



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care)

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

HM Assistant Coroner Rachel Redman
East Sussex Coroners Court,
Westfield House,
St Anne's Crescent,
Lewes BN7 1UE

20 July 2026

Dear Ms Redman,

Thank you for the Regulation 28 report of 5 June 2026 sent to the Department of Health and Social Care about the death of Ms Neeshat Dalal. I am replying as the Minister for Women's Health and Mental Health.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Dalal's death, and I offer my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention.

The report raises concerns over a lack of funding to employ appropriately qualified dietitians who can support inpatients receiving psychiatric care with their nutrition.

In preparing this response, my officials have made enquiries across the Department for Health and Social Care to ensure we adequately address your concerns.

The Government has provided an additional £29 billion funding for day-to-day spending on health by 2028-29 compared to 2025-26. Integrated Care Boards (ICB) are responsible for commissioning health services and receive a general non-ringfenced allocation.

For 2026-27, NHS mental health spending is forecast to increase to a record £16.1 billion, representing a real-terms increase of around £140 million compared with the previous year.

Alongside this, the Mental Health Investment Standard remains in place. This means ICBs are required to protect mental health spending in real terms over the next three years, ensuring that mental health continues to receive the investment needed to improve services and outcomes for patients.

Individual NHS Trusts and other employers are responsible for determining staffing levels and workforce composition. They are best placed to understand their services and the

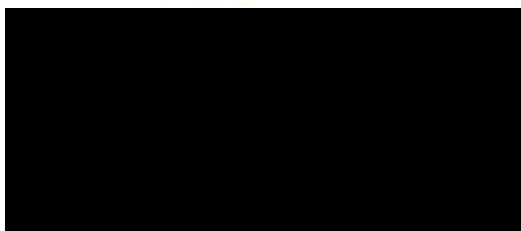
needs of their patients in order to deliver safe and effective care. I understand that you will also be receiving a response from NHS England.

Trusts already have a duty through the Health and Social Care Act 2008¹ to regularly review the number of staff and range of skills needed to safely meet the needs of people using their services.

In our 10 Year Health Plan we committed to publishing a new 10 Year Workforce Plan. The plan will help ensure the NHS has the right people in the right places to deliver the best care for patients.

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**

¹ *Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 – Regulation 18*