



# Department of Health & Social Care

*From Maria Caulfield MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department of Health and Social Care*

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Adrian Farrow  
HM Assistant Coroner  
Manchester South Coroner's Court  
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12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Mr Farrow,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July 2022 about the death of Rebecca Jayne Flint. I am replying as Minister with responsibility for Mental Health.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Flint's death and I offer my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are very concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention.

In preparing this response, departmental officials have made enquiries with NHS England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Your report raises concerns about the Care Coordinator role within community mental health services, how this role may differ across trusts, the level of responsibility placed on Care Coordinators to ensure effective multi-disciplinary working, and the resourcing of the Care Coordinator role. The government is not able to comment on specific role requirements, or staffing levels locally, as responsibility for the staffing and operations of mental health services lies with the relevant trust. However, we do recognise the wider need to increase capacity in NHS mental health services.

You may wish to know that the mental health workforce increased by 5,900 full-time equivalent staff in December 2021 compared to December 2020, and by more than 11,800 compared to December 2010. However, we know there is more to do to ensure we have sufficient numbers of healthcare staff to deliver our aims for high quality, accessible mental health services. We therefore aim to expand the mental health workforce by an additional 27,000 healthcare professionals by 2023/24 (compared to 2019/20).

Through the NHS Long Term Plan, we are investing an additional £2.3 billion a year to expand and transform mental health services in England by 2023/24. As part of this, we are investing almost £1 billion extra in community mental health care for adults with severe mental illness. This includes new integrated community models for adults with severe mental illness. These new models are still in the early stages, and will take time to embed nationally, but will give at least 370,000 adults greater choice and control over their care and are supported to live well in their communities by 2023/24.

As part of the transformation of community mental health services, in July 2021, NHS England published the Care Programme Approach (CPA) Position Statement which sets out a new

approach to delivering safe and high-quality care, including improving care co-ordination. The new approach looks to maintain the principles of CPA and ensure they are applied to all people in receipt of community mental health, not just those under the CPA.

In addition, local systems are in the process of reviewing their CPA processes and moving towards a universal standard of care which is increasingly personalised, flexible and supported by a stronger multi-disciplinary approach. This includes having a named key worker who would be working closely with other members of a multi-disciplinary team and sharing responsibility for an individual's care and support.

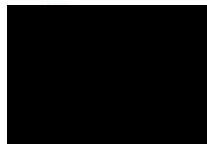
More widely, work is also ongoing to expand and improve mental health crisis care provision. This includes improving the operation of all-age 24/7 crisis lines, crisis resolution home treatment teams and mental health liaison services in A&E departments.

We are also investing an additional £150 million to expand facilities for people experiencing mental health crises such as crisis houses, as well as introducing dedicated mental health ambulances.

Finally, I have been assured that the CQC continues to have ongoing engagement and contact with the Trust. In particular, I have been informed that CQC are aware of the concerns and pressures within Community Mental Health Teams and have undertaken a recent focused inspection of some of Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust's Community Mental Health Teams that were rated as inadequate. Following the inspection, CQC took regulatory action, including to issue a warning notice under Section 29A of the Health and Social Care Act. Further information can be found in their report. I am assured that the CQC continue to closely monitor how the Trust are managing any ongoing risks and pressures within these teams.

I hope this response is helpful. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Kind regards,



**MARIA CAULFIELD**