



Rugby Football Union
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Mr Peter Nieto,
Norfolk Coroner's Service
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DH

16 May 2023

Dear Mr Nieto,

Report dated 24 March 2023 | [REDACTED]

Thank you for your report dated 24 March 2023 following an inquest into the tragic death of a Mr Richard Hill.

The Rugby Football Union ("RFU") was saddened to learn of Mr Hill's death, and it wishes to express its deepest sympathy to Mr Hill's friends and family for their loss.

The RFU was not invited to participate in the inquest, however we understand from your report that you consider "*the RFU might consider providing guidance and educative material around alcohol use that would potentially be welcome and utilised by affiliate grassroots rugby clubs which you believe could have a positive impact on harmful drinking*".

The RFU is committed to the promotion of good health in all respects, and it supports the principle of responsible drinking. The RFU provides advice and guidance to community clubs on issues relating to the supply of alcohol/licencing, health, safety, and wellbeing, and it recommends Codes of Conduct for members of clubs to promote responsible behaviour. Responsible drinking practices are also covered, where applicable, in the RFU's Safeguarding Guidance. All resources can be accessed for free on the RFU's website.

The RFU's RugbySafe programme, is an innovative and overarching player safety and wellbeing programme which provides resources for everyone involved in rugby. As it is recognised that issues relating to excessive alcohol consumption can sometimes be connected to mental wellbeing these issues are raised within the RugbySafe programme to promote awareness. The RFU partners with Simplyhealth and mental health charity Looseheadz to promote an open discussion around all relevant issues. Resources are available for free on the RFU website.

The RFU has previously partnered with the charity Drinkaware to help promote its message of responsible drinking, and it will continue to work with partners to contribute to the societal discussion on these issues. It is of course recognised that playing sport, including rugby, has recognised physical benefits for participants, as well as a positive impact on mental wellbeing.

Based on the information provided to us, and taking into account pre-existing work in relevant areas, the RFU proposes to take no additional specific action at this stage but we will keep this under review. The RFU is however willing to consider materials around alcohol awareness which may contribute to the societal conversation on these issues and the promotion of good health generally, including via its community game updates which are communicated regularly to clubs and participants.

Should you wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED], Legal Director at the RFU.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Chief Executive Officer
Rugby Football Union**