



British Thoracic Society

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Mrs M E Voisin
Her Majesty's Senior Coroner
Area of Avon
The Coroner's Court
The Courthouse
Old Weston Road
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3 September 2014

Dear Mrs Voison

Gerald Trevor WERRETT

Thank you for asking the British Thoracic Society to provide a report following the inquest on the above individual.

I am a Consultant Physician and work at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire. I am replying on the basis that I am the Honorary Secretary of the British Thoracic Society and a Consultant Respiratory Physician for over 20 years. I note that the invitation for comment has been produced on a regulation 28 - to prevent future deaths.

The inquest report I have seen states that the chest drain was wrongly inserted and this apparently contributed to the patient's death. While clearly having minimal details on which to comment, I note that the Trust has developed a safety check list which they are willing to share with other parties.

Regrettably, harm from chest drains is well recognised. The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) produced a Rapid Response Report and supporting information in May 2008. The latter give background information and refers very clearly to the Guideline which was developed by the British Thoracic Society in 2003. The Rapid Response report states clearly questions that the team should ask about before placement of chest drains.

In 2010 the British Thoracic Society published an 82 page update on management of pleural disease which includes safe insertion of chest drains (*Thorax* 2010 (August) Vol. 65, supplement 2). This publication is freely available in most medical libraries and, more importantly, is available on the British Thoracic Society website which is open to all individuals. It is one of the most frequently visited sections of the Society's website.

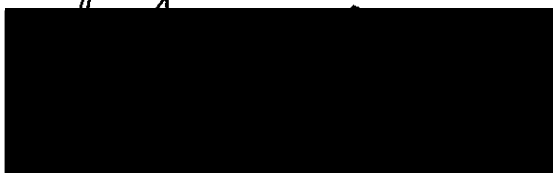
Recognising the problems that can occur with the placement of chest drains, in part mandated by the NPSA, many hospitals have already produced their own local guidelines, based upon those of the

British Thoracic Society. I am unsure if such local guidelines were available at the Trust where the event occurred and how well they were followed.

The British Thoracic Society thanks you for the interest in our guidelines and notes that these are more comprehensive and recent than information available from the NPSA.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

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Consultant Physician
Honorary Secretary, British Thoracic Society