

Ms Sarah Clarke
Kent and Medway Coroners' Service
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Maidstone
Kent
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Chief Executives Office
Priority House
Hermitage Lane
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6 March 2026

Dear Ms Clarke

Inquest into the death of Mrs Sarah Heaver

Kent and Medway Mental Health Trust Response to the Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Death

I write in response to the Regulation 28 Report dated 9 January 2026, sent to Kent and Medway Mental Health NHS Trust (the Trust) following the conclusion of the inquest into the very sad death of Mrs Heaver.

In your report to the Trust, you raised the following matter of concern:

I am concerned that patients are discharged from acute hospital settings on the understanding that they will receive psychiatric input equivalent to hospital admission, only for it to later become apparent that there is no access to a psychiatrist or prescriber for several days, particularly over bank holiday periods

Mrs Heaver's care was transferred to the care of the Home Treatment Team (HTT) which is a service provided when considering the least restrictive option in accordance with the Mental Health Act. The aim of the HTT is to provide an individualised plan of care for the patient in the community with the view of negating the need for a hospital admission. The multidisciplinary team consists of nurses, occupational therapists, doctors, support, time and recovery workers and non-medical prescribers.

Doing well together

At the time of the inquest of Mrs Heaver, the Trust had already identified that there was a lack of consistent cover provided for prescribing over weekends. This was identified by the Service Manager in February 2025, when it became apparent that all 3 Independent prescribers were on annual leave at the same time. This had unfortunately occurred due to 2 of the 3 undertaking additional training at university and they had not been able to utilise their leave in line with Trust policy. As a trust we will ensure this situation does not arise again. At the time of identifying this shortfall in regards to appropriate prescribing cover, in consultation with the three independent prescribers and [REDACTED], Consultant Psychiatrist, it was agreed that there would be a change in working pattern for the three independent prescribers subsequently working on a three-week rolling rota.

The responsibility for appropriate booking and agreement of annual leave was also transferred from the medical staff and was added to the rostering responsibility of the Operational Team Managers. This has now become established practice. All 3 prescribers now provide cross cover for both teams on all weekends, bank holidays, annual leave or sickness and this is reviewed in the teams total staffing cover weekly by the Operational Team managers. It has been agreed that if required, NHS Professionals can be utilised to provide prescribing cover, if the need should arise.

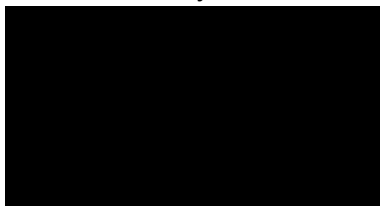
In the event that that there are complexities outside the skill sets and role of the independent Nurse prescriber, there is 24 hr access to the on-call psychiatrist, who in turn can contact the on-call pharmacist to discuss, if required.

I am sincerely sorry for the shortfalls in the care provided to Mrs Heaver.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and I hope this provides you a level of assurance of the Trusts ongoing commitment in providing safe care to our service users.

Please do let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Chief Executive.

Chief Executive