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| Dr Fiona Butler  Chair  NHS West London Clinical Commissioning Group  15 Marylebone Road  London  NW1 5JD  3 April 2018 |  |

Dear Dr Butler,

**Provision of healthcare to victims of Grenfell Tower fire**

We write to you following concerns raised with us by the survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire about healthcare and trauma counselling that has been made available to them and the wider community by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Commission is the statutory body responsible for protecting, promoting and enforcing equality and human rights in Great Britain. The Commission is currently undertaking a project, *Following Grenfell*, looking at the equality and human rights dimensions of the fire. As part of our work, we have been told harrowing accounts of the trauma of the bereaved, survivors and former residents. We give some examples below:

* We have been told that there are vulnerable people living alone, who may be disabled, elderly, non-English speaking, and unable to access the mental health support that they need.
* We also understand that one individual, who, whilst not a resident of the Tower, suffered severe burns from the fire rescuing people. He lost friends in the fire and is separated from his family who have been re-housed some distance away. He is also disabled and is suffering a severe deterioration to his mental health.
* We have been told that another individual, who also was not a resident of Grenfell Tower, but attempted to rescue a friend and her children, who had called him from a high floor. They all died in the fire. He is not currently receiving mental health support.
* We have been told that children who attend the nearby Academy school are suffering trauma and some are experiencing trauma related bed-wetting and behavioural issues.

We have heard from many people that they are confused about the nature and availability of mental health services, who qualifies for them in the wider community, and that some people, including children, have been unable to access mental health services at all.

Reports of lack of healthcare for individuals facing serious mental health crises are particularly worrying. We have been told that mental health support has been stymied by the lack of available beds in crisis assessment centres and we understand that one person was made homeless by the fire attempted suicide but could not be given a bed and had to be returned home. The survivors of the fire, the bereaved and those who witnessed it, will have suffered great harm, potentially reaching the threshold of ‘inhuman and degrading treatment’ in Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The harm has been exacerbated by the living conditions for displaced residents after the fire.

In our role as the state body concerned to promote and protect equality and human rights, we are keen to ensure that other public bodies understand their legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, including the obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. We would therefore be grateful if you could provide further information on the steps you are taking to ensure healthcare for survivors, the bereaved, and the wider Grenfell community. We appreciate, of course, that you are bound by confidentiality and will not be in a position to comment on individual cases. Please provide the following information:

* What assessment has been made of the mental health needs of the survivors of the fire and those affected by it?
* What additional resources have been provided to deal with the mental health services required?
* Please confirm how your policy for how the “screen and treat” programme is operated.
* How many adults have been identified as having urgent mental healthcare needs, and (1) how many of these people have been screened; and (2) how many of these people have received treatment?
* How many adults are receiving treatment for mental health conditions and how many adults have completed treatment?
* How many children and young people have been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services? When did the referrals commence?
* How many children and young people have received specialist mental health care and how many have completed treatment?
* What attempts are being made to ensure people (including children and young people) are being assessed for symptoms of trauma, psychological effects, and other mental health problems arising from the fire, and the ongoing situation, who may mistrust formal agencies, and have difficulties in accessing treatment due to their protected characteristics?
* What accessible information has been provided to the victims to highlight the possible signs to look out for in respect of identifying mental health issues and the need for accessing help?
* Please confirm your position on the payment of NHS fees by relatives of victims of the fire, who may be Core Participants in the formal Inquiry, and who are in the UK on a temporary visa.

We anticipate that you will wish to provide a comprehensive and prompt response to the issues we have highlighted, including our requests for further information. We would be grateful for your acknowledgement of this correspondence and your indication when you will be in a position to provide a substantive response.

Yours sincerely,



**Elizabeth Prochaska**

Legal Director