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31st March 2020

Dr Andrew Harris
HM Coroner
Southwark Coroners Court

Dear Sir

Inquest touching the death of Kerry Aldridge – PFD Response

I am writing to you on behalf of South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) in response to the Preventing Future Death report issued on 10th February 2020.

On behalf of the Trust I acknowledge your concern in regards to this very sad incident which resulted in the tragic death of Ms Kerry Aldridge

In preparing this report I have consulted with the following:

- Inspector [REDACTED], Metropolitan Police, Central Mental Health Team, Adult Safeguarding, ANVA Tactical Policy Advisor
- Inspector [REDACTED], British Transport Police, Public Protection.
- [REDACTED], Clinical Service Lead, SLaM Acute Referrals Service (Crisis Assessment Team)

The Provision of further Mental Health Training for Metropolitan Police Officers.

In my discussion with [REDACTED] I was informed that all Metropolitan Police officers receive training in mental health and mental capacity issues. We both acknowledged that there maybe specific officers who would benefit from more focused training. She specifically identified officers who would have a dedicated role in suicide prevention. I was able to identify that as a mental health trust we are able to provide mental health awareness training to a range of community partners. Our Mental Health Promotion team provide Mental Health First Aid training and there is an option for the Metropolitan Police to commission this training package. Preliminary discussions are due to take place by the end of March 2020.

Mental Health Support to Metropolitan Police Officers

██████████ identified that the Metropolitan Police do not have a Safeguarding Adult Team, however, there are safeguarding strands attached to all 12 of the Borough Command Units. South London & Maudsley NHS Trust Foundation Trust employ two full time Metropolitan Police officers who work within our main hospital sites and liaise on a three monthly basis with the borough command safeguarding officers who all have mental health knowledge and experience. The officers employed within our mental health trust would usually act as a conduit for information, advice and support within our service but also their fellow officers in the borough command units

██████████ assured me that officers have a range of personal support internally ranging from counselling to well-being advice and signposting to appropriate support services.

Single Point of contact

I am pleased to identify that there exists a strong link between SLaM & the Metropolitan Police. On a wider perspective, there are a number of pathways that police officers can assess support and advice in relation to early identification of individuals who may need specialist mental health interventions

South London & Maudsley NHS Trust has, since 2017, worked in partnership with the Metropolitan Police to provide a crisis and assessment service. The service enables mental health staff to work jointly with metropolitan police officers in the provision of early assessment and intervention. ██████████, allocates officers to work within the Crisis and Assessment team. The service also provides a 24 hour advice and support line to the public, 111 service, the police and London Ambulance Service. The advice line is staffed by mental health professionals who will advise officers and instigate rapid joint assessment if required. This joint arrangement between the police and South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust offers a proactive joint response to the concerns that may face police officers who may have limited knowledge in relation to mental illness.

The Crisis and Assessment Team covers the four boroughs served by South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Lewisham, Southwark, Croydon, and Lambeth. In addition, there is a Pan London S.136 telephone advice and support line. Although, aimed at providing advice to police officers considering the use of their powers under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 2007 the line is promoted as the mental health single point of access.

The support line is staffed by Medical Professionals & Paramedics. The British Transport Police Public Protection and Vulnerability team may also be available to assist as a consequence of accessing this help line.

The British Transport Police Vulnerability Unit provides a joint partnership approach with an NHS Provider to actively reduce and prevent railway suicides. The NHS mental health workers are embedded in the team and provide mental health support and advice to British Transport Police and Metropolitan Police on request. The mental health workers will liaise with the police and the individual's GP, local health, and social care provider to ensure that they are aware of the person's vulnerability. This service has a wide geographical reach.

I have attached relevant documents that illustrate the services available to the Metropolitan Police to assist in formulating their concerns in relation to mental health.

Summary

In documenting the services provided by South London & Maudsley NHS foundation Trust in conjunction with the Police I hope that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is ongoing collaborative work between the NHS and the police. There are clearly elements that need to be enhanced one of which may be the provision of Mental Health First Aid to specific officers in designated roles.

Yours faithfully




Director of Nursing (interim)