

OUR SERVICES

Urgent and Emergency Care
Patient Transport Service
NHS 111



LADYBRIDGE HALL
399 Chorley New Road
Bolton
BL1 5DD

T: [REDACTED]

nwas.nhs.uk

Adrian Farrow
Assistant Coroner
Manchester South Coroners Court

BY EMAIL ONLY

6 February 2024

Dear Mr Farrow,

NWAS Response: Regulation 28 Report

Thank you for your letter dated 8 December 2023 sent following the conclusion of the inquest touching the death of Claire Nicole Briggs which commenced on 11 July 2023. I know that you will share my response with her family and I firstly want to express my sincere condolences to them.

I understand you have issued two Regulation 28 reports. This response is prepared in solely in response to the Regulation 28 report addressed to NWAS (and others) in relation to the Joint Operating Protocol (JOP).

I note you have requested NWAS:-

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.

You have raised your concern having heard evidence relating to the preparation of a Joint Operating Protocol (JOP) between the North West Ambulance Service and the five regional police forces which stalled in July 2022 but was at an advanced stage of completion at the time of the inquest.

This Joint Operating Protocol was designed to improve communication between the North West Ambulance Service and the Police forces at all incidents including those involving drug overdoses. It addresses the issues of which emergency service should take responsibility for incidents and the method by which the police officers attending such incidents prior to the arrival of the ambulance service can

HEADQUARTERS: Ladybridge Hall, 399 Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL1 5DD

CHAIRMAN: [REDACTED]

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: [REDACTED]

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EVERY TIME.**

escalate their concerns. For instance, this could be in relation to a person suspected to have taken a drug overdose.

As confirmed in the evidence provided by the Trust during the inquest, the JOP implementation process was recommenced with all Police partners on 6 July 2023 and involved fortnightly meetings with all parties. The aim of these meetings was to agree a standard format and wording for the JOP to be used across the North West.

On 12 October 2023, the JOP went live within NWAS in conjunction with Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire and Merseyside Police Forces. This version was not adopted by Greater Manchester Police and although discussions were still ongoing with them, it was considered important that the process and implementation was not delayed.

We have continued to work closely with Greater Manchester Police to overcome any remaining barriers and an updated version of the JOP has now been agreed with Greater Manchester Police who are in the final stages of sign off. It is anticipated the updated version of the JOP will be implemented and “go live” across the whole North West following the next meeting with police partners, scheduled for the latter part of February 2024.

Following the conclusion of the inquest, the Trust has also engaged with British Transport Police, North West Fire Control, Fire and Rescue Services from Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Cumbria and encouraged them to sign the JOP. Extending the JOP to include these partner agencies will bring additional benefits to the whole of the North West. British Transport Police and Merseyside Fire and Rescue have signed off the updated version of the JOP. North West Fire Control and Lancashire, GM, Cheshire and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Services are to review the document at the Operations Management Committee scheduled to take place in early February 2024.

I am grateful to you for highlighting your concern to me. Your concern has reaffirmed the need for joined up working and the importance of the Joint Operating Protocol. It has been extremely useful in driving forward the work outlined in this letter.

I hope that by this letter, I have addressed your concerns, but should you require any further clarification or information, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Trust’s Assistant Director of Legal Services, Ms [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chief Executive

