

Date: 12 November 2012

To:
All Chairs and Chief Executives of NHS Trusts in
England
All Chairs and Chief Executives of NHS Foundation
Trusts in England

Cc:
Monitor
All Chairs and Chief Executives of Primary Care Trusts
in England
All Chairs and Chief Executives of Strategic Healthcare
Authorities in England
All Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England

Gateway reference: 18350

Dear Colleague

Savile Allegations

You will all have seen the recent media coverage of the allegations of abuse involving Jimmy Savile. These are appalling allegations and it is deeply disturbing to think that abuses of this nature may have occurred in NHS organisations.

The three NHS organisations about whom allegations of abuse have been made – Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Leeds General Infirmary and West London Mental Health Trust – are working closely with the police and Local Safeguarding Boards, undertaking reviews to ascertain what happened and whether there are any lessons to learn. In addition the Department of Health is holding a review into Savile's role at Broadmoor Hospital for the period it was responsible for its management.

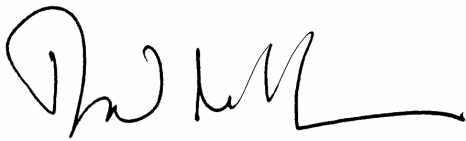
The Secretary of State has appointed Kate Lampard, a barrister and Vice Chair of NHS South of England, to provide assurance that the Department and the relevant NHS organisations are following a robust process aimed at protecting the interest of patients. She will also look, as part of that work, at NHS wide procedures, in the light of the findings of the reviews, to see whether they need tightening. When this work has concluded we will share any learning relevant for the wider system across the service as a whole.

However, in the meantime, I would ask that you take the opportunity to review, with your Boards, and working as necessary with local agencies, your own arrangements and practices relating to vulnerable people, particularly in relation to: safeguarding; access to patients (including that afforded volunteers or celebrities); and listening to and acting on patient concerns. I have discussed and agreed this approach with David Bennett, Chief Executive of Monitor.

While the nature of protection for children and young people in the NHS is far in advance of what it was in the 1970s and 1980s, we must be absolutely sure that all our existing NHS procedures are robust.

Thank you in advance for actively considering and reviewing your position on this important issue.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Nicholson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE
NHS Chief Executive