



20th February 2024

Dear HMAC Richards

I write to acknowledge receipt of the Regulation 28 report dated 8th December 2023 which was safely received in my office on 15th December 2023. I note that a copy of this correspondence has also been sent to Brent Kilmurray, Chief Executive of Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary and the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC).

From the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere condolences to Sarah's family following her untimely death. I can understand the distress Sarah's family and friends have endured during this difficult and emotional time.

The matters highlighted in the Assistant Coroner's report received my priority attention and I have consequently discussed these matters with the Chief Constable and Force Executive Team. I have also been sighted on the Chief Constable's response sent to you.

As part of my 'holding the force to account' responsibility, I have been given assurances that organisational learning following this incident has been reflected upon, to mitigate any future risks. It is vital to me as the Police and Crime Commissioner for County Durham and Darlington for the force to demonstrate that appropriate training for police officers and staff is in place, robust safety plans exist, and effective policies and practices are regularly discussed and reviewed with TEWV to respond to calls acknowledging that such a response should be a partnership conversation.

Following this report, I have been reassured that the force swiftly implemented an interim escalation policy with TEWV, and this is pending progress on the roll-out of the national 'Right Care Right Person' approach which includes a clear escalation plan through strategic, tactical, and operational levels. This interim approach supports the principles of 'Right Care Right Person' and my office is supporting the force and relevant partners in adopting this protocol in due course.

In conclusion, I am fully supportive that every person in crisis or nearing that point receives the best care and support from the right partner agency. Effective communication between partners is key to achieving this.



I trust this response addresses the issues you have brought to my attention and I will continue to monitor the progress of Right Care Right Person being adopted across County Durham and Darlington, particularly the role of the Force.

Yours sincerely



Police and Crime Commissioner for Durham

