



Susan Evans

HM Area Coroner Derby & Derbyshire

17th March 2025

Dear Ms Evans,

Re: Regulation 28 Report into the death of Chad Allford

I am writing in response to your Regulation 28 report following the investigation and inquest into the tragic circumstances of the death of Chad Allford on the 27th of October 2021.

I hope to answer the concerns you raised within section 5 of your report, which are listed as follows:

1. The evidence in this inquest focused, in part, on police officers' response to concealment of drugs in the mouth. The officers were part of a team, acting on intelligence, to make a drug offence arrest. None of the officers concerned had received prior training in this regard. They employed various methods to try and control Mr Allford and although each instructed Mr Allford to spit the drugs out, none of them warned him of the risks to his life of not doing so. It was not clear that officers understood the importance of communicating the dangers.

Since the time of Mr Allford's death the College of Policing has instigated a review of the current version of the Personal Safety Manual, as a result of this review it is currently being revised, which is a detailed and lengthy process. Part of this process includes an examination on the guidance for dealing with articles in the mouth. The current manual does not feature guidance on informing a subject regarding the risk to their life as a result of swallowing drugs, future versions of the manual and curriculum will do so. In the interim period while the manual is

completed communication will be sent out nationally via the NPCC Self Defence Arrest & Restraint Panel to advise forces of this recommendation and implement appropriate changes.

2. Attempts were made by officers to open his mouth and sweep the drugs out of the mouth with their hands. A number of officers gave evidence that they were not aware of some of the risks inherent in placing their hands in someone's mouth, including the risk of packages entering the airway and therefore choking, and they were not aware of the relevant passages in the NPCC Personal Safety Manual or importantly, the principles relating to this contained within. This was not only the position in 2021 but remained the position at the time of the inquest.

As per the previous answer the revision of the Personal Safety Manual includes an examination on the guidance for dealing with articles in the mouth. The advice mentioned above in the current manual is given as "Officers should not attempt to put their fingers in the subject's mouth to remove any objects, as this could pose a risk to the officer and could possibly push the object into the airway and causing an obstruction." Words to this effect will remain in future versions of the manual and be reviewed against the latest medical guidance for this area.

3. I am concerned that there is no standard provision for guidance or training for police officers in units tasked to make arrests for drug offences, to equip them to make informed decisions when faced with this situation. In the Personal Safety Manual (Module 12 pg 42), it is described as a 'common tactic used by some subjects during arrest to conceal controlled drugs in their mouths'.

The issue of drugs being concealed in a subjects mouth may not be as widespread as the wording in the manual implies. Anecdotal evidence suggests it is ordinarily linked with a small number of subjects who practice the tactic frequently. In force areas where concealment of drugs in the mouth is an identified risk, training curriculums developed by the College of Policing allow for the provision of the relevant sections of the Personal Safety Manual to be delivered. This facility is available in both the historic Personal Safety Training and the latest Public &

Personal Safety Training delivery methods. In forces where this is the case the staff that require the training, level it is delivered at, and the appropriate risk mitigation would be informed by a local needs analysis.

I hope this helps to answer the points that were raised but if we can assist with anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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Policing Standards Manager – Specialist Operations
College of Policing