

Statement prepared by Professor Paulo Polaski MBBS (Hons) MRCPsych PhD FRCPsych

Re: Gemma Stevens NHS: 625 449 2358

Date of birth: 13 May 1965

Date of death: 16 Sept 2021

At the request of the coroner, Ms Mary Hassell LLB (Hons):

My name is Professor Paulo Polaski. I qualified in medicine with MMBS (Hons) from the University College London in 2009. My further qualifications include a Foundation Programme at Barts Hospital, MRCPsych at the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2009-2012), Higher training in Forensic Psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital (2012-2014) and a PhD at the Institute of Psychiatry (2014-2017). I am currently working as Consultant Psychiatrist at the Tower Hamlets Centre for Mental Health, a position I have held since 2017.

I was involved in the care of Gemma Stevens from 29 Aug 2021 to 16 Sept 2021.

I would like to start by expressing my sincere condolences of the family and friends of Gemma, for their sad loss.

This statement has been prepared on the basis of the contemporaneous medical records and from my memory of my involvement in Gemma's care.

Gemma had a past medical history which includes trauma to her brain, specifically the amygdala and mediodorsal prefrontal cortex, resulting in complete bilateral lesions of each region. It remains unknown what caused such lesions, as an earlier MRI (November 2012) performed as the result of a car crash in November 2012 found no evidence of any brain injury at that time. Gemma was admitted as an in-patient of the Tower Hamlets Centre for Mental Health on 29th August 2021, on the referral of her GP, Dr Maninder Singh, due to worsening delusions, hallucinations and irrational social decision-making that was affecting her work and personal life. Gemma was otherwise in very good general health and had suffered no adverse long-term physical effects because of the car crash.

At the time of her death, Gemma was on the following regular medications:

- Ritalin (20mg/day) to address her deficits related to the amygdala lesions.
- Clorazil (75mg/day) to address her delusions and hallucinations. This has been reduced from 100mg/day due to improvement in psychotic symptoms.

I have been treating Gemma's various behavioural and psychological problems only very recently since she was admitted to the Centre. She was referred to me because she was behaving inappropriately with strangers, for example flirting with younger men in front of her husband and closely approaching people on the street who she had never met. This made those people especially uncomfortable due the current situation regarding social distancing throughout the COVID19 pandemic. She had also developed some psychotic symptoms, such as delusions and hallucinations, for example believing that she had been infested with parasites crawling all over her body and believing that her husband was poisoning her. It was her husband, Dr Gary Stevens, who requested that Gemma attend her GP, who then referred

to me. At the time of her death, Gemma had taken part in a number of intense series of behavioural assessments and psychological tests, as well as personal therapy sessions. I last saw Gemma on 14 Sept 2021, when she presented with vast improvements to her behaviour, with a reduction in her delusions and hallucinations, as well as control over her inappropriate social behaviour. I put this down to successful psychopharmacological treatment, as well as rounded cognitive-behavioural therapy. As a result of this improvement, I requested that she be permitted to interact with other patients in the day room, and attend Group Therapy sessions, which she did on 15 and 16 Sept 2021.

I had no further involvement in Gemma's care after 16 Sept 2021, the day she died.

I hope the information in this report has been of assistance to the Coroner, but I would be happy to provide further information or clarification, should it be required.

Signed:

Professor Paulo Polaski Date: 20 Sept 2021