



Care Quality Commission
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Darren Stewart OBE
HM Assistant Coroner for Surrey
HM Coroner's Court
Station Approach
Woking
GU22 7AP

21 April 2026



Dear Darren Stewart

Re: Regulation 28 Report following the inquest into the death of Gary Starbuck

Thank you for raising the Regulation 28 report with us, following the inquest into the death of Gary Starbuck on 16th August 2021 at home. We would like to extend our sympathy and condolences to Gary's family and friends.

Your concerns relate specifically to guidance published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) not being mandated for use by private providers.

As a regulator we are not able to mandate providers follow NICE guidance. NICE guidelines are generally not legally mandated, but they are expected to be considered by healthcare professionals.

We assess if providers are delivering evidence-based care and treatment. The requirement for people to receive care, treatment and support that is evidence-based and in line with good practice standards is strongly linked in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Our current assessment framework and associated guidance is published on the internet and is available to providers and the public. The assessment framework is currently under review, and the new framework and guidance will also be publicly available. To ensure providers are clear about what good looks like rating characteristics are also being developed. We will continue to work with other stakeholders to raise awareness of our expectations in the independent section.



We have also written to the two independent providers listed as interested parties to seek reassurance of their current process for referral to an MDT for cancer patients and their process for review and application of guidance.

If you have any questions about this letter, you can contact our National Customer Service Centre using the details below:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

If you do get in touch, please make sure you quote or have the reference above reference number to hand. It may cause delay if you are not able to provide it to us.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

Deputy Director Hospitals, Secondary and Specialist Care.