

Crispin Oliver  
HM Assistant Coroner for  
County Durham and Darlington  
PO Box 282  
Bishop Auckland  
Co Durham  
DL14 4FY

12 February 2021

Dear Mr Oliver,

**Re: Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths report for Clare Richards,  
deceased**

Thank you for your letter dated the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and for sending the report of the inquest into the death of Claire Richards dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020. We would like to express our sincere condolences to Claire's family.

We do not have a record of receiving the report in November 2020. If there was a communication at the time, can you let us know who and where this was addressed to together with the communication type and we can investigate further.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society ('RPS') is the professional body for pharmacists and pharmacy in Great Britain, representing all sectors of pharmacy. Our role is to lead and support the development of the pharmacy profession including the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy. We transferred our regulatory role to the General Pharmaceutical Council ('GPhC') in 2010, and they now regulate pharmacy and pharmacy professionals in Great Britain.

We note and share your concerns regarding the misuse of prescription medicines including pregabalin and gabapentin. As the professional body we work with the profession to promote best practice in the safe and effective supply of medicines and pharmaceutical care for people receiving medicines from pharmacy.

The report outlined matters of concern including the availability of prescription medicines to vulnerable people illegally, or outside of the healthcare system and controls on availability. For this reason we believe it would be appropriate for Public Health England (PHE) and the Advisory Council for the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), who both have roles around the misuse of drugs to be aware of this report.



The misuse of prescription drugs is monitored by PHE and in their latest quarterly report published December 2020 noted that registered deaths involving pregabalin have increased from 136 in 2017 to 244 in 2019<sup>1</sup>.

PHE is an executive agency of the Department of Health with a role to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

The role of the ACMD is to make recommendations to Government on the control of dangerous and harmful drugs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/advisory-council-on-the-misuse-of-drugs>

It was following concerns raised by the ACMD that pregabalin was added to the Misuse of Drugs Regulations in 2019.

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. If there is more information you would like to share please do not hesitate to contact us again. I hope our response has been helpful

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive  
Royal Pharmaceutical Society

---

<sup>1</sup> Public Health England. Quarterly summary for professionals – December 2020.

[https://khub.net/web/phe-national/public-library/-/document\\_library/v2WsRK3ZIEig/view\\_file/395143611?\\_com\\_liferay\\_document\\_library\\_web\\_portlet\\_DLPortlet\\_INSTANCE\\_v2WsRK3ZIEig\\_redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fkhub.net%3A443%2Fweb%2Fphe-national%2Fpublic-library%2F-%2Fdocument\\_library%2Fv2WsRK3ZIEig%2Fview%2F345595238](https://khub.net/web/phe-national/public-library/-/document_library/v2WsRK3ZIEig/view_file/395143611?_com_liferay_document_library_web_portlet_DLPortlet_INSTANCE_v2WsRK3ZIEig_redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fkhub.net%3A443%2Fweb%2Fphe-national%2Fpublic-library%2F-%2Fdocument_library%2Fv2WsRK3ZIEig%2Fview%2F345595238)

