

Dr Anton van Dellen
HM Assistant Coroner
West London Coroner's Court
25 Bagleys Lane
Fulham
London
SW6 2QA

By email only: [REDACTED] FAO Dr Anton van Dellen

Date: 29th November 2023

Dear Dr van Dellen,

Regulation 28 Report – Mr Jack Peter Zarrop

I write on behalf of the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) in relation to paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, in relation to the prevention of future deaths report sent via email to the NPCC dated 2nd October 2023.

The notice sets out concerns that arose from the information received during the inquest into the death of Mr Zarrop which occurred in March 2021. I am very sorry to read of the circumstances of Jack's death. My sympathies are with his family and friends, and I hope the following information will go some way to reassure you that the current Healthcare model for Police Custody is robust.

I note you set out two main areas of concern; the use of Custodial Nurse Practitioners (CNPs) in Police Custody instead of doctors, as set out in the 2003 Home Office circular and the training of agency staff in the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT).

I have reviewed the 2003 circular and would like to highlight that custodial healthcare has changed considerably since that point. The 2003 circular refers to the practice of using Police Surgeons in custody, this role is no longer in existence. Police Custody is a very regulated and scrutinised area of policing, it plays a pivotal role in the criminal justice process and cares for some of the most challenging and vulnerable people in society at what is often a very testing time. Our aim is to be effective, safe and to ensure that people are treated fairly, with as much dignity as possible. Having professional officers and staff who are well trained is essential. The NPCC Custody Portfolio works closely with NHS England, partners, and other stakeholders to deliver a service specification that is fit for purpose.

Whilst the NPCC helps to set standards and provide guidance; all Chief Constables/Commissioners are operationally independent and procure their own medical provision for their custody suites via a

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tendering process. Chief Constables tender for medical provision using a National Health Service (England) (NHSE) Specification which is authored and reviewed by NHS-England for the NPCC, College of Policing, and Home Office. This specification is reviewed and updated periodically to cater for advances in care and additional needs when identified. Whenever an update is required, the document is widely consulted on, with private medical providers, NPCC Independent Medical Advisor, as well as medical bodies such as the Faculty of Forensic Legal Medicine (FFLM), and The UK Association of Forensic Nurses and Paramedics. (UKAFNP).

Chief Officers are able to use the National Healthcare Specification to determine the type of medical care they require. The Specification can be tailored by forces should they not require all elements, and they can tender for the services they need; but the document is clear with regard training and qualifications. I attach the latest version of the service specification (draft until ratified by NHSE Clinical Reference Group – Nov 2023), which may be useful, and would like to highlight the following sections which I hope will provide you with reassurance:

- 9.30 Governance Roles
- 9.31 Clinical Governance
- 9.60 Workforce Standards
- 9.61 Qualifications and Registration
- 9.70 Competency Assessment
- 9.72 Clinical Staff Supervision

I hope the information provided goes some way to reassure you the Healthcare Specification is clear regarding experience and qualifications for Health Care Professionals in Police Custody in England and Wales and that you are satisfied that as well as Doctors; Nurses and Paramedics working in custody are suitably qualified and trained to work alone within the environment, with appropriate clinical support and supervision.

For any further information please contact my Staff Officer [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) who will be happy to address any concerns and answer any questions.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council