

Professor Chris Jones
Dirprwy Brif Swyddog Meddygol
Deputy Chief Medical Officer



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mr C J Woolley
Assistant Coroner
South Wales Central Area

October 2018

Dear Mr Woolley

Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths – Deidre Harvey

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2018, enclosing the above Regulation 28 report following your investigation into the death of Deidre Harvey. I am responding on behalf Vaughan Gething Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services in Wales.

We know the interaction between mental and physical health has important consequences at all levels of a patient's care and treatment. 46% of people with severe mental illness also have significant long term physical conditions. Admission to a mental health inpatient facility should be seen as an opportunity to improve a person's mental and physical health. It is also an opportunity to review the medications that a person takes, particularly in terms of their side effects and interactions with other medications.

It is encouraging to see several of the Royal Colleges and other educational bodies are already undertaking work to explore the addition to the new components of the professional educational curricula, in order to achieve the person-centred approach which combines the various aspects of a person's physical and mental health conditions in a holistic fashion. We expect any outside consultants to work collaboratively with the team involved with a patient's day to day care to ensure any decisions taken concerning a patient's treatment plan are based on their holistic health needs.

NHS organisations are expected to ensure that units / wards are safe for the patients being cared within them. Fixtures and fittings should therefore be assessed to ensure they are anti-ligature. Where ligature risk points are identified but cannot be immediately addressed, it is the responsibility of the professionals caring for people on such a unit and the health board generally to put robust measures in place to mitigate the risks.

In the shorter term, Welsh Government officials will be taking this tragic incident for discussion at the all Wales Serious Incidents Group in October. Led by the NHS Delivery Unit, it will contribute to improve learning and the development and dissemination of further guidance to be shared across the differing professional groups.

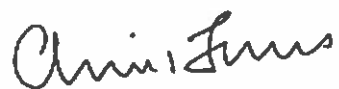


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I do assure you that Welsh Government will keep this case and the learning that arises under ongoing review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PROFESSOR CHRIS JONES