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Priory Chief Executive Officer

Friday 23 September 2022

Mr Andrew Bridgman
HM Assistant Coroner
Coroner's Officer
HM Coroner's Office
1 Mount Tabor Street
Stockport, SK1 3AG

Dear Mr Bridgman

Mr James Booth; date of birth: 26 September 1968; date of death: 14 October 2020

I write in response to the Regulation 28 Report dated Sunday 17 July 2022 issued following the Inquest touching the death of Mr Joseph Booth. You have raised one matter of concern that relates to Priory and one matter of concern that has been raised with the Department of Health.

In respect of the Priory matter of concern you have identified that the section of the shift handover form titled: 'Incidents in last 7 days' was not completed and that no audit of the forms had been completed.

Upon receipt of your letter, your concerns were brought to the attention of ██████████, Altrincham Hospital Director and the senior management team (SMT) at the hospital. A review was undertaken by ██████████ of the shift handovers that were taking place at the hospital during July and August 2022 and these were identified as being satisfactory in that they captured for each patient, their current mental state, recent incidents and emerging issues that may affect their safety and well-being. Furthermore we are assured that ██████████ has continued to have oversight of the shift handover process and where concerns have been identified these have been immediately raised and reflected back to the ward team and to the SMT and during the hospital governance meetings. Both ██████████ and the Altrincham Hospital Director of Clinical Services, ██████████ will continue to attend shift handovers on each of the wards on at least a weekly basis and continue to check the content, accuracy and detail of those handovers. Your concern and the matter of conducting robust shift handovers has also been raised across the wider Priory Healthcare portfolio via safety bulletins issued to hospital staff reminding them to ensure that shift handovers make sufficient reference to previous incidents. Our internal compliance team and the divisional quality team have also continued to monitor the quality of handovers during their inspections. Again, where matters of concern have been identified these have been brought to the immediate attention of the hospital SMT.

Additionally, a detailed handover template is being introduced across the Priory Healthcare sites (and this is currently being trialled on Rivendell ward at Altrincham in response to your Regulation 28 report). The handover template has the capacity to download information from different applications including the electronic patient record (CareNotes) and the incident reporting system (Datix). This will give a detailed picture of the patient's current health and

inform colleagues as to the current level of risk. The handover template, being electronic, will enable detailed and contemporaneous audits to be undertaken of the content. We anticipate that the handover template will be formally introduced across Priory Healthcare on or before Monday 1 November 2022.

We note that you have directed one of your matters of concern to the Department of Health. This matter of concern relates to considering the need for having in place national guidance to ensure the correct level of security for vulnerable patients while also benefitting from the therapeutic setting of an outdoor space. In respect of this matter of concern, please be assured that Priory has responded to the risk of patients absconding by completing a series of courtyard/garden risk assessments across all Priory hospitals. There is also an ongoing programme of works at our Priory acute units to increase courtyard and garden fencing (including anti-climb roller bars) to a standard height of 3.2m.

I trust that the actions outlined above will provide the assurances you seek in respect of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Chief Executive Officer.A smaller black rectangular redaction box covering the name of the Chief Executive Officer.

Priory Chief Executive Officer