




Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

  
*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for  
Women's Health and Mental Health*

*39 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0EU*

  
Joanne Kearsley  
The Coroner's Office  
2nd and 3rd Floor, Newgate House  
Newgate  
Rochdale  
OL16 1AT

  
31 October 2025

Dear Ms Kearsley,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 12 August 2025, sent to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, about the death of Jessica Smithson. I am replying as the Minister with responsibility for mental health.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Smithson's death, and I offer my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are very concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention. Thank you also for the additional time provided to the Department to provide a response to the concerns raised in the report.

Your report raises concerns about the delayed roll out of crisis text support services nationally, the lack of consistency in the approach taken by charities currently offering these services, and the impact of having no locally commissioned crisis text support service within the Greater Manchester area.

I understand your concerns.

In preparing this response, my officials have made enquiries with NHS England to ensure we adequately address your concerns.

As set out in the Suicide Prevention Strategy for England, mental health crisis text services are an important part of delivering accessible and effective mental health support across the country. NHS England has confirmed that all integrated care boards (ICB) have been asked to put in place integrated crisis text services and ICBs have now submitted their plans, with delivery expected across all areas by Spring 2026 and we have been requesting regular progress reports on this.

More broadly, the Government is committed to delivering effective care for those in crisis. This includes the introduction of the 'mental health option' for NHS 111, the roll out of 24/7 psychiatric teams in every A&E and investing up to £120 million to bring the number of

mental health emergency departments up to around 85, providing reactive, short term intensive support for people in acute mental health crisis as an alternative to A&E.

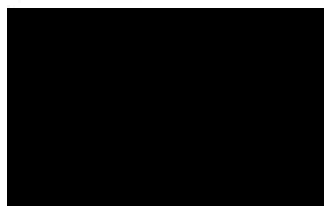
Our 10-Year Health Plan sets out our vision for a neighbourhood health service, which will bring care into local communities, convene professionals into patient-centred teams, end fragmentation and abolish the NHS default of 'one size fits all' care. As part of this, NHS England is currently piloting six 24/7 neighbourhood mental health centres, which expand on the 'no wrong door' approach of the Community Mental Health Framework, providing open access to mental health care for patients and reducing long waits.

I hope you will understand that charitable organisations providing crisis text services are independent of both Government and the NHS.

I would expect your concerns regarding the current lack of a locally commissioned crisis text support service to be addressed by NHS Greater Manchester ICB in its response to your report, and I understand from NHS England's response to you that it will be reviewing the ICB's response to consider whether any further actions are required.

I hope this response is helpful. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely,



**PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR  
WOMEN'S HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH**