



Legal Services

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Mr. Jonathan Landau
Assistant HM Coroner for South London
South London Coroner's Office
2nd Floor, Davis House
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16th November 2021

Dear Sir

Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths Report, arising from the inquest in to the death of Mr. Richard Boateng

Thank you for your Regulation 28 PFD Report dated 24th September 2021, setting out your concerns to be addressed.

I would like to begin by expressing London Ambulance Service NHS Trust's sincere condolences to Mr. Boateng's family.

The issue you have asked LAS to consider in the PFD report is as follows:
The GP called LAS concerned about Richard's welfare. LAS attended his home address. Richard was not there. The LAS paramedic advised his sister to call the police. The LAS quality manager accepted in evidence that it would have been better to have taken her number and to pass it on to the police to make contact. I was told that national guidance on this issue was published in the summer. To date, neither guidance to crews nor to control had been updated to make the LAS guidance clearer to those applying it.



I set out below the actions that have been, and continue to be, taken in relation to our policies and procedures and staff awareness, in light of this case.

Immediate Action Taken: Staff Bulletins

We gave evidence at the inquest confirming that the relevant LAS policies dealing with 'no trace' calls are OP14 (Managing the Conveyance of Patients – for frontline staff) and OP23 (Dispatch of Resources – for control room emergency operations centre, 'EOC' staff). Those policies are being updated, and I give further information below about this.

Pending finalisation of the updates to those policies we have developed bulletins for the above cohorts of staff, which have been issued.

The frontline staff bulletin details the actions to be taken when a patient cannot be located, namely:

- conducting a thorough area search;
- contacting EOC to confirm the address;
- requesting that EOC check with local hospitals if there is a concern that the patient is at risk from an illness or injury (physical or mental health);
- contacting EOC to request the assistance of the Metropolitan Police, if the above actions have not been fruitful in locating the patient, and if there continues to be a concern that the patient is at risk from an illness or injury (physical or mental health).

The bulletin emphasises that the request for the police must be made by the LAS on scene, via EOC, and must not be left to members of the public to undertake.

These actions must be documented on the call log ('CAD') by EOC and on the patient record ('ePCR') by frontline staff.

The EOC staff bulletin corresponds with the above. It makes it mandatory where there is a concern for risk, or where the patient is deemed to be vulnerable, that EOC contact the police and provide all available information. It also states that this must not be left to member of the public or staff from other agencies to undertake, and should be made via EOC.

Both bulletins also clarify that the police will accept a missing report of a vulnerable (at risk) person immediately.



Each bulletin provides non-exhaustive, detailed guidance as to types of vulnerable patients.

The bulletins have been sent out by our communications team and added to the LAS intranet, 'The Pulse'. Awareness will be reinforced when they are covered on our regular intranet 'LAS TV Live' session on 17th November 2021, and in our Routine Information Bulletin, 'The RIB', on 16th November 2021. In addition, they will be communicated to all staff via the weekly 'LAS Roundup' email on Friday 19th November 2021.

LAS has established processes for sharing updated guidance and information digitally with staff via personally issued i-pads and the frontline bulletin has been disseminated to the 'JRCALC+' app (where clinical guidance is held, and also covers safeguarding issues) section on the crew staff tablets, which has to be acknowledged as received.

Bulletins are attached into this app so they can be seen by all staff. It will also alert them, when they next open the app, that there is something they have not yet read.

In addition, EOC staff receive weekly emails with all bulletins attached.

Updates to Policies OP14 and OP23

We gave evidence at the inquest that national guidance for dealing with missing/absconded patients was issued to ambulance Trusts in April 2021. Although our policies OP14 and OP23 are already compliant with that guidance, it was accepted in evidence that it would be beneficial to update them to include a specific step by step process to be actioned by control room in conjunction with frontline staff.

Both policies, OP14 and OP23, were already in the process of being updated prior to this case. The learning from this case will be incorporated into the updated policies, in corresponding wording to the respective bulletins.

Work was already underway to make OP14 a unified document that would be a single 'point of truth' for information when staff have a specific policy or clinical question, with hyperlinks to relevant information and documents. This means that it will be a 'live' document on line which can be updated quickly. It can be accessed by staff via their tablets when on scene.

Policy OP14 is expected to be finalised by the end of 2021, and OP23 is expected to be finalised in early 2022.

When the new policies are released, this will be communicated in the same ways



as the staff bulletins, as set out above. New starters will also be provided with them and the policies will be embedded in training for new entrants to the relevant teams at LAS.

I hope this response is helpful in describing the immediate and ongoing work the LAS is engaged in relating to 'no trace' calls involving vulnerable patients, encompassing bulletins for both frontline and control room staff, and corresponding amendments to our policies for those groups of staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David [unclear]', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.


Chief Executive, London Ambulance Service NHS Trust