

**Our ref:** 12 October 2020

**Stockport**  
NHS Foundation Trust

**BY EMAIL**

**Private and Confidential**

Ms A Mutch OBE  
HM Senior Coroner  
HM Coroner's Office  
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Stockport SK1 3AJ

Chief  
Executive  
Oak House  
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Tel:

Dear Ms Mutch

**Re: Inquest in to the death of Mr Joseph Cheetham**

I am writing in relation to the further information you requested at the conclusion of the inquest touching on the death of Mr Joseph Cheetham, which was held on 22 September 2020. I would like to thank you for highlighting your concerns and giving the Trust an opportunity to respond. The Associate Medical Director, and Associate Nurse Director of the Medicine and Clinical Support Business Group have investigated these matters on my behalf and I can now share with you the following information.

I understand from our inquest team, that you requested further information on two points. I have taken each point in turn, and trust this approach is satisfactory to you.

**Steps taken to support meal times**

The Trust has in place approved policies for protecting meal times. This includes restricting visiting, visual aids to identify people who require extra support and minimising clinical interactions during meal times. Patients are regularly reviewed using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) score for nutrition and hydration. We monitor nutrition and hydration through nursing quality metrics and the ward accreditation scheme. Trained volunteers also support patients with their nutrition needs across the organisation. In addition, the corporate nursing team has completed a mini accreditation for nutrition and hydration compliance on all the inpatient wards across the Trust. This process identified many areas of good practice and areas in need of more support and guidance.

All ward areas have received a dedicated '*seven minutes briefing*' session focused on patient nutritional standards with key points also being displayed in ward areas. The Trust continues to promote an annual malnutrition awareness week aimed at raising the profile of the importance of good nutrition and hydration in the care and treatment of patients.

At a local level on Ward A11, an action plan has been devised in order to highlight the improvement required to deliver consistent quality patient care to the high standards we set for ourselves. These actions include: monitoring completion of the MUST score; refresher training for staff; compliance with role specific training for staff; additional support from dieticians and the Quality Matron; visibility of mealtime standards and expectations in ward areas; reinforcing communication at shift handover regarding patients with nutritional needs; monitoring staff compliance through appraisal and audits.

### **Guidance on the administering of medication following a SALT assessment**

The Trust Speech and Language Team (SALT) has in place Trust-wide approved guidance, which has been developed to ensure patients are appropriately assessed for swallowing ability including the identification of specific problems occurring during the oral and pharyngeal stages of swallowing.

The stroke specialist nurse has led a dedicated project aimed at increasing awareness amongst clinical staff of the important role of patient positioning in the respect of naso-gastric tubes used for the administration of medication and nutrition. This project promotes the sharing of best practice guidance and associated information from SALT via teaching session.

I have enclosed several documents for your information that detail best clinical practice which are used across the Trust

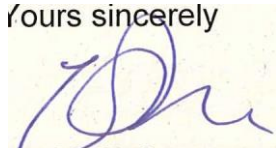
- **Seven minute briefing regarding supported mealtimes**  
This briefing document has been shared with all staff across the Trust. The briefing is disseminated to every ward area in the hospital with the aim to highlight important factors and promote discussion within teams. It is displayed in all wards as a reminder of the expectation from staff for our patients.
- **Meal time standards**  
These standards are displayed on the ward information boards, with information for all staff to read in regards to expectations on the ward. During the staff safety huddle performed twice daily, all staff are made aware of patients with specific dietary requirements and needs, highlighting 'at risk' patients.
- **Green apple card**  
The card was introduced as a trial in order for all staff to be aware of which relatives had been authorised to attend the ward at mealtimes, following discussion with the senior nursing team. This currently is on hold due to the visiting restrictions due to the pandemic. The rationale behind the card, is to ensure ease of access for the relatives of patients identified as requiring assistance at mealtimes.

In addition there is also a Trust intranet microsite for Nutrition and Hydration which staff can access at any time to find up to date information and guidance to support

our' patients. The site contains information, advice, policies and procedures to support and educate staff.

I trust that this answers the queries raised following the inquest. If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a yellow background. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'D. J. ...'.

Chief Executive

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