

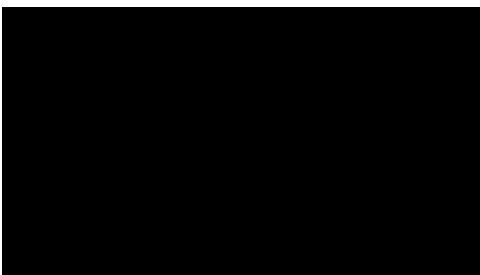
The main area of concern that you raised within the Preventing Future Deaths report relates to the alarm sound and whether there should be a different sound for 'serious matters'. This will require a change in the design of the associated medical devices which would fall into the remit of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

The national patient safety team have worked with two national professional organisations on general safety concerns relating to non-invasive ventilation/CPAP.

- The national patient safety team worked closely with the British Thoracic Society during the development of their recently published guidance on Respiratory Support Units to ensure that several key safety issues were addressed in the guidance. This included recommendations that 'local protocols should be in place to detect disconnection from CPAP and NIV and will include disconnection alarms on machines and defining the protocols for the frequency of nursing review especially for patient nursed in side rooms' and 'all machines should, at a minimum, have a disconnection alarm ... where patients are nursed in side rooms, the alarm should be audible from outside the room.' The BTS guidance also includes a checklist which provides an additional safety intervention and includes checking alarms and that the device is actually attached to oxygen.
- The national patient safety team continues to work with the Faculty for Intensive Care Medicine to develop guidance on the setting up of breathing circuits and we will engage with them to include guidance on disconnection alarms to ensure staff are aware of what each alarm may be indicating and the relative urgency to respond to an alarm.

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 & NHS Improvement and
Interim Chief Executive,
NHS Improvement