

I would not, of course, comment on clinical matters as to what treatment should or should not be provided or on which treatment is to be preferred clinically.

The issue here is that the Trust has a policy which states that compression stockings should be offered unless contraindicated in certain clinical conditions, and, quite simply, not to offer the stockings is a breach of the policy, unless a clinical assessment has been carried out and one of the contraindications applies. A detailed written record of the assessment and result thereof should be made. This did not happen in the case in question.

In my opinion, the Trust and, in deed, the individual clinicians, would always be open to criticism if the Trust's policy is not followed.

The maxim should be that any practice should be in accordance with the relevant policy, and the policy should reflect the agreed practice.

I note that the Trust's current policy on this matter is, in fact, quite prescriptive in its wording.

With regard to the comments attributed to IIM Coroner, I believe this to be incorrect. My understanding is that HM Coroner made no comment as to what constitutes best practice but simply stated that "on the balance of probabilities, the absence of TED stockings [in this case] post operatively would not have altered the outcome".

The concerns regarding the failure to follow the Trust policy were raised (outside of the Inquest) by myself, and the Trust's solicitor.

Regards

David A Jones
Legal Services Manager and Inquest Liaison Officer

sent via email 21/7/08