Department of Health & Social Care

[redacted]
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

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HM Assistant Coroner Guy Davies
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[redacted]

October 2026

Dear Mr Davies,

Thank you for the Regulation 28 report of 10th August 2026 sent to the Secretary of State about the death of Pamela Margeret Hindley**.** I am replying as the Minister with responsibility for Health Innovation.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Pamela'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 the risks arising from insufficient social care provision. You highlighted the pressure that rapid discharge events can place on hospital and community services, the risk of patients being discharged without appropriate care, equipment or home adaptations, and the effect of delayed discharges on hospital capacity, patient flow, emergency department crowding and ambulance services. You also referred to previous investigations identifying a link between patients awaiting discharge to social care and patients waiting in ambulances and emergency departments.

We recognise that, when a patient is admitted to hospital, inadequate planning and insufficient social care capacity can delay discharge, increase pressure on hospitals, emergency departments and ambulance services, and create risks for patients. It is important that people are discharged promptly and safely with the right care, equipment and home adaptations in place where required.

Discharge is a national delivery priority. We are working with NHS trusts and local authorities to embed best practice, including through the recently published NHS England Model Discharge Pathway. This sets out the actions hospitals and system partners can take to

reduce avoidable delays, improve patient flow and support timely and safe discharge – including through early planning of a patient's discharge. For people who require further care, multidisciplinary care transfer hubs bring together NHS, local authority, social care, housing and other professionals to coordinate discharge and ongoing support.

In 2026–27, over £9 billion is committed to the Better Care Fund. The NHS and local authorities are expected to work with providers to develop integrated intermediate care services with sufficient capacity to meet demand, including step-up care to avoid admissions and step-down care to support discharge and recovery. In addition, the Government is making over £4.6 billion of additional funding available for adult social care in 2028–29 compared with 2025–26, to support improvements in the sector.

We also recognise the importance of ensuring that necessary home adaptations are delivered promptly. Local authorities are required to meet delivery timescales set out in legislation, and the Government has published target timescales in its Disabled Facilities Grant delivery guidance. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government also funds Foundations, the national body for the Disabled Facilities Grant and home improvement agencies in England, which provides guidance, training and practical support to help local authorities and practitioners deliver adaptations efficiently, effectively and in a timely way.

These measures are intended to strengthen social care capacity and the availability of appropriate support, including home adaptations, so that people can be discharged safely and avoidable delays and pressures on hospital and ambulance services are reduced.

Yours sincerely,





PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE