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West London Coroner's Service
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National Medical Director
NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
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27 February 2025

Dear Coroner,

Re: Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths – James Robert Michael Alderman who died on 11 October 2023

Thank you for your Report to Prevent Future Deaths (hereafter "Report") dated 13 December 2024 concerning the death of James Robert Michael Alderman (known as Jimmy) on 11 October 2023. In advance of responding to the specific concerns raised in your Report, I would like to express my deep condolences to Jimmy's parents and family. NHS England are keen to assure the family and the Coroner that the concerns raised in your Report have been listened to and reflected upon, and we commend Jimmy's parents George and Ellie Alderman for their important work raising public awareness of the risks when using carriers or slings with newborns.

Your Report raised the concern that there is insufficient information available from any source to inform parents of the safe positioning of young babies within carriers / slings and, in particular, in relation to breastfeeding in carriers / slings. NHS England agree that every parent should expect quality, comprehensive advice on how to keep their baby safe, particularly when using products marketed for use with babies.

Advice is available on the [NHS.UK website](https://www.nhs.uk) on the safe use of slings – including information on the UK Sling Consortium's 'TICKS' rules, and links to guidance from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Lullaby Trust on baby sling safety – in pages on [caring for a newborn baby](#), and separately on safe sleep and preventing [Sudden Infant Death Syndrome](#). However, on review, NHS England agree that this guidance could be easier to find and isn't currently linked to breastfeeding information. Our Maternity Team will work with the NHS.UK website team so that guidance on the safe use of slings is easier to find, and is linked to more relevant website pages, such as on breastfeeding.

Turning to antenatal advice given to women in healthcare settings, NHS Maternity Services are required to follow guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which develops evidence-based guidelines on what advice and care should be routinely provided. We are not aware of specific recommendations or advice on the safe use of slings, and we have referred this issue to NICE for consideration in response to your concerns. We have also passed on the details of this case to UNICEF-UK. As you may be aware, a significant proportion of maternity services in England work to achieve the standards of infant feeding advice and support

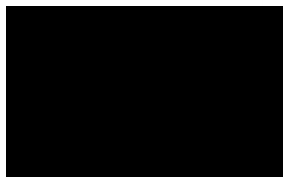
set out in [UNICEF-UK's Baby Friendly Initiative](#), and I know this will be a matter of interest for their trainers and holistic feeding advice.

There are a significant number of products marketed for use with newborns. In the context of limited time for midwives to provide advice in antenatal appointments, NHS England consider that the manufacturers of these products bear a significant responsibility for ensuring that parents receive adequate guidance on their safe use. I note that you have also written to the Office for Product Safety and Standards, and we are supportive of a revised industry standard in this area, in particular around the safe use of slings / carriers while breastfeeding.

I would also like to provide further assurances on the national NHS England work taking place around the Reports to Prevent Future Deaths. All reports received are discussed by the Regulation 28 Working Group, comprising Regional Medical Directors, and other clinical and quality colleagues from across the regions. This ensures that key learnings and insights around events, such as the sad death of Jimmy, are shared across the NHS at both a national and regional level and helps us to pay close attention to any emerging trends that may require further review and action.

Thank you for bringing these important patient safety issues to my attention and please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

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National Medical Director