



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Maria Caulfield
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy*

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

28 June 2024

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths dated 9 May 2024 about the death of Brandon William Turner. I am replying as the Minister with responsibility for mental health and patient safety.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Brandon's death and I offer my sincere condolences to his family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention.

Your report raises concerns at national level over shortages of staff. We understand that that staff shortage is an ongoing and significant challenge for Cornwall with high use of Agency staff over recent years. Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is developing a workforce strategy to address recruitment challenges.

The Trust is in the process of setting up a facility in Truro run by the CHAOS Group which will have up to 14 step up / step down beds, 4 crisis beds, a 24/7 crisis/sanctuary facility plus support at home. This will be opened in a phased approach with the support at home function planned to start from 1 July.

Although Cornwall is not currently operating a crisis café, there is limited provision of sanctuary house support which can be accessed via the Trust's Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Teams services, as part of an integrated service offer.

The ICB, in partnership with Cornwall Council, has recently awarded a 5 year contract to provide a VCSE mental health and suicide prevention collaborative to deliver integrated,

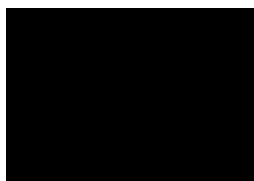
place-based support in communities for those who may be vulnerable or feel at risk. This service is called 'People in Mind' and is delivered via the Voluntary Sector Forum (VSF). This new service should be integrated with existing crisis pathways in cases where individuals need to be escalated to more intensive support.

We know that waits for autism assessments are very long, with many private providers coming into the market and Cornwall isn't unique to this. NHS Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Integrated Care Board and the Trust have developed plans to reduce the waiting times to access autism services and those on the waiting list should be made aware of how to access support should they feel vulnerable or at risk. It should be noted that if an autistic person is requiring or requesting support for a mental health condition all reasonable adjustments should be made to support timely access to evidence-based support.

Turning to your concerns around the impact of staffing shortages on service delivery nationally, the Government recognises the need to increase workforce capacity in NHS mental health services overall. Positive progress has been made on growing the mental health workforce which, as of December 2023, had increased by around 20,800 compared to 2019/20. In addition, the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan sets out an ambition to grow the mental health, primary and community care workforce by 73% by 2036-37.

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

Yours sincerely,



MARIA CAULFIELD