

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2 September 2021

Media statement

Response by Ifti Majid, Chief Executive of Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, to the publication of the report:

“On behalf of the Trust, I welcome the publication of today’s report. We are fully committed to learning what we can from this tragedy in order to make improvements to our services and the way we liaise with other agencies about the management of patients who may present a risk to public safety.

“I would like to offer my apologies and condolences to the family of Sobhia for the opportunities that were missed through the care we provided. It is clear that Sobhia was a much loved, integral part of her family and that her tragic loss is still felt deeply today.

“In 2017 the Trust undertook an internal investigation into the care and treatment provided to Mr A prior to the events of May 2017. This investigation identified a number of ways the Trust could improve the quality of our services and reduce the possibility of a similar event. An action plan was developed and we have made significant progress in implementing all of the recommendations. We will ensure these improvements are embedded and sustained into practice.

“Our services in 2017 were very different to those we have in place today. Four years ago we did not have a Forensic Community Mental Health Team in Derbyshire, which was a significant gap in local service provision.

“In July 2019 a Forensic Community Mental Health team was commissioned for Derbyshire, to enhance our focus on public protection. The service aims to promote the mental, physical and social wellbeing of forensic patients and reduce the risk of re-offending to protect the public.

This service continues to develop and is expanding to ensure the effective support and supervision of patients in the community.

“The responsibilities of this team include ensuring good and safe practice, including adherence to the Ministry of Justice reporting standards. We will ensure our practices are audited to confirm ongoing compliance.

“We are committed to working closely with and communicating effectively with our partner organisations. We have introduced a joint social supervision policy with both local authorities, which outlines the responsibilities of a social supervisor. We are also working together to employ forensic social workers in our Forensic Community Mental Health team and within the Trust’s inpatient low secure services.

“We understand the importance of family engagement and of our services being culturally appropriate. We now have an enhanced auditing process in place to ensure that race, ethnicity, gender and religious issues are considered. We will routinely address these issues within our care plans.

“The Trust is also in the process of commissioning a new Electronic Patient Record, which includes the development of a new Safety Plan process, with enhanced care planning and references to ‘Think Family’ throughout.

“We thank family members for their involvement in this report. We appreciate this must have been very difficult and we are committed to ensuring that we learn as much as we possibly can from this tragedy, putting improvements in place to protect the public.”

Notes to editors

The Forensic Community Mental Health Team has a focus on public protection alongside training and expertise in working with patients, many of whom have had contact with the criminal justice system. The team has smaller caseloads than other community mental health teams, to allow more time to get to know an individual, their risks and clinical presentation. This enables in-depth analysis of an individual's personality, attitudes and behaviours.

The functions of a Forensic Community Mental Health Team are:

- To assist the discharge of patients from secure care into the community settings
- To safely manage the transition from forensic community services to non-forensic community services
- Consultation and liaison with local mental health teams and agencies to provide specialist advice and oversight of practice
- Management of a defined caseloads of high-risk individuals in the community and patients on restriction orders with complex needs
- Providing specialist advice to Derbyshire MAPPA (Multi-agency public protection arrangements)
- Education and training to other services in the safe management of high-risk individuals
- Oversight of patients in secure hospitals.

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Supporting information

1. Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is a specialist provider of children's, learning disability, substance misuse and mental health services – across community, inpatient and specialist settings in Derby and Derbyshire.
2. The Trust membership is made up of Trust staff, patients, carers, partner organisations and interested members of the public. Anyone over 16 can become a Trust member, as long as they live in Derbyshire or its surrounding areas. Membership is voluntary, free and without obligation.

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