

[The Fuller inquiry: update to the Secretary of State, 19 May 2022](#)

News story

A progress update from the independent inquiry into the issues raised by the David Fuller case.



The independent inquiry into the issues raised by the David Fuller case has published an update today, Thursday 19 May, on its progress to date.

The inquiry was established to investigate how David Fuller was able to carry out inappropriate and unlawful actions in the mortuary of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and why they went unnoticed (phase 1).

The inquiry will also consider if procedures and practices in other hospital and non-hospital settings safeguard the security and dignity of the deceased (phase 2). The inquiry will publish its initial report on phase 1 later in 2022 and its final (phase 2) report in 2023.

The progress update published today sets out the transition from a local, independent investigation initiated by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust to the current independent inquiry announced last year.

The update explains the background to the investigation originally set up by the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, and how this has informed the first phase of the inquiry. It highlights the following:

- areas of concern arising from the original investigation and flagged to NHS England and NHS Improvement
- progress in establishing the independent inquiry, including engagement with families and publication of its terms of reference
- collection of evidence and next steps, including scoping of phase 2, the final report

The inquiry was announced in November 2021 by Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Sajid Javid, and has worked closely with the families of the more than 100 victims of Fuller's crimes. Health Minister Maria Caulfield

today made a [written ministerial statement to Parliament](#) on this matter.

In addition, the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) – whose regulatory remit covers how human tissue may be taken, stored and used for public display; research; anatomical examination (for medical training); organ donation and transplantation; human application and post-mortem examination purposes – is also publishing today [a progress report on advice sent to the Secretary of State](#) in December 2021.

Action taken to date by the HTA has focused on internal activity to review and revise their guidance for licensed mortuaries in the post-mortem sector. The HTA will shortly be engaging with stakeholders (such as other regulators and devolved administrations) to ensure the guidance is sufficiently explicit.

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