



It is possible that guidance from other sources may have added confusion for the treating healthcare team as we are aware that there can be a variety of information sources that clinicians draw on to determine treatment options locally. However, BNFC guidance is clear.

The College will be interested to understand from NICE, whom you are also seeking views, on their plans to review their guidance and whether an update is needed to clarify guidance for immunocompromised children.

### Access to specialist paediatric infectious disease advice for complex cases

I have shared your report with the BPAIIG for further advice on actions the College could take to prevent future deaths of this kind. They have identified the importance, for hospitals providing care to children, of having regular input from an infectious disease paediatric subspecialty who are readily available to help improve clinical decision making and patient pathways.

### Communication with families

The College will learn from your report, especially with respect of working with our members on the importance of continually improving how we engage with families in care settings. This includes how paediatricians can better facilitate parents and families to share their understanding of how ill their child is. The College has worked with NHS England and the Royal College of Nursing to develop a paediatric early warning system (PEWS) to spot deterioration.<sup>2</sup> The new national inpatient PEWS includes a parental concern trigger where parental or carer concern will lead to escalation of the child's care, regardless of other assessments.

The College is also engaging with NHS England and the Patient Safety Commissioner on how Martha's Rule – a new process that stipulates the right to request a second clinical review - will be implemented nationally. This recognises the importance of a structured system that obtains information relating to a patient's condition directly from patients and their families at least on a daily basis.<sup>3</sup>

### Sharing information for quality improvements

The College will be sharing information and suggestions for local improvement from your report with our paediatric members via its [patient safety portal](#), including the promotion of the BNFC guidance to improve awareness across the profession. The information within your report will also be shared for discussion with the RCPCH Clinical Quality in Practice group in early Spring, where further actions may be identified.

The RCPCH supports the recommendation from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation on a universal varicella vaccination programme to be introduced as part of the routine childhood schedule.<sup>4</sup> We continue to advocate for rapid implementation of the NHS Vaccination Strategy to bring forward opportunities to protect communities and save lives.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/paediatric-early-warning-system-england>


<sup>3</sup> <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-responds-patient-safety-commissioners-recommendations-marthas-rule>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-varicella-vaccination-programme-jcvi-advice-14-november-2023/jcvi-statement-on-a-childhood-varicella-chickenpox-vaccination-programme>

Thank you for seeking our views and reminding us of the importance of this work. Our sincere condolences are with Nuel-Junior's family.

Yours sincerely



  
RCPCH President