

October 2016

Alert No: 024

Clinical Alert: Managing Risk

There has been a patient death, which raised concerns related to the provision of information to the family following an emergency assessment. In particular, it was not clear to the family that any recurrence of symptoms would be a cause for significant concern and potentially immediate action or in exactly what circumstances professional help should be sought on an urgent basis and how to go about this.

The Trust Clinical Risk Assessment and Management policy states: *'Collaboration with the patient and those involved in the patient's care should be intrinsic to the risk management process. Where possible and considered necessary, risk information should be sought from a wide variety of sources such as Family/Carer/Partner/Significant Other/Friend'.*

Action

1. It is important that staff communicate clinical expectations and return advice to patients and their families before discharge.
2. All staff working within mental health services must provide a verbal explanation of the presentation and prognosis to any child, young person and family or adult and family, as appropriate, when seen for an emergency assessment in the Emergency Department or elsewhere in our services, along with crisis management plans.
3. This information must be supported by a printed card providing details of who to contact in the event of any deterioration or relapse both during working hours and out of hours.
4. Every family seen by Child and Adolescent Mental Health services must be provided with this crisis information before leaving the department.