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Private & Confidential

Melanie Sarah Lee
Assistant Coroner
Inner North London
St Pancras Coroner's Court
Camley Street
London N1C 4PP


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22 January 2024

Dear Madam,

Regulation 28 Report on the death of Mrs Jennifer Ruth Whinney

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report of 27 November 2023. The Trust has carefully considered the concerns raised in the learned Coroner's report, and guidance has been sought from specialists within the Trust to address them.

The matters of concern identified in the Regulation 28 report are:

1. Jennifer was referred to the colorectal specialist team at the Royal London Hospital and seen in late May. The witnesses were unable to give me the exact date of the appointment. Jennifer's notes were not sent to the appointment with her. I heard that patient records at Queen's Hospital are not electronic. Ward staff compile the notes which are sent physically with the patient if they attend any external appointment. I heard that no one person has responsibility for ensuring that the notes are sent.
2. Jennifer was articulate and understood her health problems well and so was able to provide the colorectal surgeon with her medical background. I am concerned that another patient may not be able to provide such a full and accurate history and that critical information may not be passed on.

Trust's response:

1. A review of the process for sending patients notes accompanying them to external hospital visits has been undertaken and we have identified gaps in the governance of this. The policy has now been revised internally and the updated policy, was approved at the Policy Ratification Group that took place today, on 22 January 2024. The changes include both implicit responsibility of handing the patients notes over to the nurse / medical escort or ambulance driver as appropriate, a checklist for the transfer of patients externally as well as a signature section to acknowledge receipt of the notes. A copy of this policy is included with this response for His Majesty's Coroner's kind review.
2. As part of the review of transfer of health records it has been noted that medical letters detailing Name, Date of Birth, NHS number, presenting complaint, medical history, medication history and reason for referral with contact details of medical team requesting the transfer as a minimum data set should be sent with the patient and is included in the checklist detailed above.

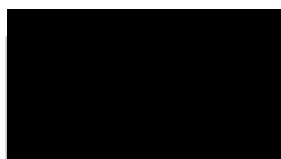


3. The Trust is currently embarking upon its journey into digitisation of medical notes which should be completed in mid-late 2025. Once this is completed it is envisaged that the issue of medical notes being sent between hospital sites, that are also digitally enabled should be seamless; although it is recognised this is a lengthy timescale.

The Trust has taken the issues identified by the Learned Coroner very seriously and has taken positive action to address them.

I would be happy to meet to discuss this response if that would be helpful to HM Coroner.

Yours sincerely,

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Chief Executive