

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHAIR'S OFFICE**  
Berrywood Hospital  
Berrywood Drive  
NORTHAMPTON  
NN5 6UD



10 April 2026

FAO Ms Bina Patel  
Area Coroner for Bedfordshire and Luton



Dear Ms Patel

**RE: Regulation 28 Report Concerning Edward James Hands**

We write in response to your Prevention of Future Deaths Regulation 28 ('Report') dated 17 February 2026 concerning the death of Edward James Hands on 16 February 2024. Before responding to the matters of concern you have included within your Report, I would like to express my condolences to Mr Hand's family and loved ones.

From your Report, we understand that you have concerns about the arrangements in place within Bedford Prison to manage those suspected to be 'under the influence of illicit substances'. Specifically, you are concerned that the healthcare and prison teams are working to difference policies/procedures; that there is a lack of awareness of roles, responsibilities, and processes that should be followed in such circumstances; and that any Trust-wide policy/procedures we have in place should be clear on what happens when individual institutions have their own local protocols.

You have asked The Trust to either provide details of action taken, or proposed to be taken, or to explain why no action is proposed. Please find below our response to your concerns detailing the actions being taken.

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## **Our common protocol for managing those suspected to be Under the Influence**

We have worked with the Prison Governor and Head of Safety to agree and implement a common, local protocol for managing those suspected to be under the influence of illicit substances (UTI) at HMP Bedford. I have enclosed a copy of the protocol with this letter for your information.

The protocol clearly articulates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both healthcare and prison staff in the identification, assessment, and management of those suspected to be UTI.

The protocol makes it clear when prison staff should escalate to healthcare staff. It states that healthcare staff are responsible for taking the lead on UTI cases in which medical intervention is required. We have included a flowchart as an appendix to the UTI protocol to ensure this is clearly understood by both healthcare and prison service team members.

## **Ensuring prison and healthcare staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities**

The healthcare and prison service leadership teams circulated the UTI protocol and an amended UTI recording log to staff late last year. Mandatory training for healthcare staff on UTI detection and management is being facilitated by the Trust's Resuscitation Lead and is part of our induction programme. An 'Airways Champion' has also been identified. The Airways Champion supports our leadership team in maintaining competence in airway management and suction machine use. They will also help deliver future UTI simulation training sessions.

## **A new monthly meeting between prison and healthcare leaders**

We have established a new, monthly meeting between the Head of Healthcare and Prison Governor focused on operational matters of healthcare and prison service integration. This new meeting complements our existing Partnership Delivery Board, which serves as the primary mechanism for shared tactical oversight and decision-making on matters within the agreed terms of reference. These strengthened arrangements will help us to maintain aligned and effective working relationships between healthcare and prison service teams, learn lessons from any issues that may arise, and capitalise on opportunities for innovation and improvement.

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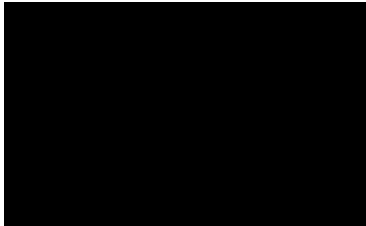


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I hope the content of this letter fully addresses the concerns you raised in your Report and provides assurance on the steps we have taken.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or require further information.

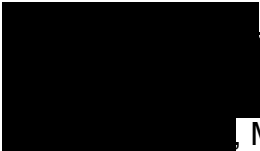
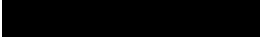
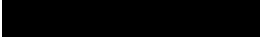
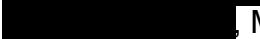
Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HEALTHCARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

Enc: HMP Bedford Local Under the Influence Protocol

Cc:  Chief Medical Officer  
 Group Chief Nurse  
 Chief Operating Officer  
 Managing Director and Deputy Chief Executive



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