

1 September 2025

Mrs Heidi Connor
Senior Coroner for Berkshire
Berkshire Coroner's Office
Reading Museum and Town Hall
Blagrove Street
Reading
RG1 1QH

Dear Mrs Connor,

We are writing following further consideration of the issues raised by the very sad death of Ms Ellen Mercer. Our thoughts continue to be with her family.

We have reflected on the circumstances surrounding Ellen's death and the concerns raised in your report, specifically that policies do not require assessment of VTE risk in people presenting at the emergency department.

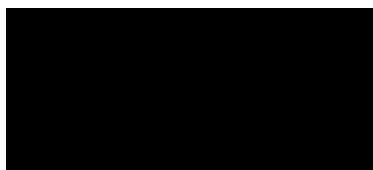
As we noted in our earlier response, we have published a guideline on venous thromboembolism in over 16s: reducing the risk of hospital-acquired deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism [NG89]. The guideline makes recommendations for VTE risk assessment for people admitted to hospital and we recommend assessing all medical patients to identify the risk of VTE and bleeding as soon as possible after admission to hospital or by the time of the first consultant review (recommendation 1.1.2).

Since our previous response, NICE's guideline surveillance team have thoroughly considered the issues raised in your report against our published recommendations and reviewed the issue you raise with topic experts. As a result of this, we will amend our recommendations in the guideline NG89 to say that people should be assessed to identify the risk of VTE and bleeding after a decision to admit to hospital, or after 12 hours in ED, or by the time of the first consultant review, whichever is sooner.

Additionally, we will amend our recommendations on pharmacological VTE prophylaxis to state that this should be started as soon as possible and within 14 hours of the decision to admit the person (rather than within 14 hours of admission as at present) where VTE prophylaxis is indicated. We hope that these amendments will address the issue of VTE prophylaxis for people who have a prolonged wait in the emergency department.

Thank you for bringing Ellen's case to our attention and we hope that this further update is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



[Redacted Name], CBE MD FRCS FRCEM
Chief Medical Officer, Deputy CEO and Interim Director of the Centre for Guidelines, NICE