

James Bennett

Area Coroner – Birmingham and Solihull
Coroner's Court
Steelhouse Lane
Birmingham
B4 6BJ

13 September 2024

Dear Mr Bennett,

Preventing Future Deaths Report – Tchernobari.

Thank you for providing the College of Policing with a copy of your report dated 3 June 2024 following the death of Tchernobari.

I understand a number of concerns have been raised specifically in relation to the communication and risk assessments between West Midlands Police (WMP) and Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust (BSMHFT), with the College being cited as the organisation responsible for Approved professional Practice (APP) and party to the Right Care Right Person (RCRP) national initiative.

The College of Policing work closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) who have established a national Right Care Right Person (RCRP) team to support forces by providing advice and guidance in their development and implementation of RCRP. The College of Policing have worked with the NPCC to publish a guidance toolkit; **Right Care Right Person toolkit | College of Policing**

The toolkit was developed with the NPCC along with national partners and sets out that Right Care Right Person aims to ensure vulnerable people get the right support from the right emergency services. It applies to calls for service about:

- concern for the welfare of a person
- people who have walked out of a healthcare setting
- people who are absent without leave (AWOL) from mental health services
- medical incidents

The toolkit was fully published by December 2023 and forces have been encouraged to follow the guidance within their development of RCRP.

The RCRP toolkit applies specifically to the areas as set out above and does not encompass incidents relating to missing persons. However, it is acknowledged that some incidents which are at first treated as an RCRP related incident, including AWOL, may then turn into a missing person investigation. The Toolkit specifically raises this point to ensure forces provide clarity to their staff on which policy to follow when dealing with changing incidents. The toolkit states:

It is important to distinguish between someone who is AWOL and someone who is missing (as defined by force policy).

Within the College's Mental health APP, under the section titled 'AWOL patients' see link: [AWOL patients | College of Policing](#) the professional practice sets out the following;

- *Police forces should consider including the following matters in their locally agreed multi-agency protocol for AWOL patients:...*

Response and communication strategies so that partner agencies understand what police actions and resources will be deployed as a result of reporting someone absent.

The Missing Persons APP [Missing persons | College of Policing](#) is a separate and distinct policy that is not covered by RCRP, and sets out guidance to forces including the following;

- *By working together, sharing information and having a common understanding of processes, police forces and partner agencies involved with health, social care and safeguarding are able to support the proper management of missing person cases.*
- *Senior officers should ensure that protocols are in place to support any situation where individuals are looked after, and should set out each organisation's responsibilities and processes in relation to someone being absent or going missing. Collaborative development and implementation of protocols may also facilitate better relationships between agencies.*
 - *The protocols should include... an agreed inter-agency framework for classifying the degree of risk when an individual goes missing.*
- *It may also be appropriate to involve other agencies, social services and health and mental health care professionals within the risk assessment process, particularly in relation to children in the care of the local authority.*
- *The officer's assessment of risk should be checked, verified and recorded on the appropriate form (*by a supervisor).*

- *Mental health services should be consulted if a person is thought to be suicidal or suffering from a mental health crisis to find out if the person is known to them.*
- *The hospital has a duty to ensure the welfare of the individual, and should be expected to undertake reasonable enquiries... Where there is immediate risk of harm, police should not delay action to find the missing person.*

The College has been working with the NPCC to ensure that the Missing Persons APP is as clear as possible in relation to communication between police and mental health services. We continually keep under review any amendments required including the need to update the language used in the APP to include a stronger emphasis on consulting mental health services. The College is also currently undertaking a full review of the Mental Health APP, and the points raised in regard to officers having regard to the expertise of mental health clinicians will be included within this review process.

I understand that West Midlands Police are working with partners on the implementation of RCRP and are currently in the process of reviewing their policies and procedures in line with the College of Policing toolkit and Approved Professional Practices.

I hope this is useful and that it helps to reassure you that our APP and Toolkit guidance, along with the scope of our current review of the Mental Health APP, deals with the issues that you have highlighted. If there is anything further that we can assist with, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]

Chief Executive Officer
College of Policing

E: [Redacted email address]