

31 July 2025

Sean Cummings
HM Assistant Coroner for Milton Keynes HM Coroner's Office
Civic Offices
1 Saxon Gate East
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ

Dear Mr Cummings,

Re: Regulation 28: Report to prevent future deaths

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report dated 18 June 2025 following the inquest into the death of Edward Joseph Cassin. The inquest concluded on 13 February 2025.

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) deeply regrets the death of Mr Cassin and we would very much like to extend our condolences to his family.

I am writing to provide the Trust's response to the concerns that you raised in your report.

Matters of Concern

1. A lack of understanding by nursing and other staff of some of the policies and procedures that the Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) and Dietetic Service had developed and disseminated for investigating and managing patients prone to aspiration.
2. Provision of the SALT and Dietetic services by the Central and North West London NHS Trust into the Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (MKUH) involved both Trusts working to a degree in a siloed manner and that closer co-operation and sharing of clinical responsibility would benefit patients in a similar position in the future.

We would like to respectfully clarify that the Dietetic Service is provided by MKUH and therefore our response refers only to the SALT Service. With regard to the criticism of siloed working arrangements, we have been in discussions with MKUH and have concluded that we can improve the service for patients if this is run fully by MKUH. Arrangements have been made with MKUH to transfer the service to them on the 22 October. We believe this change will support more integrated and responsive care, with a single provider responsible for coordinating all relevant services within the hospital. CNWL is working closely with MKUH to ensure a smooth and safe transition of care.

Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) policies and procedures

The SALT Team continue to provide regular training and support to hospital staff on safe swallowing to enhance their knowledge and understanding. This training has been reviewed to ensure that it provides relevant information to staff about how to identify which patients require a referral to the SALT Team, how to make these referrals and how to ensure that

Trust Headquarters, 350 Euston Road, London NW1 3AX
Telephone: 020 3214 5700

www.cnwl.nhs.uk

safe swallowing recommendations are followed. The training has been enhanced by the inclusion of practical elements such as staff being required to prepare drinks and snacks that would be in line with the recommendations for a particular patient. Staff feedback on the training indicates that these changes have been received positively.

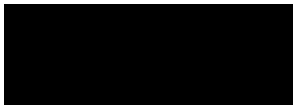
In addition to this, the Speech and Language Therapy team are actively working with MKUH on a quality improvement initiative focused on enhancing the care of patients with dysphagia. This has included updating the leaflets describing the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation (IDDSI) levels and in particular providing more specific information about the types of food allowed, as well as making the yellow bedside signs that provide patient-specific swallowing recommendations clearer.

Co-operation and sharing of clinical responsibility

The SALT Team continue to assess patients on the wards at MKUH and work closely with their hospital colleagues as part of this. A new, electronic, referral process to the SALT team has been implemented to ensure that referrals are standardised and can be triaged effectively. In the event of a clinical incident immediate feedback is provided to the ward staff. Any incidents are recorded by CNWL staff on the CNWL Datix incident reporting system, they are sent to MKUH within 1 working day and entered into the hospital RADAR (incident reporting) system for timely review by MKUH.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention. I hope that the content of this letter provides sufficient assurance that CNWL takes the concerns raised seriously and has taken action following the death of Mr Cassin. CNWL has accepted the points raised and continues to work to improve the service we provide. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely,



Chief Executive