



**Norfolk and Suffolk**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Ms Yvonne Blake  
Norfolk Coroner's Service  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH

**Trust Management**  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Admin  
Hellesdon Hospital  
Drayton High Road  
Hellesdon  
Norwich  
NR6 5BE

Date: 22 March 2022



Dear Ms Blake

I write in respect of Sheila Steggles who died on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019. On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 you issued a prevention of future deaths notice on the Trust due to concerns raised during the inquest which concluded on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

The matters of concern are as follows:

- Irrespective of the reason for a person's mobility reducing, if it does so and this is a known risk factor then notice must be taken of it and appropriate steps taken.
- Medical staff should follow the Trust's protocols and perform and document a VTE risk assessment when the reduction in mobility is reduced (from their baseline) even if it is not known if/ how long the reduction will continue.
- All staff should raise concerns and if they have specific ones, document what these are in the clinical notes.
- Clinical notes should contain more detail about the patient since they are what is relied upon (with a verbal handover) to inform staff on later shifts.
- If a patient is to be reviewed, then a specific plan should be placed on to the care plan so that everyone knows what is needed to be done.
- All staff should be aware of a patient's relevant past medical history.
- Junior staff should consult more senior staff if they are unsure of the effect that anti-coagulation will have on anti-psychotics or other medication and are thus concerned about administering this

In responding to these concerns, I would like to take this opportunity to express again the Trust's condolences to her family regarding the death of Sheila.

Actions taken above the recommendations within the internal review are primarily to address the gaps in junior Doctors understanding and prompts to escalate concerns regarding physical health. To this end the Medical Director for medical trainees will be updating the Trust induction to include physical health

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emergencies alongside the existing information on psychiatric emergencies. This includes being alert to the potential risk of diagnostic overshadowing. This will be replicated within the local induction and the junior Doctor handbook. This refresh includes the importance of VTE assessment and prompt action in respect of administering prophylaxis, as well as clear guidance on when to escalate concerns based on clinical findings. The Medical Director for junior Doctors will also be liaison with our acute hospital colleagues to reinstate the joint workshops held prior to the pandemic which shared learning and skills and promoted positive networking.

Handover between junior Doctors and other medical staff will be underpinned by the Situation Background Assessment Recommendation (SBAR) framework. This will ensure that patient history, emerging concerns and necessary action including escalation where necessary are known, recorded and acted on. Inpatient wards across the organisation utilise and upload the SBAR tool into patient records to assist with ward reviews and handovers. The SBAR document is built upon at each handover, therefore building up a comprehensive history of the patient.

All agency and bank staff will be offered the "3 Ps" training which covers "Prevent, Promote, Protect" - observations and assessment, health promotion and screening. This will be available to all staff from support worker to ward manager level, the format is a set of e-learning modules accompanied by a workbook. The physical health team are rolling out "bite size" training across the trust including focus on VTE and thrombolisation, this training will be face to face. We have set up a working group to work with our flexible working colleagues to support an education 'passport' for health workers which will include; acute and chronic conditions, NEWS2 (deteriorating patient), managing Insulin and use of protective personal equipment (infection control measures) amongst other subjects.

The Chief Medical Director will be speaking to regional colleagues about the challenges for a mental health hospital to manage serious physical health conditions. This is with a view to improving understanding of relevant expertise and core business leading to improvements in communication and collaborative working.

I hope that these actions go some way to assure you how seriously the Trust has taken the findings of this tragic incident, and our commitment to improve physical health care and outcomes for our patients.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive



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