



Department
of Health &
Social Care

From Will Quince MP
Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Christopher Morris
HM Area Coroner
Coroner's Court
1 Mount Tabor Street
Stockport, SK1 3AG

28th August 2023

Dear Mr Morris,

Thank you for your letter of 4th November 2022 about the death of Lynn Moss. I am replying as Minister with responsibility for Health and Secondary Care, and thank you for the additional time allowed.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Mrs Moss' 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 as well as the regulation in this instance, the Care Quality Commission.

Sepsis can be a devastating condition and patients rightly expect the NHS to be able to recognise and diagnose it early and provide the highest quality treatment and care.

Over recent years, the NHS has become much better at spotting and treating sepsis quickly. This means that more people are being identified as at risk of sepsis and mortality rates are falling. However, we know that some patients who deteriorate with sepsis are still not being diagnosed quickly enough.

In April 2018, a National Early Warning Score patient safety alert was issued to support providers to adopt the revised National Early Warning Score (NEWS2) to detect deterioration in adult patients, including those with suspected sepsis¹. However, there is an opportunity for sepsis guidance to be improved to ensure appropriate room for diagnostics and clinical judgement in the recognition and treatment of deterioration, including from sepsis.

In response to growing evidence of the need to update sepsis guidance and provide a stronger framework for treatment of deterioration, the Academy of Royal Medical Colleges (AoMRC), in partnership with the Faculty for Intensive Care Medicine, published their '*Statement on the initial antimicrobial treatment of sepsis*' in May 2022².

¹ [Patient Safety Alert - adoption of NEWS2.pdf \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

² [Statement on the initial antimicrobial treatment of sepsis 0522.pdf \(aomrc.org.uk\)](#)

To support a strong understanding of new guidelines for recognition and treatment of sepsis amongst a wide range of healthcare professionals, NHS England is working to ensure that clinical staff caring for patients will have access to appropriate education, including through new learning tools and additional materials on HEE's website³.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) also launched a consultation to seek views on updating its guidance on the recognition, diagnosis and early management of suspected sepsis. The consultation ran from 7 to 21 December and updated guidance is expected to be published in 2023⁴.

We recognise the pressures the ambulance service is facing which is why we published our delivery plan for recovering urgent and emergency care services. This aims to deliver one of the fastest and longest sustained improvements in waiting times in the NHS's history reducing Category 2 response times to 30 minutes this year, with further improvements towards pre-pandemic levels next year.

Ambulance services are receiving £200 million of additional funding this year to grow capacity and improve response times alongside 800 new ambulances, including specialist mental health ambulances. Backed by nearly £50 million, the delivery of 6 new ambulance hubs and 42 new or upgraded discharge lounges will cut unnecessary delays, helping get ambulances back on the road faster.

To increase hospital capacity and reduce waits, the delivery plan will deliver 5,000 more staffed, permanent beds this year compared to 2022-23 plans, backed up £1bn of dedicated funding. This is alongside £1.6 billion over the next 2 years to reduce the numbers of beds occupied by patients ready to be discharged helping improve flow through hospitals and reducing ambulance handover delays.

Ambulance trusts receive continuous central monitoring and support from the National Ambulance Coordination Centre. Furthermore, the 24/7 System Control Centres established across all local NHS systems last winter are enabling year-round use of real-time data and local insights to better manage demand and respond to emerging challenges at a system level.

Further, the NHS has expanded falls response services right across the country, where local community teams are sent to help people who have fallen in their home or in care homes, saving vital ambulance resource and unnecessary trips to hospital.

To build capacity in social care ahead of this winter, we will launch the next phase of our National Recruitment Campaign to encourage more people to join social care. We are also boosting international recruitment of care workers, with a further £15 million invested this year and more next year.

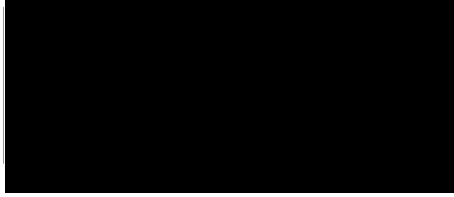
Finally, in primary care, we have already committed to invest at least £1.5 billion to create an additional 50 million general practice appointments by 2024, by growing and diversifying the workforce, which should improve access for patients. We estimate that this plan will deliver over a million more appointments this winter by bolstering general practice teams with other professionals who can help them. This will reduce the need for A&E and emergency care getting patients the treatment where they need it.

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

³ <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/sepsis-awareness>

⁴ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/indevelopment/gid-ng10310>

Yours sincerely,



Minister of State Health and Secondary Care