

NORTHFIELD MEDICAL CENTRE

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LE8 4NS

Telephone: [REDACTED]

H.M. Coroner
The Town Hall
Town Hall Square
Leicester
LE1 9BG

Dear H.M. Coroner

Re: Francis James Lea (Your ref: CEM/GA/02131-2016)

I am writing to you on behalf of Northfield Medical Centre.

The matters of concern raised in your report dated 15th December 2016 have been discussed in a meeting between Hazelmere Medical Centre (HMC), Northfield Medical Centre (NMC) and The East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

NMC response to Coroner's report:

Mr Lea was resident in a care home at a time when a decision had been taken locally to rationalise the GP provision to care homes, as far as possible, to improve the care given to patients. The relevant GP practices wrote to the patients, via the care homes, explaining the change and giving patients the option to move GP practices or to remain with their existing practice. A copy of such a letter sent by Northfield Medical Centre to its care home patients is attached.

Mr Lea was initially a patient at Hazelmere Medical Centre but the GP practice allocated to his care home was Northfield Medical Centre. Where patients were happy to move GP practice, this was facilitated by the care home, as was the case for Mr Lea.

Mr Lea agreed to change GP practice and there was no suggestion that he did not have the capacity to make the decision to change GP. In such circumstances, the GP practice is not in a position to inform the next of kin due to the duty of confidentiality owed to the patient and practical difficulties of identifying relevant members of the family or next of kin.

As a consequence, it appears that although the care home and Mr Lea were aware that Mr Lea had changed GP practice, Mr Lea's family were not.

In order to avoid such a situation arising again, we will as a practice be liaising with the care homes to request that:

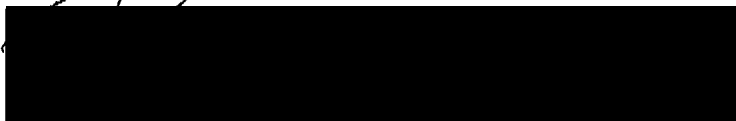
- Where a patient, with capacity, who is resident in a care home, changes GP practice and this change is facilitated by the care home, arrangements are put in place for the care home to provide written confirmation that the patient is aware of the change, the patient gives consent to the change and that where appropriate the patient's next of kin have been informed.
- Where a patient lacks capacity, the care home should provide written confirmation that the patient's next of kin has been properly informed and consents to the change of GP practice. If there are any concerns about capacity it would be expected that the care home would raise these.
- Wherever a Registration Form is signed on a patient's behalf, the person signing the form on the patient's behalf will be required to print their name and their relationship to the patient.

In addition it has been agreed that any future projects such as that undertaken to rationalise GP provision to care homes, as referred to above, should include better advertisement, including in the form of posters, so that families, next of kin and staff are fully aware of proposed changes.

For an existing local agreement about changing patient care from one local practice to another when a patient resides in a care home, any communication arriving at the old practice in the 6 week period between deduction from the old practice and registration at the new practice will be forwarded on to the new practice, in addition to a copy being returned to the sender.

With regard to a safe and effective transfer of care, it has been agreed that to avoid any similar accidents, for any future Locality projects there will be a written policy which needs to have been signed off by all parties as to the clear process of facilitating any change of GP registration and who will be informing the next of kin where appropriate.

Yours faithfully



On behalf of the Northfield Medical Centre