

20 NOV 2019 SK



**Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group  
Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group**

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18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

FAO: Ms Joanne Kearsley, Senior Coroner  
Manchester North Coroner Area  
Coroners Service, Phoenix Centre  
L/Cpl Stephen Shaw MC Way  
Heywood  
Greater Manchester  
OL10 1LR

Dear Ms Kearsley,

**Re: Response to Regulation 28 report in relation to William Oliver**

We are responding to the matters of concern raised following the death of William Oliver at his home address of 42 Earles Lodge, Albert Street, Failsworth, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The Ambulance Commissioning Team, hosted at Blackpool CCG, is responsible for commissioning North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) on behalf of the 31 North West CCGs.

**Coroners Concerns:**

1. Meal Break Policy and Shift Rostering

During the course of the Inquest the Court heard evidence as to the demand experienced by NWAS during the night of 31<sup>st</sup> October-1<sup>st</sup> November. One of the reasons for difficulties in allocating resources was directly attributed to the meal break policy. In short, the issue being that each crew has to take a 30 minutes meal break within their meal break window. This has been highlighted in other serious incident investigations. In this case there was a significant reduction in the number of vehicles able to be allocated during the time Mr Oliver had contacted NWAS. The court heard that this policy has been under review, but that no changes had yet been implemented.

Ambulance Commissioning Team, Blackpool CCG response:

As part of the NHS Standard Contract 2019/20 Service Development Improvement Plan Blackpool CCG has emphasised the importance of a Roster Review and have included the Roster Review in commissioner requirements to support and gain assurance from NWAS in its implementation. The roster review will use detailed demand profiling data to align the entire workforce to meet the expected service demand and will be reviewed on an annual basis. As part of these changes the meal break policy will be reviewed to ensure that it does not compromise the effectiveness of this workforce profiling. Implementation in Greater Manchester is planned for January 2020.

## 2. Times at Greater Manchester Hospitals

Another contributing factor to the decreased availability of ambulances on the 31<sup>st</sup> October-1<sup>st</sup> November was the turnaround times at hospitals in the Greater Manchester area. Whilst hospitals were busy the turnaround times at Manchester Royal Infirmary, North Manchester General, Royal Oldham, Salford Royal and Stepping Hill Hospitals were all particularly higher than anticipated with numerous ambulances delayed for over an hour.

Ambulance Commissioning Team, Blackpool CCG response:

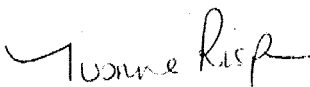
Recognising that handover and turnaround performance is a whole system responsibility there has been significant system-wide focus on improvement. It formed part of the NWAS Performance Improvement Plan and in 2018 the North West Handover Stakeholder Engagement group was established.

A collaborative programme called 'Every Minute Matters', was undertaken over winter 2018/19 with six identified hospital sites to deliver sustained 30 minute performance for handover (the national target). The sites were chosen because they had challenged performance and collectively represented a significant proportion of ambulance arrivals due to their size, so improvements at these sites would have a disproportionate impact on the whole North West. The programme's aim was to reduce hospital handover times by using improvement methodology. All hospitals participated in learning workshops and undertook rapid tests of change. All six sites focused on understanding their processes and data and using measurement to drive improvement. The collaborative approach has fostered sharing of good practice but also friendly competition between the sites, with reduction in handover times being achieved. One Greater Manchester Hospital was included in this cohort. A further eight hospitals have started this programme at the end of October 2019 including two further Greater Manchester hospitals. The intention is for this programme to be implemented at all North West Emergency Departments, including Greater Manchester hospitals, to improve handover times and therefore increase the availability of ambulances to respond.

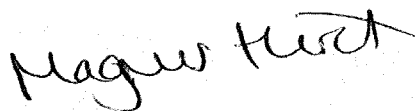
The stakeholder group has recently been superseded by a North West Handover Improvement Board, co-chaired by the NHSEI Director of Improvement and the NWAS Chief Executive. This Board will provide leadership and direction to system wide handover improvement work, particularly within A&E Delivery Boards.

We would like to thank you for drawing attention to these important matters and providing further impetus for system-level change that will reduce the future risk to patients. We hope that our response has provided sufficient assurance that these themes had been identified and that a programme of work is in place to address them. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Yvonne Rispin  
Director of Ambulance Commissioning



Magnus Hird  
Regional Clinical Lead