



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy

From Minister Caulfield MP

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Alison Mutch
HM Senior Coroner
for the coroner area of South Manchester Area Coroner

18 April 2024

Dear Ms Mutch

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths dated 29 January 2024 about the death of Shahzadi Khan. I am replying as Minister with responsibility for Mental Health and Womens Strategy.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Khan's death, and I offer my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are very concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention. Please also accept my sincere apologies for the delay in responding to this matter.

The report raises the concerns about:

- how a how a shortage of mental health beds nationally can lead to patients being placed far from home, impacting their care and increasing risks. Key issues include families not being able to stay in contact or visit. Difficulties in communication and sharing information between patients, families, and clinicians, especially when non-NHS or out-of-trust beds were used. Additionally, out-of-area trusts and private providers lacked familiarity with local discharge support arrangements, resulting in less effective communication and coordination.
- The inquest heard that due to its size the mental health trust covers a number of areas. Each area has its own systems and pathways. Lack of understanding of these pathways by coordinating teams meant that patients were not being moved onto the correct pathway for care. The inquest heard that this was compounded by a lack of awareness by the Trafford HBTT of the local pathway for a patient such as Ms Khan and the need for a clear discharge plan to be in place that was understood by all those involved in a patient's care including her family and mental health care workers.
- There was evidence from Ms Khan's family that her deterioration was in part due to her going through the menopause and that had there been better awareness of this as a factor in mental health deterioration for some women and better support in place, interventions could have taken place at an earlier stage and been more effective.

In preparing this response, Departmental officials have made enquiries with NHS England and the Care Quality Commission.

To improve the issue of out of area placements, and to support adult social care and discharge, up to £2.8 billion has been made available in 2023/24 and £4.7 billion in 2024/25. This can be used to support discharge from mental health inpatient settings, reducing bed occupancy and OAPs. The Department has been working with NHS England and other

partners to develop statutory guidance for discharge from all mental health inpatient settings. This was published on 26 January 2024, setting out how NHS bodies and local authorities can work together to support the discharge process, improving flow and ensuring the right support in the community. Private companies have always played a role in the NHS, and patients should expect a safe and good quality service regardless of whether their care is delivered by independent sector or public sector providers. All providers, whether independent or NHS, must register with the Care Quality Commission and follow a set of fundamental standards of safety and quality below which care should never fall.

We have also made specific enquiries at local level. Up until September 2022 Greater Manchester had very low numbers of reportable out of area placements. They then experienced a gradual increase. The management of contracted independent sector provision and out of area placements is managed by the North-West Bed Bureau. Following the increase in reportable out of area placements the capacity within the North-West Bed Bureau was strengthened. Practitioners were allocated to specific providers which enabled them to develop better relationships- within this was included in person visits to better understand the settings they were placing patients in. There were always strong processes in place for patients placed within Greater Manchester but in a different local authority to the one in which they resided. These processes and policies have been reviewed and strengthened to ensure the same rigor and oversight is in place for those patients who are placed outside of Greater Manchester. There is a weekly meeting at NHSGM ICB level (Multi Agency Discharge Event) about out of area placements ensuring that as an ICB, they have real grip and control. There is also a trajectory of improvement in place with their NHS Trusts to reduce the number of out of area placements

To raise awareness of menopause for healthcare staff including the effect of menopause on mental health, funding has been given to Mind in Greater Manchester (this is a partnership of five local Minds working together to ensure people experience better mental health and to support people with their mental health to live well and feel valued in their communities and at work). The funding will:

- Enable local Minds to provide free training to Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's), that have less than 250 employees and may not have the funding to access such training, to raise awareness of menopause to both managers and colleagues
- Fund free mindfulness and relaxation for menopause courses. These courses support individuals in learning mindfulness and meditation to give them greater capacity to manage the emotional and physical impacts of menopause and to improve their mental health.
- Delivery of free, culturally appropriate and specific menopause awareness sessions in different communities across Greater Manchester delivering in a range of multicultural languages and providing in-depth understanding of symptoms and what help is accessible

Greater Manchester has also provided a free access to menopause resource for anyone working in health and care in the city region. It is hoped that this course will help form part of a wider cultural change that leads to better support for people going through the menopause, whilst also helping individuals understand the challenges and how to get the right help.

I hope this response is helpful. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Best Wishes,



MARIA CAULFIELD