



**Norfolk and Suffolk**  
NHS Foundation Trust

04 OCT 2021

Trust Management  
Main Administration Block  
Hellesdon Hospital  
Drayton High Road  
Norwich  
NR6 5BE

Nigel Parsley  
Suffolk Coroner  
Beacon House  
Whitehouse Road  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP1 5PB

30 September 2021

Dear Mr Parsley

**Regulation 28/29 prevention of future deaths notice received from Suffolk Coroner in relation to the death of Joshua Sahota**

I write in response to your letter dated 9 September 2021 raising your concerns in respect of the tragic death of Joshua whilst an inpatient at the Wedgwood Unit in Suffolk. The concerns relate specifically to the information given to visitors to the wards including family and carers in respect of "restricted items", locally risk assessed, and/or fully "banned" items.

As you are aware plastic bags were a restricted item on our wards historically. To this end regular messaging and refreshing of the internal alert system featured this item, at that time the ward was undertaking individual risk assessments regarding the item. However, following the inquest evidence being submitted there remained the concern that family, and other visitors, were not aware of this "restriction" at that time, and that assurance was needed i.e. that plastic bags being a "banned" item is communicated effectively to all visitors and service users now.

This item is a completely "banned" item across all inpatient units save our rehabilitation unit. Improvements have been made to our external messaging to families and carers on this subject plus a number of safeguards have been put in place to disrupt the passage of restricted items including plastic bags. For example on entering the main Wedgwood reception visitors are asked to show what items they have brought to the unit, if these are within or contain a plastic bag a paper one will be given as a replacement. Likewise for any service user going out on leave, on return they will be given an alternative type of bag either paper or canvas. When advancing to the ward reception there are posters and a "sandwich board" which highlight various pieces of information including restrictions on items coming in to the ward namely plastic bags.

Letters for both service users and carers have been updated to reflect the importance of not bringing restricted items on to wards and the rationale for this. This action was overseen by our People Participation Lead in West Suffolk and I attach copies for your information.

I would also like to assure you that the necessity to remove all plastic bag type items including tape and plastic wadding from mail forms part of the local induction for both substantive and agency staff. Equally discussions about ward safety including the risk of items such as bags coming on to the ward is discussed at the various safety huddles every day; all staff are included in safety huddles, including our housekeeping colleagues.

All service users returning from leave are asked to remove any type of plastic carrier or packaging from their person. Where thought necessary to safeguard the individual and other service users this may entail a search of the person and/or their bedroom area dependent on an individual risk assessment.

I hope that this information reassures you of our commitment to maintaining the safety of our service users and ensuring that families are not unknowingly increasing risk on our wards. This was a terrible tragic incident which resulted in the loss of a young man who had his life ahead of him. I can personally assure you that we as an organisation and as individual health care professionals do not want such a loss to occur ever again, hence we are doing all that we can to prevent such a tragedy being repeated.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive