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[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Robertson

Thank you for your Prevention of Future Deaths report of 13 March concerning the tragic death of Jane Walker who died after a collision with a jet ski while on a rigid inflatable boat. In the report you recommend that paramedics should be provided with powers to administer mucosal fentanyl lozenges to ensure fast acting pain relief.

You are receiving a response from an official in accordance with procedures for handling correspondence during the pre-election period.

I understand that evidence heard at the inquest included detail about a mucosal fentanyl lozenge as an alternative, easier to remove and faster-acting analgesic to that received by Ms Walker (who was administered morphine via a cannula, which can take 15 minutes to be effective). At the time of Ms Walker's death paramedics did not have the authority to administer that form of pain relief.

Your recommendation mirrors two recommendations made in the report *Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 2: Emergency Response*, which are as follows:

*Recommendation 118: The Department of Health and Social Care and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) should consider urgently whether the regulatory regime should be altered to enable analgesia, such as fentanyl lozenges or sufentanil sublingual tablets, to be given by paramedics to injured persons.*


*Recommendation 119: If the decision is that the regulatory regime should be altered in this way, the National Ambulance Resilience Unit should consider urgently whether the use of such analgesia should be rolled out to all Hazardous Area Response Team and other specialist operatives, as part of their basic equipment, and to paramedics more generally.*

The Manchester Arena Inquiry reports are available at the following link: [Manchester Arena Inquiry reports - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672804/Manchester-Arena-Inquiry-Volume-2-Emergency-Response.pdf)

The NHS England Task & Finish Group on Analgesia was established to consider these two recommendations. This comprises civilian and military clinical representatives, academics, representatives of the Faculty of Pre-Hospital Care, the College of Paramedics, ambulance pharmacists and government officials. This group works closely with colleagues in the Devolved Administrations to ensure any learning is shared and can be considered for use in the respective countries. Evidence gathering and evaluation are ongoing. The group has been provided with a copy of your letter for their reference.

Once this group has reported its conclusions, these and any recommendations about paramedics and the administration of fentanyl will be considered by a future government.

Yours sincerely

  
Head of Drug Misuse Unit