

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
National  
Medical Director

Ms Alison Mutch  
HM Senior Coroner, Manchester South  
Coroner's Court  
1 Mount Tabor Street  
Stockport  
SK1 3AG

Skipton House  
80  
London Road  
  
SE1 6LH

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

[REDACTED]  
  
Dear Ms Mutch,

**Re: Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths – Alfred David Jones**

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report (hereafter “report”) dated 30 April 2021 concerning the death of Alfred David Jones on 7 September 2020. Firstly, I would like to express my deep condolences to Mr Jones’s family.

The report concludes Mr Jones’s death was a result of bronchopneumonia in combination with Covid-19 contributed to by falls with vertebral fractures, Type 2 diabetes mellitus, pulmonary fibrosis, heart failure and epilepsy.

Following the inquest you raised concerns in your report that there is a shortage of MRI scanners both in the Trust and the wider NHS. This was compounded by a shortage of radiology staff which the inquest was told is part of a wider issue of a national shortage of qualified radiologists and radiographers. This led to a prolonged admission in hospital whilst awaiting tests and led to him having a fall whilst on the ward and contracting Covid-19 whilst an inpatient.

I am not aware of the precise details of the events prior to Mr Jones’s death, although I can comment that generally, if access to MRI services is experiencing challenges, alternate imaging such as CT scanning can often have an important role in diagnosis and timely condition management. This is particularly applicable for vertebral fractures and may have adequately answered the diagnostic question more rapidly. This alternate imaging option is often required for patients who for example suffer from claustrophobia or have cardiac pacemakers.

From a National perspective, in supporting the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan, NHS England & Improvement (NHSE&I) commissioned an independent review of diagnostic services. The recently published report (October 2020), [Diagnostics: Recovery and Renewal](#) conducted by [REDACTED] also took into account the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The recommendations have been accepted by NHSE&I and work has already begun to address the

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recommendations made, which include an increase in both imaging equipment and imaging workforce in England.

Funding within the 2021/22 spending review has been targeted to support diagnostics via the development of community diagnostic hubs which will in turn augment access for inpatient activity in acute hospital services through the movement of elective activity to community settings. It is anticipated that MRI, CT scanning, Ultrasound and X-ray services will be the core imaging offer for these new centres and will represent new additional imaging capacity.

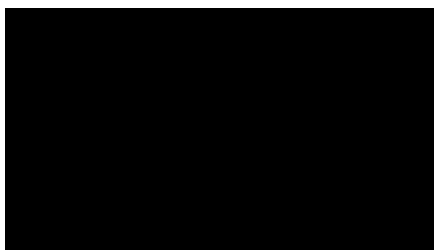
There is also a recommendation regarding a major expansion of the imaging workforce which is now being developed in tandem with Health Education England (HEE) to augment training numbers for radiographers and radiologists, deliver new Imaging Training Academies and pump prime innovative technologies to deliver more productive and safer imaging services.

The [National Imaging Strategy](#) published in November 2019 also sets out the case for the development of Imaging Networks across England and work is now well underway to establish these new operating models to support increased service resilience, quality of care and improved patient access.

Through these measures NHSE&I are supporting the transformation of imaging services for the longer term and in recognition of the vital role diagnostics has in supporting clinical services for patients.

Thank you for bringing this important patient safety issue to my attention and please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,



**National Medical Director  
NHS England and NHS Improvement**

