



**Midlands Partnership**  
NHS Foundation Trust  
A Keele University Teaching Trust

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Mrs Joanne M. Lees  
Assistant Coroner  
Her Majesty's Assistant Coroner  
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Coroner's Office  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire  
SY2 6ND

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Dear Mrs Lees,

**Re: Lee Davies**  
**Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths**

Thank you for your letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020, reporting a matter to us, in accordance with Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.

I'd like to take this opportunity to reassure you that following Lee's death, we undertook a thorough investigation into the care delivered by the Trust and identified lessons learned and recommendations.

As per your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths, the action we should take is:  
The Trust may wish to consider removing the plants/foliage and/or introducing regular searches of the garden and shrubbery area.

Since receiving this action, a review of the garden on Laurel Ward was carried out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 by [REDACTED] (Clinical Matron for Adult Inpatient Services), [REDACTED] (Head of Health, Safety and Security) and [REDACTED] (Health, Safety and Security Manager).

The review considered a number of elements and below is our findings and actions:

**Removal of plants/foliage in the garden**

The garden area has been designed using the Department of Health - Health Building Note 03-01: Adult acute mental health units. Within this document, section 7.51 states that "gardens with green or relatively verdant foliage or flowers can be arranged in such a way that they offer a feeling of privacy but do not obscure sight lines or present opportunities for service users to conceal themselves".

Following our review on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, we are satisfied that the garden is maintained in such a way that it is therapeutic to service users and balances the risk of being able to conceal objects as any objects hidden by service user's would have to be brought through the ward first. This review found that the presence of the foliage impedes service user's access to the fence thus reducing the ability to scale it.

The Trust has a contract in place for grounds and gardens which is managed by our Facilities and Estates department. The garden and grounds contractors are on site all week (Monday to Friday) and the maintenance of gardens forms part of ongoing work.

As part of the review we highlighted three points for action:

1. The first point for action was a bench which currently sits close to the perimeter. Whilst this is bolted down, it could be used as a base to attempt to scale the fence and therefore, this will be moved away from the fence to a more suitable location within the garden.
2. The second point relates to a 'film' which is covering the windows in the day room which looks out onto the garden. This film has been installed for privacy against overlooking houses close to the ward perimeter and to reduce glare into the day room. However, it was highlighted that this can impact on observations into the garden from the day room and therefore, the film will be removed at a lower level (to allow for unhindered vision into the garden) and kept at a higher level (to enable privacy to be maintained and continue to limit glare).
3. The third point relates to the fence itself. We are in the process of reviewing the fence structure itself and have obtained quotes in the meantime to establish options. One option is to install a full replacement fence and the other option is to retrofit an addition to the existing fence of a 'bull-nose' anti-climb dome along the perimeter. This piece of work will require time to implement as we would want to see a site where this has been previously done and evidence that there are benefits and improvements relating to reducing abscond incidents. If this were the case, we would look to replicate this upgrade across our other two acute wards on the Redwoods site for consistency.

#### Regular searches of the garden area

MPFT employs a Narcotics Search Dog Handler and on request we have used this resource as a way to search areas such as gardens. Whilst this is currently on a more reactive basis, we are discussing ways in which searches can be completed at set frequencies such as bi-monthly whereby a different ward is searched within a set period.

In addition to this, we have established good links with our colleagues at West Mercia Police as part of our police liaison meetings. This has provided us with access to police search dogs on request which has proved to be very beneficial and supportive. Whilst this is a service we cannot always guarantee, we are able to draw on their services to undertake searches of the garden area when there is need to.

To ensure an effective response and the right attention is given to these matters, these will be addressed through our Trust's Health and Safety Committee for action and monitoring.

I hope this response helps to address your concerns. However, if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive