

Mr Xavier Mooyart
Assistant Coroner for Inner South London
1 Tennis Street
London
SE1 1YD

26th September 2024

Dear Mr Mooyart,

Further to your prevention of Future Deaths Notice following the conclusion of your inquest (8th November 2023) into the death of Kasey Beech who died on 13th October 2021, we would like to extend our sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of Ms Beech.

We note the initial assessment took place in an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) rather than Emergency Department (ED); from the described circumstances of Ms Beech's death, it is not clear whether the UTC was effectively 'gatekeeping' access to an emergency department or not. Regarding the Simple Triage Rapid Emergency Assessment Method 'STREAMing Model'^a, we have not been able to find any specific details regarding what appears to be an initial assessment tool, and we do not believe that this is an assessment tool that is routinely used in emergency departments. As a consequence, we are not able to provide any specific response to your concerns regarding the apparent prioritisation of cardiac sounding chest pain over other potentially life-threatening conditions.

The Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) has issued the following guidance regarding the initial assessment (triage) of patients [1]

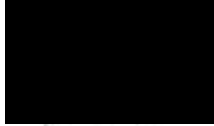
- *The front door of the Emergency Department should be managed by the ED and fall within its quality improvement and governance systems.*
- *Gatekeeping to the ED by non-Emergency Department services is not supported.*
- *Emergency Departments use simple or complex streaming [2], as part of their initial assessment processes. Both processes should be resourced to meet variation in demand and be delivered by trained clinical staff.*

The RCEM has collaborated with NHS England to standardise the definition and processes that might be used in the initial assessment of a patient attending the emergency department [2]. The RCEM continues to work with NHS England to promote the standardisation of initial assessment of patients presenting to emergency departments. Our current work has involved

^a Streaming is the process of allocating patients to different physical areas / services, pathways or processes, to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The main objective of streaming is to ensure that the patient is directed to the correct location / service and to the correct person to manage their clinical needs. Streaming should always be performed by a trained clinician.

an evidence-based review of the effectiveness of current triage systems as well as helping to design a new initial assessment process for implementation in all emergency departments throughout England [3].

Yours sincerely,



Chair, Quality in Emergency Care Committee

References

1. Initial Assessment of Emergency Department Patients. RCEM, 2017. https://rcem.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SDDC_Intial_Assessment_Feb2017.pdf
Accessed 16.09.2024
2. Guidance for emergency departments: initial assessment. NHS England, August 2022. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/guidance-for-emergency-departments-initial-assessment/>
Accessed 16.09.2024
3. Standardising Acuity Clinical Guide. NHS England, in publication.