

4 February 2010

News statement

FAO: News editors / health reporters

For immediate release

Statement following the inquest concerning the death of Mr David Gray

Primecare, which runs out of hours urgent care services across the country, has responded to the inquest into the tragic death of Cambridgeshire man that concluded on 4 February 2010. Mr Gray received a fatal dose of diamorphine from an agency doctor who was doing a shift for a different out of hours provider, Take Care Now.

As a result of this incident, and the interim findings by the Care Quality Commission, Primecare have produced a full report for commissioners to provide assurance of the quality and safety of their out of hours services.

Primecare services are mostly staffed by local clinicians. Locum doctors and agencies are only used occasionally. Primecare has set their own standards so that every month no more than 5% of doctor hours are covered by agency doctors or new starters.

Primecare are able to assure Primary Care Trusts and Local Health Boards who commission their services of the robust process that is carried out before a new doctor starts work for Primecare. This includes registration, CRB and training checks as well as a thorough induction.

All of Primecare's out of hours service are staffed by doctors and nurses so that safe, high quality services are provided to the local population that meet the National Quality Requirements and local performance levels. In some areas, Primary Care Trusts mandate the staffing levels required for a population.

Primecare have introduced a Quality Account reporting system for commissioners that clearly explains on a quarterly basis Primecare's performance against national and locally agreed quality indicators. This Quality Account covers many of the recommendations in the Department of Health's project report on GP out of hours services that has been subsequently published.

ENDS

Notes to editors

- 1 For more information contact Ruth Wilkin, Head of Communications and Marketing on ruth.wilkin@primecare.uk.net, 0121 214 3763.
- 2 A full copy of Primecare's report responding to the death of Mr Gray is available on Primecare's website at www.primecare.uk.net/news