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To: stopsimallies@dcc-i.co.uk

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

12 May 2023

Dear signatories,

Re: A professional challenge to NHS England - An open letter in solidarity with the #StopSIM Coalition

Thank you for your letter on 13 March 2023.

We are extremely grateful to you as mental health professionals who are mobilising against the concerning practices within SIM and for your leadership in driving better and more evidence-based and trauma-informed support for people who frequently need help in crisis.

We have just written to the STOPSIM coalition, setting out further detail on what we have done to date to put an end to practices of concern associated with the SIM model and routes for concerns to be raised by staff as well as patients and carers.

We have appended that letter here for your information. In particular we would like to underline the fact that the CQC will now use the published letter as a framework to consider whether any of the concerning practices associated with SIM are in use within mental health services during their inspections. Professor Tim Kendall is briefing CQC inspection teams to ensure that they understand the rationale and importance of being alert to any of these practices as part of inspections.

Thank you again for your commitment to change and ensuring that we as the NHS both listen to and learn from the voice of lived experience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Murdoch'.

Claire Murdoch CBE
National Director for Mental Health
NHS England

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Kendall'.

Professor Tim Kendall
National Clinical Director for Mental
Health
NHS England

Annex 1: Letter sent to STOPSIM coalition –12 May 2023

Dear STOPSIM coalition,

Thank you for your letter on 13 March 2023. We are writing to you, jointly as Senior Responsible Officer for Mental Health and National Clinical Director for Mental Health, but please be assured that our response is on behalf of NHS England.

We are extremely grateful for the work of the coalition. You highlighted significant policy concerns with serenity integrated monitoring and similar models and helped us to mobilise to correct them; thank you.

We are clear that the SIM model should not have been spread and are committed to ensuring the practices of concern related to SIM and similar models are no longer used. To that end:

- On 10 March 2023, Tim Kendall as NCD clarified our policy position that the use of concerning practices associated with SIM must end with immediate effect;
- In advance of this, we held briefing sessions with regional, system and provider teams to explain the position and rationale;
- We made the letter publicly available for the sake of transparency, so that patients and carers can be clear on our position and therefore the care that they can expect to receive;
 - Patients or carers who feel an NHS organisation is using any of the practices outlined in this letter can [use the standard NHS complaints procedures](#) and can also report their experiences to the CQC through the CQC website. Reporting concerns to the CQC is not a formal complaint process, but provides vital information to support them to fulfil their role.
 - The NHS [‘Freedom to Speak Up’](#) policy states that NHS organisations should encourage staff to speak up about any concerns, while embedding a more open and supportive culture that normalises the raising concerns for the benefit of patient quality or safety.
- We have confirmed with the CQC that they will consider whether any of the concerning practices associated with SIM are in use within mental health services during their inspections.

With vital input from the Coalition, both our teams set out with the intention to put lived experience at the heart of the review of SIM, to address issues that arose from a lack of patient voice in the model’s initial selection and roll out. Although we have not been able to agree a joint position statement, we feel we have still achieved some of that original intention, as reflected in our recently issued communication to systems which made clear that SIM or similar models must not be used in NHS mental health services.

Our mental health programme strives to ensure lived experience is fully incorporated in our policy making, from the aims and ambitions in the Long Term Plan to guidance on specific pathways. We are strengthening our processes to do so and our commitment to learning from lived experience is stronger than ever.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Murdoch CBE
National Director for Mental Health
NHS England



Professor Tim Kendall
National Clinical Director for Mental
Health
NHS England