender for a UK centre to operate a UK register for anaphylaxis, which will also feed into the wider European platform already in operation. The BSACI, in partnership with Imperial College, have responded to this call and have received provisional approval.

The other critical need is for a fatal anaphylaxis register where all fatal allergic reactions are subject to a detailed root cause analysis to ensure maximal learnings from every such event, which can then be published regularly to ensure all relevant agencies have access to high quality information. Longitudinal analyses of these events will provide further information about the key risk factors for severe reactions. Such a registry, the UK Fatal Anaphylaxis Registry (UKFAR), has been in existence since 1992 in Manchester at the University of Manchester. It was initially set up and run by [REDACTED] on a voluntary basis with valuable academic outputs. Following his retirement, permissions were renewed to retain the data and continue acquisition of data for this registry but with no sustainable funding, the registry has not been kept up to date and has a significant backlog of cases. As a consequence, earlier this year, the current allergy team in at Manchester University hospitals (who are the custodians of the data) entered into conversations with the BSACI to explore the possibility of closer working in order to find a solution to the sustainability of the UKFAR. Following from this, BSACI council made a commitment to explore this further including consideration of a workable operating model and assistance in raising adequate funding, thought to be around £120,000 annually. Whilst funding streams could include charitable donations or industry support, these carry significant risk and the involvement of industry may be perceived to taint the integrity of the outputs. The BSACI believe that the appropriate funding solution would be for the Foods Standards Agency to support the UKFAR, as part of their responsibility to safeguarding the public. This would ensure sustainability and also aid engagement with the coronary system, which UKFAR relies on to provide details of all cases of suspected fatal anaphylaxis. The BSACI directors will be writing to the chair of the FSA to raise this issue, which had been previously highlighted but not led to any offer of funding.

Please feel free to let us know if you would like any further information. We very much appreciate your efforts in highlighting the concerns we all share in this area.

Yours Sincerely,



[REDACTED]
President, BSACI