

Our trust:

Hertford County Hospital, The Lister Hospital,
Mount Vernon Cancer Centre, New QEII Hospital



**East and North
Hertfordshire**
NHS Trust

Kevin Howell
Director of Estates & Facilities
Lister Hospital
Coreys Mill Lane
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 4AB

19th October 2023

Dear GP,

I am writing to you as the chair of the East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust Violence and Aggression Group. This group has been created to determine how patients who display violent and aggressive behaviour should be treated to ensure the protection of our staff, other patients and visitors.

The Violence and Aggression Group reviews all reported instances of violence and aggression on a weekly basis and includes representatives from a range of clinical and non-clinical backgrounds. Where a case of violence and aggression is upheld, next steps could include warning letters or, in extreme cases, excluding a patient from receiving routine care in hospital. Excluding a patient from routine care does not affect emergency care provision. However, once the patient has been clinically stabilised, they will be transferred to another hospital to receive ongoing treatment – a practice which will be reciprocated with other hospital Trusts.

If a patient is excluded from receiving routine treatment, they will receive a letter informing them and explaining why this decision has been taken. A copy of this letter will be sent to their GP practice.

We are mindful that some incidents of violence and aggression may occur where a patient is not clinically deemed to have capacity. In these circumstances, we would not issue a warning letter or exclude the patient from receiving routine treatments. However, we will make note of these instances and will review our approach should there be any further occurrences.

When making recommendations at a practice level about a patient's ongoing treatment, we would be grateful if the decision to exclude them from routine treatment at one of our hospitals could be taken into consideration. We understand that this is adding to the administrative tasks already undertaken by our extremely busy GP practices but believe that this is an important part of ensuring we keep our staff and patients safe.

I can assure you that decisions to exclude patients from receiving routine treatment are not taken lightly and are only made in the most extreme circumstances where repeat incidences of severe violence has been found.

We always want to treat our patients to the best of our ability, but we have a zero tolerance to violence and aggression and duty of care to our staff. I hope that we can work together to ensure that those who display such behaviour understand that it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

I'm happy to discuss the contents of this letter with you directly - you can get in touch with me through the details set out at the top of this letter. Alternatively, please get in touch with our GP liaison team who can share your feedback with me.

Thank you very much for your support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Howell', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Howell
Director of Estates and Facilities