

27 June 2017

Dear colleague

Grenfell Tower – fire safety in your premises

I am sure you will be aware of the significant focus on fire safety following the terrible tragedy at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington on 14 June.

As the regulator, our purpose is to ensure people receive safe, effective, compassionate and high quality care and to encourage improvement.

With recent events in mind, I am writing to ask that you review your fire safety processes in your registered premises to ensure they are up to date and are being applied consistently in practice. In particular, I ask you to pay attention to the size and fabric of your registered premises. You may have carried out such a review already but if you have not, I encourage you to do so.

Such a review is consistent with your legal responsibilities under both the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 ('The Order').

The Order requires the responsible person in a workplace to carry out a fire risk assessment. The assessment should pay special attention to those at higher risk due to issues, such as mobility impairment or learning disability. The Order includes a range of absolute duties ranging from providing information and training to employees through to ensuring that premises and any equipment provided in connection with firefighting, fire detection and warning or emergency routes and exits are covered by a suitable system of maintenance by a competent person.

We know from our inspections that there have been occasions when we have identified fire safety issues, some of which we have had to escalate to the local fire authorities. These issues include blocked fire exits fire doors wedged open, escapes routes used as storage areas, low awareness among staff of what to do in emergency situations and no evidence of fire drills having been undertaken recently.

From our inspections, we recognise that some providers maintain their premises and equipment safely and properly, undertake environmental risks assessments, manage any risks and issues, and have staff members who use safety-related equipment and processes properly.

We will continue to assess fire safety when we register and inspect providers, focusing on passive and active fire protection and on how fire safety is managed on a day to day basis.

Further information from the Department for Communities and Local Government on its fire safety guides and checklists can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business.

Thank you for your continued support and your recognition of this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Behan', written in a cursive style.

Sir David Behan
Chief Executive