

HM Coroner Jonathan Stevens
St Pancras Coroner's Court
Camley Street
London N1C 4PP

Adult Social Care
4th Floor
222 Upper Street
London N1 1XR

By email only

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14 May 2024 – sent on 30 May.

Dear Coroner Stevens,

London Borough of Islington response to the Regulation 28 Prevention of future death report into the death of Rose Hollingworth

In response to the matter of concerns of the PFD that there was a failure to properly review, manage and check the performance of the care agency, Islington's response is the following:

The Council's Adult Social Care vision is for Islington to be a place made up of strong, inclusive, and connected communities, where regardless of background, people have fair and equal access to adult social care support that enables residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives. This vision underpins all our activity, and we expect our providers that we commission to embrace this approach.

Adult Social Care commission providers to support residents on a range of services, this includes placements in care homes and supported living, advocacy services and home care services.

Adult Social Care have a dedicated team of 8 people who are employed to manage their contracts, this includes checking the quality of our providers who we commission with, ensuring they are delivering on their agreed key performance indicators. The team work alongside other teams to develop a holistic understanding of a provider. This includes social workers, occupational therapists, health colleagues and contract managers from other local authorities.

Islington Council has a robust process in place to monitor the quality of care of our providers. We work closely with CQC and across the system to ensure a system wide approach. This is overseen by the Islington Provider Quality Oversight Board (IPQOB), which reports to the Senior Leadership Team within Adult Social Care and the Independent Adults Safeguarding Board.

The Islington Provider Quality Oversight Board is a monthly multi-agency meeting with colleagues from across health and social care and CQC in attendance. The role of the board is to work in partnership with health and CQC to triangulate information about providers where

there are concerns from across agencies. The Board shares intelligence and agrees key actions to support provider improvement and ensure residents are safe. Providers are risk rated based on agreed criteria. Providers on the IPQOB agenda, receive enhanced monitoring, oversight and support from an allocated contract officer employed by London Borough of Islington.

Where providers are found not to be performing well, the Council can enact its Provider Concerns Process. This process is supported by CQC who attend meetings. The process supports the provider to identify areas of improvement.

Further, it seeks assurances that these changes are embedded to ensure that Islington residents are receiving safe care. Where a provider is not assessed to be making the necessary changes to ensure a safe service, the Council may then seek to move individuals to another provider. This board reports to the Islington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board so that the whole system can review and consider concerns, this has also helped refine the process to ensure we are effectively capturing and addressing concerns.

The council undertakes an annual audit of home care providers. The audit is based on CQC Key Lines of Enquiry, which provides robust assurance around the suitability of providers who work with Islington residents. This includes reviewing the care plans, staff files and reviewing key policies to ensure that people are receiving a safe service in line with the standards.

The council leads quarterly provider forums with the aims of fostering a supportive learning environment to share, reflect and shape best practice across the sector. It's also an opportunity to hear from commissioning colleagues any key trends and important information to share including presentations from other areas to share learning and commissioners share important information and key trends. The forum is supplemented by a regular provider bulletin, which provides updates and news stories that may be of interest to providers, as well as reminders of changes in regulation.

Contracts and commissioning colleagues work closely with safeguarding and operational social work teams to share intelligence about providers, to ensure a coordinated approach to decision making and agreeing the proportionate approach to address concerns. Operations colleagues submit "service issues" to providers where they have identified issues with an individual's package of care. The provider is expected to investigate and report back to the Council within 10 days. Service issues are a useful source of intelligence to identify if there are wider quality concerns about a provider. This process also enables general trends to be identified, which feed into provider forums to share learning that may be useful for all home care providers.

During 2023, the Council undertook a robust procurement exercise for a new home care service through a framework, to replace the previous contracts which expired in March 2024. The procurement aimed to reduce the number of providers London Borough of Islington uses,

enabling the council to work more closely with a smaller number of providers and further enhance the focus on quality and safety of residents. The procurement exercise was extensive and included site visits and interviews with prospective providers. Residents were also part of the procurement evaluation panel. The new framework went live on 1 April 2024 with 9 locality providers and 14 secondary providers.

Learning and strengthening practice

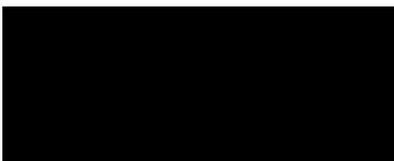
All providers commissioned by Islington Council are expected to be on a journey of continuous improvement, and the contracts and commissioning functions in the Adults Social Care Strategic Commissioning and Investment Department also take this approach within their own practice.

ASC continues to review their process for contracting and quality monitoring. The Council have updated their provider audit approach to include resident and staff voice in the process. This forms part of the Quality Assurance Framework, which has recently been reviewed.

London Borough Islington continues to work closely with other London councils and responds to concerns from host boroughs, regarding providers supporting Islington residents, where we have placed individuals or where we are the lead authority.

Contracts and commissioning functions are always included in any learning, strengthening of practice and service improvements being made across the department. This includes membership on the Prevention and Learning subgroup of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Yours sincerely,




Director of Adult Social Care
Islington Council