



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care)

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

HM Senior Coroner Amber Pember
Northamptonshire Coroner's Service
The Guildhall,
St Giles' Square,
Northampton,
NN1 1DE

14 October 2026

Dear Ms Pember,

Thank you for the Regulation 28 report of 14th August 2026 sent to the Secretary of State / the Department of Health and Social Care about the death of Samuel Hand. I am replying as the Minister for State for Secondary Care.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Samuel Hand's death, and I offer my sincere condolences to their 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 disposition of the calls made by Mr. Hand to EMAS, where he stated he had taken a significant overdose and was experiencing suicidal ideation.

In considering your report, officials within the Department of Health and Social Care have made enquiries with NHS England and concluded that concerns regarding the disposition of the 999-call made by Mr. Hand are more appropriately addressed by NHS England directly. I am advised that NHS England will therefore provide you with a full and comprehensive response on the concerns you have raised.

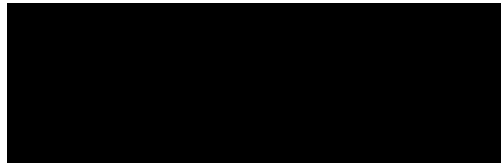
NHS Ambulance Services in England must process 999 calls through a nationally approved clinical triage system. NHS England currently approves two systems in England for primary 999 assessments; NHS Pathways and Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS).

Call handlers receive comprehensive training in nationally approved triage systems such as NHS Pathways and the Advanced Medical Priority Dispatch System. Their training covers clinical awareness for prioritising life-threatening emergencies, effective communication with distressed callers, safeguarding vulnerable individuals, coordination with police, fire and specialist services, and proficiency in technology including computer-aided dispatch and integrated clinical decision support.

The recognition and management of complex calls is comprehensively taught in the initial training period for Health Advisors. It is tested at the end of this period, prior to live call-taking, and is repeatedly reinforced through Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and mandatory call audits.

In addition, clinical advisors (such as paramedics and nurses) are available to support call handlers with complex or high-risk cases, ensuring that every patient receives the most appropriate response.

I hope this response is helpful and you receive a detailed response from NHS England and the trust on the substantive concerns regarding the calls Mr Hand made to EMAS. Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.



MINISTER OF STATE