

Ms Emma Whitting
Senior Coroner for
Bedfordshire and Luton Coroner Service
Coroner's Office,
The Court House,
Woburn Street,
Ampthill,
Bedfordshire
MK45 2HX

National Medical Director and Interim
Chief Executive of NHS Improvement
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

england.coronersr28@nhs.net

17th March 2022

Dear Ms Whitting,

Re: Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths – Luke Richard Wilden who died on 22 May 2020.

Thank you for your Report to Prevent Future Deaths (hereafter “Report”) dated 16 January 2022 concerning the death of Luke Richard Wilden on 22 May 2020. I would like to express my deep condolences to Luke’s family.

I note the inquest concluded Luke’s death was a result of cardiotoxicity arising from cocaine and heroin use.

Following the inquest, you raised concerns in your Report regarding the adequacy of transition arrangements within East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) for individuals with high functioning autism, stating that when Luke turned 18, he was not transferred to the appropriate adult mental health team for continued treatment and to enable provision of an appropriate adult social care package, including suitable accommodation for him. You raised a second concern that this gap in services may also exist on a national level.

I understand that ELFT are responding to you directly regarding the transitional arrangements for Luke to Adult Mental Health Services. They have shared their progress, and which is summarised below:

- Since this incident CAMHS and Adult services have completed a review of the protocol in place governing transition from children's to adult services. There is an audit process in place for assurance.
- In relation to the link with social care and multi-agency transitions, there are positive professional relationships in place and escalation pathways, but continues to require strengthening through increased knowledge and understanding of transitions issues in each other's areas and a shared transition protocol or protocols that link together. It is hoped that the work below will do this as part their review.
- The safeguarding board have commissioned children's and adult social care, Mental health and P2R to look at leaving care pathways and mental health transitions to establish if there are any multi agency gaps and propose solutions.

- This group will meet until the task is complete.

In regards to the concern that a gap between Children and Young People's Mental Health Services and Adult Mental Health Services exists on a national level, I can confirm that NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I) have been progressing a number of commitments in the Long Term Plan which I have set out in more detail below. I understand the cause of concern and appreciate it being brought to our attention whilst we work to deliver these commitments so that, when transforming services, we can ensure that all children and young people get the help they need, when they need it.

Improving transitions between Children and Young People's Mental Health Services and Adult Mental Health Services is a key priority within NHSE/I's LTP commitments regarding mental health. The LTP sets out a commitment that a comprehensive support offer for children and young people, between the ages of 0 to 25 years, would be in place in all areas of the country by March 2024. Critical to this ambition is improving support and care for young adults (18 to 25 years) with the expectation that by March 2024 no age-based thresholds will be in place and that all services are adapted to meet the needs of young adults. In planning guidance to local systems for 2022/23, NHSE/I has highlighted the importance of services having particular regard for the needs of high risk groups, including those young adults with co-existing substance use, co-existing physical health conditions or disabilities (including neurodevelopmental disorders).

Further the planned Integrated Care Systems (ICS) are a vehicle for integrated planning to ensure those who need it have access to comprehensive mental health support which is integrated across health, social care, education, and the voluntary sector. The vision for greater local system integration and autonomy is being implemented for specialised mental health, learning disability and autism services, by giving responsibility for a given population to Provider Collaboratives. Provider Collaboratives will improve links to other care settings, to improve the entire pathway and reduce reliance on the most specialised services by reinvesting in community provision.

NHSE/I are committed to improving care and support for autistic people. The LTP recognised the need to ensure all NHS services are reasonably adjusted to ensure they are better able to meet the needs of autistic people. We know that the transition to adult services does not always work well for children and young people and their families, acknowledging that this was the case here. It is so important that there are good multi-agency planning/actions, before young people turn 18, to ensure that they get the support they need as they move to adulthood services. It is even more important that there is effective support for young people, such as Luke, who experience multiple additional challenges. It is for this reason that we have made transition one of the key priorities for the Learning Disability and Autism Programme and are working with partners in other agencies to ensure there is an effective cross system response to young people experiencing difficulty and crisis.

NHSE/I has announced additional funding in 2021-22 to improve the quality and availability of inpatient mental health support and alternatives to admission for Children and Young People.

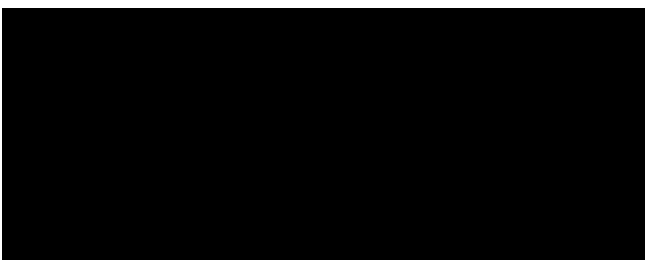
The LTP sets out that by 2023/24 all children and young people experiencing a mental health crisis will be able to access age appropriate crisis care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via NHS 111, combining crisis assessment, brief response and intensive home treatment functions. This will not end when young people turn 18, with a commitment to connect urgent mental health services to Integrated Urgent Care services to allow this access to crisis care 24/7 via NHS111 by 2023/24 for all adults.

These services for children and young people may include blended models with inpatient care and/or existing adult team practitioners who are trained and competent in meeting the specific mental health needs of children and young people. When a response is provided by adult mental health services, there must be an integrated approach with Children and Young People Mental Health Services, including knowledge of community pathways and systems, as well as appropriate training in place to ensure the team has an understanding of the developmental and safeguarding needs of children and young people.

Across the country, people now have access to dedicated 24/7 NHS urgent mental health helplines to ensure everyone, including children, young people and young adults, can get the urgent care they need without going to A&E. Details of which local helpline to call, can be found on an easy to use service finder on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>

Thank you for bringing these important patient safety issues to my attention and please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information. I do hope the above information sets out clearly the steps that we here at NHSE/I are taking to respond to these known concerns.

Yours sincerely,



National Medical Director