

Mr William Wragg MP  
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee

**Sent by email only**

1 February 2024

Dear Chair,

I am writing to share our latest report on mental health care and treatment, '[Discharge from mental health care: making it safe and patient-centred](#)'. I have enclosed a copy with this letter.

The report examines cases investigated by PHSO where we have found failings in care around discharge from mental health inpatient settings and emergency departments and where, ultimately, patients experienced harm due to unsafe or inappropriate discharge. The impact of poorly planned discharge is stark. This ranges from a revolving door of quick succession re-admissions, neither good for individuals nor the services they are using, to individuals tragically taking their own lives when follow-up care plans fall apart.

The cases in our report show a range of issues including poor record-keeping and poor communication between the multiple teams involved with discharging a mental health patient from care. But the most common failing we see is the lack of involvement of patients, their families, and carers in decision-making.

The report sets out our recommendations to improve discharge and transitions in care planning, delivery and follow-up. These include:

- **making sure there is a range of professionals involved in effective discharge planning for it to be truly holistic**
- **an extension of the 72 hour follow-up requirement to those triaged and discharged from emergency departments**
- **bringing forward the right to name a 'nominated person' to be involved in discharge discussions**
- **further empowering patients, families and carers to feedback on care**
- **Government to introduce the Mental Health Bill to Parliament as a priority.**



The Department of Health and Social Care in close collaboration with NHS England and Integrated Care Systems will have a key role to play in taking up these recommendations and ensuring that discharge and transitions from mental health care have safety, recovery and patients themselves at their heart.

I look forward to exploring how the Committee can support PHSO in scrutinising the relevant bodies in the delivery of these recommendations.

To arrange a meeting to discuss this further, please contact my Private Secretary Faye Glover at [faye.glover@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:faye.glover@ombudsman.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Rob Behrens

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