

22 September 2020

Oliver Longstaff
H M Assistant Coroner
H.M. Coroner's Office
PO Box 282
Bishop Auckland
Co Durham
DL14 4FY

Your ref: 02705-2018
Our ref: EH-309378

Dear Mr Longstaff,

I write in response to your Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths, dated 18 August 2020, regarding the tragic death of Viktor John Anthony Scott-Brown.

We have considered the circumstances surrounding Mr Scott-Brown's death and the concerns raised in the report regarding the content of the British National Formulary (BNF). Namely, that the BNF information regarding [lamotrigine](#) should be updated to mention possible risks of self-harm, and suicidal thoughts and behaviour.

Although accessible from the NICE website, the BNF is a joint publication of the British Medical Association and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. NICE manages the contract for the production of the BNF and BNF for Children (BNFC), but has no role in reviewing their content.

Your concerns have therefore been passed to the BNF publishers, in confidence, for their consideration and action, as appropriate. They have confirmed they will respond to the *Regulation 28: Report* directly to you, copying NICE into their response.

The concerns in your report have also been considered by NICE's Centre for Guidelines, with regards to our guideline on [epilepsies: diagnosis and management \(CG137\)](#). This guideline contains the following recommendation and footnote:

1.9.17 Continuation of pharmacological treatment

1.9.17.1 Maintain a high level of vigilance for treatment-emergent adverse effects (for example, bone health issues and neuropsychiatric issues^[16]).

[16] Treatment with AEDs is associated with a small risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviour; [available data](#) suggest that the increased risk applies to all AEDs and may be seen as early as 1 week after starting treatment.

The guideline is currently in the process of being [updated](#).

Given that the guideline update is not due to publish for some time we will consider the concerns of the coroner's report – including, the appropriateness of moving the footnote into the recommendation.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Professor 
Chief Executive