

HM Assistant Coroner [REDACTED]
Coroner's Investigation Officer
Gerard Majella Courthouse
Boundary Street
Liverpool
L5 2QD

9th July 2025

Dear Mr Lewis,

I write on behalf of the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) in relation to paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, in relation to the prevention of future deaths report sent via email to the NPCC dated 1st May 2025.

The notice sets out concerns that arose from the information received during the inquest into the death of Robert John Evans. I am very sorry to read of the circumstances of Mr Evans death. My sympathies are with his family and friends.

As noted within the Authorised Professional Practice, there is clear guidance for what Custody Officers should do, when presented with a detainee who is suspected of having packed or swallowed drugs. I agree with your observations that there is a material difference between the action taken for those arrested, and those who are not. Further to this there is currently no power for officers to convey to hospital somebody detained under these provisions against their wishes. Whilst custody is heavily regulated with law, policies, procedures and best practice, fundamentally, an officers primary role is to preserve life and the risks in such cases should be recognised and further mitigated.

The NPCC Stop & Search portfolio has reviewed the Regulation 28 document and will work to ensure officers are equipped to resolve incidents such as these in the most appropriate manner. The portfolio will work with other national policing portfolios and stakeholders, to provide the necessary training and guidance to ensure officers have a refreshed knowledge of all policing powers available to them.

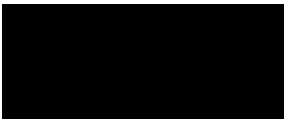
The suggestion that an officer cannot share information with a next of kin, or other family, to manage risk and prevent serious injury or death, is misguided. The police can disclose private information about a data subject if it is necessary to protect the vital interests of the data subject or another person. This typically applies in life-or-death situations, such as suspected drug ingestion (UK

GDPR Article 6(1)(d)). There are also similarly worded exemptions within the Data Protection Act 2018. There is already in place, national training modules that cover this subject in detail, and include scenarios where disclosure is proportionate and necessary, whilst emphasising the importance of disclosing the minimum amount of information necessary, to achieve the objective sought.

Safeguarding is a key area of focus for the NPCC and we are committed to working across relevant NPCC portfolios to ensure there is appropriate aftercare / safeguarding following a stop & search and will work to ensure a consistent approach that keeps people safe.

I hope the information provided will go some way to address your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further action or information in relation to my response.

Yours sincerely,



Chair
National Police Chiefs' Council