

Your ref

Our ref

Kennedys

By email: [REDACTED]

FAO HM Senior Coroner Graeme Irvine
East London Coroners Court
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IG11 7PB

25 Fenchurch Avenue
London
EC3M 5AD
United Kingdom

[REDACTED]
DX 766 London City

Direct Dia [REDACTED]

16 June 2022

Dear Sir,

PREVENTION OF FUTURE DEATHS REPORT FOLLOWING THE INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF MS ASHLIE TIMMS

We write further to the conclusion of the inquest into the death of Ms. Ashlie Timms, and the subsequent circulation of a Prevention of Future Deaths report, dated 26 April 2022, by HM Senior Coroner, Graeme Irvine (“the Report”).

The Chief Operating Officer (and Acting Chief Executive Officer) of Sequence Care, Robert Dalrymple, provided two statements to the Inquest on behalf of the organisation, dated 7 April 2022 (“First Statement”) and 11 April 2022 (“Second Statement”). These statements outlined the remedial measures taken by Sequence Care since Ms. Timms’ death.

Sequence Care as an organisation is determined to learn all the lessons it can from the recently concluded Inquest proceedings. Sequence Care has reviewed the contents of the Report and can update HM Senior Coroner on the following concerns.

- 1. The operator of the premises failed to ensure that staff on duty were competent to carry out a fire evacuation. Despite reflection and remediation in policies, processes and training, multiple staff members who gave evidence to the inquest remained unable to describe the proper action to take in the event of a fire alarm.**

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Steps were already being taken by Sequence Care to address the Coroner's concerns in this regard prior to the conclusion of the Inquest, as detailed in paragraphs 26 to 28 of Mr [REDACTED] First Statement.

In light of the Report, Sequence Care can now provide the following additional information to HM Senior Coroner in respect of each of these paragraphs as follows:

26. Face to face fire safety training is now provided to staff. This training is provided annually by Pinnacle and is delivered at each premises. The training covers, amongst other things, evacuation routes and procedures, fire drills and fire safety measures. A copy of the training handbook provided to staff as part of that training is attached.

The face to face fire safety training provided by Pinnacle is specifically fire warden training. By training all its permanent staff to this level, Sequence Care aims to ensure that there will always be a fire warden trained member of staff on duty at any one time.

Sequence Care continues to provide e-learning to all permanent staff via an external third party (Care Skills Academy). However this is limited to an employee's induction to the company and is supplementary to specific face to face induction training delivered at each home (see below in respect of paragraph 27 of Mr [REDACTED] First Statement).

The face to face fire warden training is provided to all employees annually via Pinnacle, and any new joiners will be added on to the next available session to supplement their e-learning.

Further training sessions are also being carried out to ensure that any remaining staff are provided with outstanding training (see below).

27. Specific induction training, tailored to each of Sequence Care's premises, is also provided to the permanent and agency staff assigned to work there. This training is delivered to staff by either the registered manager or one of the deputy managers. The training ensures staff are familiar with and have read the following: fire safety policy, accidents and incidents procedure, EMG Response Plan and support plans/risk assessments/PEEPs for service users at that premises. Completion of this training is confirmed in the permanent and agency staff checklists attached...Staff refresher training is also provided annually.

Sequence Care provided HM Senior Coroner with copies of the induction checklists for the training of both permanent and agency staff. The provision of annual fire warden training (see above) aims to ensure that there will always be a fully trained permanent member of staff on duty at any given time.

28. In addition, a competency assessment is carried out on an annual basis by either the registered manager or deputy manager (who are also to be trained by SOCOTEC in how to carry out this assessment) in the form of question and answer sessions, on which staff

are assessed. This ensures management monitoring of staff training. A copy of the competency assessment checklist is attached at Exhibit RD/18.

Face to face fire safety competency checks take place at individual homes on an annual basis. The competency checklist questions were revised upon the conclusion of the Inquest. The updated checklist was attached as the above referenced exhibit to Mr [REDACTED] First Statement, with the additional questions highlighted in red. Staff have been re-assessed against the revised competency checklist following the conclusion of the Inquest.

Please refer to the enclosed spreadsheet which records the completion of the competency assessment training - and all outstanding training - by staff members. Sequence Care has arranged additional sessions to address the training in outstanding areas.

2. **Fire alarms in three units operated by Sequence Care Group remain non-compliant with the 2013 British Standard Guidance, which recommends that they should have a link to an Alarm Receiving Centre (“ARC”) which automatically contacts the emergency services when a fire alarm is activated.**

As outlined in Mr [REDACTED] First Statement, Sequence Care had already taken steps to ensure that the fire alarms in all but three of its homes were linked to an Alarm Receiving Centre (“ARC”).

The Second Statement confirmed that, at that time, there were three homes within the Group which did not have fire alarm systems linked with an ARC as recommended in British Standards BS 5839-1. Whilst the three homes did not adhere to the guidance provided by the British Standards, it is not correct to say that they were non-compliant.

Sequence Care has now arranged for the fire alarm systems at these homes to be updated so that they are compatible and for an ARC link to be installed.

Details of the current status of these three homes are as follows:

- i. [REDACTED] - works completed and system (including ARC) activated on 20 May 2022;
- ii. [REDACTED] - works due to be completed on 24 June 2022, the delay being due to the implementing team being absent due to Covid-19;
- iii. [REDACTED] - works due to be completed on 24 June 2022, the delay being due to the implementing team being absent due to Covid-19.

Yours faithfully

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