



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care)

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

HM Coroner Chris Morris
Manchester South Coroners Court
1 Mount Tabor Street (1 Mottram Street)
Stockport
SK1 3AG.
0161 474 3993

22 September 2026

Dear Mr Morris,

Thank you for the Regulation 28 report of 21 July 2026 sent to the Secretary of State about the death of Margaret Murphy. I recognise the importance of the concerns raised in your report and have considered them with great care. I am replying as the Minister responsible for Secondary Care.

Firstly, I would like to say how deeply saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Murphy's death, and I offer my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. I appreciate that no response can lessen their loss. 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 insufficient medical specialists in microbiology at Tameside General Hospital (TGH) to help identify Ms Murphy's necrotising fasciitis during her time at TGH. Despite attending hospital on 4th, 5th and 6th October 2025, it was not identified until postmortem.

In preparing this response, officials have made enquiries within this department to ensure we adequately address your concerns.

I recognise the distress that the circumstances described in your report will have caused Ms Murphy's family and loved ones and I have carefully considered the situation. 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 would expect Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust and all other NHS Trusts to ensure that their staffing arrangements are appropriate, following the tragic death of Ms Murphy.

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.

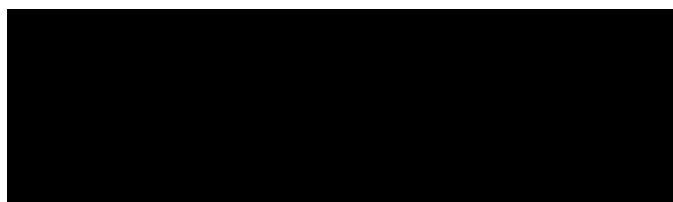
The recent Resident Doctors Deal significantly expands the number of specialty training posts by up to 4,500 over the next three years, including 1,000 next year. More than 350 of these additional places will be available in England to start in February 2027. This expansion is a positive step towards strengthening the specialist medical workforce and supporting the NHS to build more resilient services in response to concerns such as those raised in your report.

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

I note that you have also sent this report to Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership, and Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust and expect that they will respond regarding the concerns about the services involved.

I hope this response is helpful. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely,



MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH

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