

26 November 2024

Office of the Chair & Chief Executive
Trust Headquarters
Portland House
44 Richmond Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 1HS

Dear Mr Simpson

Inquest into the Death of Ryan Ouslem, Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths

I write in response to your Regulation 28 Report dated 24 September 2024.

I was so sorry to read the details of the circumstances leading to Ryan's death and I extend my sincerest condolences to his family.

I acknowledge and understand the concerns that you have raised regarding the importance of sharing risk information with Sussex Police as the trust moves from the Street Triage model to the Rapid Response Service (RRS).

I do of course share your concern that for the new RRS to be a success it relies upon joint working with partner agencies to ensure as far as possible, that our approach to assessing risk of a vulnerable person in need of mental health support, are aligned.

Your Concern

The new approach under the Right Care, Right Person policy will still need police officers to understand mental health issues in order to know when to pass matters on for mental health services to deal with and what information to provide. Despite the significant change of working arrangements there does not appear to have been any joint training undertaken; nor am I informed that any is planned. I am concerned that the importance of sharing all relevant information will not be understood unless each organisation understands what information to provide to the other or what questions to ask.

Chair: [REDACTED]

Chief Executive: [REDACTED]

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www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk

A teaching trust of Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Prior to the launch of the RRS, representatives from the Trust met with Sussex Police's Mental Health Lead and a representative from West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service on 16 July 2024 which enabled a discussion of how it was anticipated the RRS would function when launched on 4 November 2024. One of the conclusions from the meeting was that there is scope for improvement of the flow of information between the police and mental health services and I address below the action the Trust has taken (and will continue to monitor) to make these improvements.

Improving the flow of information between Sussex Police and RRS

Under the previous Street Triage model, it was always the case that there was a discussion between a Mental health practitioner and the police in order to consider whether the use of the Police S136 detaining power (under the Mental Health Act 1983) was appropriate and this would necessarily include discussions around risk.

The soft launch of the RRS went live on 4 November 2024.

The RRS is accessed by a single point of contact (SPOC) which will allow for:

- Consistency of guidance provided to the police;
- Consistency of approach to information sharing;
- A single point for any issues to be identified and corrected.

These benefits were less likely to be available under the previous Street Triage model because each locality developed local practices (e.g. to better support the demographic and to address known risks) and whilst there is still a place to be sensitive and aware of demographic differences and known risks, we recognise the importance of having a trust wide consistent approach in other areas, including how risk information between SPFT and Sussex Police is shared.

A trust wide Standard Operational Procedure for the RRS is being developed which will provide guidance to staff working within the RRS. This will embed the expectations placed

upon our stakeholder partners namely Sussex Police, British Transport Police and South East Coast Ambulance when contacting the RRS. As would be expected, it will also provide guidance around risk management and will include the following:

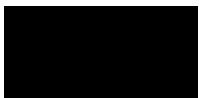
- An acknowledgment of risk management being a crucial part of the Practitioner's role and responsibilities;
- A requirement that all risks should be clearly documented and accompanied by the source of the information;
- A requirement that all decisions made are based on risk and clinical presentation, be evidenced based and clearly documented and recorded in line with Trust policies.

Joint Training

The trust is not commissioned to provide training to Sussex Police and they employ their own Mental Health specialist. However I wish to assure you that this is not a bar to the Trust providing support to Sussex Police with mental health related training. I am able to advise you that immediately following the inquest, the Trust contacted Sussex Police to open the door to discussions about how we may approach cross training and these discussions are ongoing.

I do hope that this response will be of assurance to you and Mr Ouslem's family that the newly implemented RRS provides the trust with an opportunity to monitor the sharing of information between SPFT and Sussex Police prior to it being rolled out across the whole of the trust. If you have any questions regarding the content of this response or if I can further assist please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely


Chief Executive