

2 MAR 2016

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital
King's Lynn
NHS Foundation Trust



JL File



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Your ref: JL/sd

26 February 2016

Mrs. J. Lake,
The Coroner,
Norfolk Coroner's Service
69 – 75 Thorpe Road
Norwich
Norfolk
NR1 1UA

Dear Mrs. Lake,

Re: Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths following the Inquest: Mr Christopher Higgins

I am writing to apologise that you did not receive a response to the Regulation 28 report following the death of Mr Christopher Higgins within the timeframe set out in your letter of the 24 December 2015. We have been working closely with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust to develop a referral pathway which will ensure in the future that inpatients from our local mental health facility can access care and treatment in the Emergency Department in a timely manner that limits stress to the individual concerned.

Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust has coordinated this work and has developed the written pathway and flow diagram for staff, outlining a new referral route in which a potential Emergency Department attendance is flagged with the department and a mutually agreed time is arranged so that the patient can be seen immediately on arrival in the department. At the time of the inquest our understanding was that the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust were already in the process of liaising with local A&E Departments and thereafter drawing up a joint response incorporating these local agreements and you may already have received further details from them. We are pleased to say that this work is now complete.

The Trust currently experiences a significant level of attendance in the Emergency Department from patients presenting with mental health problems or self-harm and as such is constantly seeking ways to improve the experience for these patients. It is hoped that this planned pathway for patients from an inpatient mental health bed will improve both the experience and safety of this particular cohort of patients.

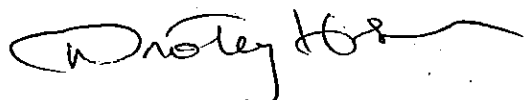
Chair:
Chief Executive:
Patron:

Edward Libbey
Dorothy Hoseln
Her Majesty The Queen



I apologise once again that we did not respond within the required timeframe but would like to assure you that your recommendations have been acted on and new measures agreed to improve the safety of the process of transfer and the experience for the patient.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dorothy Hosein', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs. Dorothy Hosein
Chief Executive