

Interim Chief Executive, NHSI,
National Medical Director
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Alison Mutch,
Senior Coroner for the Area of Greater
Manchester South
1 Mount Tabor Street
Stockport
SK1 3AG

26 October 2021

By email to: coroners.office@stockport.gov.uk

Dear Ms Alison Mutch,

Re: Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths –Roger Phelps, 6th September 2021

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report dated 6th September 2021, regarding the death of Roger Phelps on 4th November 2020. Firstly, I would like to express my deep condolences to Roger Phelps's family.

The regulation 28 report concludes Roger Phelps's death was a result of:

1a Sepsis

1b Endocarditis and Covid-19 infection II Congestive cardiac failure, hypertension, type 2 diabetes mellitus, aortic stenosis with left ventricular hypertrophy

Following the inquest you raised concerns in your Regulation 28 Report to NHS England regarding:

The inquest heard that whilst the trust were following PHE/NHS guidance in relation to regularity of swabbing of inpatients it was regularly taking in excess of 48 hours for swab results to be returned to the trust. The impact of the delay was that infectious asymptomatic patients were remaining on non Covid wards for some days and spreading infection to other patients.

The trust where Mr Phelps was a patient had now resolved the issue of delay of results by buying additional on-site testing machines and results were back within hours rather than days.

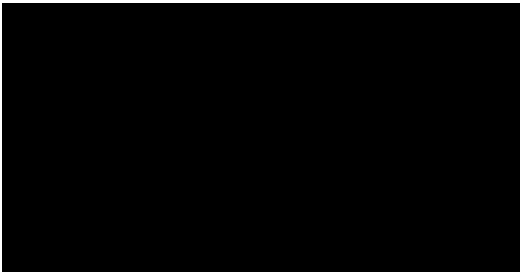
It was unclear from evidence given at the inquest whether the issue of delayed results had been addressed by other trusts in a similar way or if the risk remained to other patients in other trusts.

Pillar 1 testing refers to swab testing for the virus in Public Health England (PHE) labs, NHS hospitals for those with a clinical need, and health and care workers. For pillar 1, the testing turnaround is the time that a test is received by a laboratory for processing to the time when the results are published to the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). We have been closely monitoring NHS pillar 1 COVID testing turnaround times since July 2020. As mentioned in the query, we have deployed additional COVID19 testing equipment, including rapid and point of care testing devices, to the NHS pathology system nationally over the past 18 months to support reducing the testing turnaround times.

National COVID19 testing turnarounds are published weekly ([Weekly statistics for NHS Test and Trace \(England\): 23 September to 29 September 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)). The latest report indicates that over 19 out of 20 pillar 1 test results were made available within 24 hours of the laboratory receiving the test between 23 September and 29 September 2021 – with an average of 96.5% of pillar 1 test results were made available within 24 hours. Turnaround times for pillar 1 have been above 95% since the week ending 27 January. Since reporting began, 94.1% of test results have been made available within 24 hours.

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,



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