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Mr Chris Morrison  
Area Coroner  
Coroner's Court  
1 Mottram Street  
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Stockport  
SK1 3AG

10 April 2018

Dear Mr Morrison

**REGULATION 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATH: CHARLIE BENJAMIN CRAIG (DECEASED)**

Thank you for your Report dated 15 February 2018 made under paragraph 7, schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 ("Report"), which has been made following the inquest touching the death of Charlie Craig which was heard at Stockport Coroner's Court on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

We have set out below our response to the Report addressing the matters of concern raised in the Report, namely that British Cycling does not currently undertake any health assessments or medical screening prior to accepting young riders onto the apprentice stage of the World Class Programme ("WCP").

**Great Britain Cycling Team ("GBCT") WCP**

As you are aware the GBCT operates a performance pathway which nurtures promising talent ultimately leading to participation on the WCP. The performance pathway is broken down into an apprentice stage for riders between the ages of 14 and 16, the junior academy for riders between the ages of 16 and 18, the senior academy for riders between the ages of 18 and 23 and the podium stage for riders aged 21 upwards.

In the apprentice stage the training is regionalised and riders are not subject to a full time training program and in fact only train with the GBCT for, on average, 15 to 20 days per year. As riders progress through the various stages the training becomes more extensive and is centralised in Manchester.

**GBCT medical assessment**

At present, on joining the apprentice stage, riders are required to complete a health questionnaire. As riders progress through the stages and the training becomes more intense, so does the medical review which includes a full medical screening including cardiac screening in the form of an ECG, followed by an echocardiogram where abnormalities are detected on the ECG.





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## Review of medical screening on the GBCT

The type of testing envisaged as a possibility by the Coroner has in fact been under research since last September when a new Head of Medical Services was appointed and British Cycling believes that this testing will meet what is envisaged by the Coroner's report.

Since his appointment the new Head of Medical Services has been working with some of the UK's leading sports cardiology experts at Liverpool John Moores University to produce new GBCT cardiac screening guidelines ("Guidelines") covering all athletes on the WCP together with those at apprentice level. The recommendations for Guidelines are due to be submitted for review by the GBCT Senior Leadership Team by 16 April 2018, following which the Guidelines will be implemented across the WCP and those at apprentice level.

The screening of individuals below the age of 16 has previously been a contentious area across all sports, as due to the developmental changes in the heart which are still taking place at this age ECG monitoring can produce false positive ECG findings. However, the latest professional consensus at the UK Cardiology in British Sport Symposium (23 March 2018) is that screening at this age can be statistically relevant.

It is proposed that under the Guidelines, as a minimum, apprentice riders will not be allowed to participate in the performance pathway until they have:

- a. satisfactorily completed a health questionnaire and any areas of concern have been addressed by the GBCT medical team,
- b. provided a fitness to participate certificate from their General Practitioner, and
- c. provided evidence that cardiac screening has been undertaken in the form of an ECG, and where abnormalities are detected on the ECG, evidence has been obtained that a satisfactory echocardiogram has been completed. Any abnormalities found at the time of screening will trigger referral to a sports cardiologist for further action, including decisions on further participation on the performance pathway.

We trust that the above addresses the matters of concern raised in the Report; however, should further information be required please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Julie Harrington  
Chief Executive  
British Cycling