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Date: 31 January 2024

Mr A Farrow
HM Assistant Coroner

Dear Mr Farrow

Re: Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths Notice 2023-0513 – Claire Nicole Briggs

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report dated 8 December 2023 concerning the sad death of Claire Nicole Briggs on 28 November 2022. On behalf of NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care (NHS GM), we would like to begin by offering our sincere condolences to Claire's family for their loss.

Thank you for highlighting your concerns during the inquest. On behalf of NHS GM, we apologise that you have had to bring these matters of concern to our attention. We recognise it is very important to ensure we make the necessary improvements to the quality and safety of future services.

Following the inquest, you raised concerns in your Regulation 28 Report that there is a risk a future death will occur unless action is taken. We have worked with the 2 other ICBs in the Northwest who also use North West Ambulance Service particularly Lancashire ICB who act as a lead commissioner for the provider to review the concerns and ensure steps are taken to progress the concerns raised.

I hope the response below demonstrates to you and Claire's family that NHS GM has taken the concerns you have raised seriously and will learn from this as a whole system.

This letter addresses the issues that fall within the remit of NHS GM and how we can share the learning from this case.

The evidence heard was that a Joint Operating Protocol between the North West Ambulance Service and the five regional police forces designed to address the issues of which emergency service should take responsibility for incidents involving drug overdoses and the method by which the police officers attending such incidents prior to the arrival of the ambulance service can escalate their concerns over a person suspected to have taken a drug overdose, was in an advanced stage of completion, but was stalled in July 2022.

Whilst the court heard that discussions have recently recommenced, they now encompass the Right Care, Right Person model, the findings of the Manchester Arena Bombing Enquiry and that additionally, the Fire and Rescue Service and the British Transport Police have now become involved.

Pending agreement of a Joint Operating Protocol, there does not appear to be any consistent and reliable understanding in place across the police forces and the North West Ambulance Service to provide clarity as to the roles of the respective services and the method by which concerns about individual patients can be escalated to the ambulance service by police officers dealing with those who are suspected to have taken drug overdoses.

As mentioned in your concern during the time of the inquest NWS had engaged with all the North West Police Forces and were advanced in the development of a Joint Operating Protocol (JOP) for the opening, updates and closures of logs between NWS and Police Forces. I can now confirm that four of the North West forces have now agreed and gone live with their JOPs and NWS are making some slight amendments to the wording of the JOP with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) with the intention for this to be completed and signed off on the 1 February 2024. It will then go live in this area.

The main aims of the JOPs are to:

- Ensure clear process for sharing of information between agencies, understanding of primacy and a clear escalation process for any operational issues.
- Set out the process to follow for requesting open lines.
- Detail the key principles for establishing a lead agency.
- Detail the process to follow for contacting NWS' clinical hub.

The JOP should mitigate the gap in process that you highlighted and the learning from Claire's tragic death and progress updates on the implementation of the Joint Operating Protocol will be overseen by the NWS Regional Clinical Quality Assurance Committee which has representation from the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSC ICB) as a commissioner of ambulance services.

Actions taken or being taken to share learning across Greater Manchester:

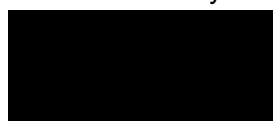
1. The Regulation 28 and our response to be presented/shared with the Greater Manchester System Quality Group on 21 March 2024. This meeting is attended by commissioners, including commissioners of specialist services, localities, regulators, Healthwatch and NICE. Through sharing in this forum, we expect members to review and ensure learning is incorporated into their commissioned services.
2. Progress updates on the implementation of the Joint Operating Protocol will be overseen by the NWS Regional Clinical Quality Assurance Committee which has representation from the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSC ICB) as a commissioner of ambulance services.

In conclusion, key learning points and recommendations will be monitored to ensure they are embedded within practice.

We hope this response demonstrates to you and Claire's family that the North West ICBs have taken the concerns you have raised seriously and are committed to working together as a system including our service users, carers and families to improve the care provided.

Thank you for bringing these important patient safety issues to our attention and please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further information.

Yours sincerely



Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer
and Chief Nursing Officer
NHS Greater Manchester