

FOA of the Coroner, Ms Galloway
Via [REDACTED], Coroners Officer
By email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Your ref: [REDACTED]
Our ref: [REDACTED]
Date: 14 January 2021

Dear Ms Galloway,

Jean Williams – Inquest 3rd Nov – 9th Nov 2020

Further to your Regulation 28 report of 16th Nov 2020, I write with confirmation of actions taken by Lancashire County Council (LCC).

The safety of service users is of the utmost importance for LCC. We take your finding that there were matters giving rise to concern and your opinion that there was a risk that future deaths may occur extremely seriously.

A meeting was held between relevant staff members at LCC and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals (BTH) on 2nd December 2020, both parties agreeing the need to work together to address the concerns. The Council confirms the following actions in addressing your concerns:-.

a) Mobility 2000 and Lancashire County Council staff are fitting Bed Levers and/or adjusting Bed Levers in the absence of the patient (and therefore not taking into account important individual patient factors such as patient height, when fitting the Lever).

The Occupational Therapist is responsible for the assessment of need for a bed lever which is undertaken with input from individual service users and considering their individual needs. The therapist will complete a prescription to the retailer on a deliver only basis. Only a trained member of the Occupational Therapy team can fit the bed lever and only with the service user present, to ensure it is relevant to their individual need. Risk assessments are undertaken at this time by both Occupational Therapy staff and LCC staff and support plans are updated to reflect the use of the bed lever.

Following the installation of the bed lever LCC staff check it is correctly positioned twice each day. Should it have significantly moved position the bed lever is removed until a time when a trained member of the Occupational Therapy team can refit it.

This process is detailed in the updated LCC document titled OP103 Bed Rails and Bed Levers Policy and Procedure, which governs the process and to which staff are trained. LCC staff will also ensure that new bed lever deliveries are not fitted until a trained member of the Occupational Therapy team is able to fit them.

Neither Mobility 2000 nor any other retailer will fit any bed levers.

These new arrangements were implemented week commencing 7th December 2020.

- b) Lancashire County Council do not currently have in place a policy that any concerns/issues raised on their risk assessments of bed levers at the premises should be reported to the Occupational Therapy Team at the Trust.**

Following the hearing immediate action was taken to give guidance to staff on the escalation process. Our 'Bed Rail and Bed Lever Policy and Procedure' was already in place but that has now been updated, as referred to above, to make clear how concerns should be escalated and which staff/colleagues are to be made aware.

This updated document is live as of 08 January 2021 and a further review will take place in April 2021 to ensure it is clear to all staff and has been appropriately implemented.

- c) The Occupational Therapy Team at the Trust, who are now correctly trained to fit and assess a patient for the use of the Bed Lever, are not – at present – routinely fitting the bed levers at Thornton House. In fact, there has been a miscommunication that Bed Levers are no longer to be used at Thornton House. Occupational Therapists prescribe bed levers due to the medical need of the patient and are now trained to fit them properly following full assessment of the patient.**

The miscommunication that suggested that bed levers are not used at Thornton House has been rectified and an agreement between LCC and BTH has been reached that bed levers can be used when appropriate to the resident's needs.

As outlined at (a) above, further agreement was made that bed levers would be prescribed on a 'deliver only' basis and only fitted by a trained member of the Occupational Therapy team.

Further to the points raised, with regard to the incident at Thornton House, LCC have implemented the updated policies at all 16 LCC operated older peoples residential homes. I trust the information and confirmation of action detailed in this letter give you the assurances required that suitable action has taken place to rectify your concerns.

Yours sincerely



Director of Adults Disability and Care Services

Enc: OP103 Bed Rails and Bed Levers Policy and Procedure