

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Express and Star
Date of article	Monday 3 rd December
Reporter	Heather Large
Headline	Trust hits back over death rate
First paragraph/s of article	The medical director of Dudley’s hospital trust today defended it against a report claiming it recorded a high number of deaths for the past three years – saying there was actually “a significant improvement”.
Paragraph/s relating to The Dudley Group	N/A
Press enquiry	Express and Star, along with, Midlands Today, the Press Association and ITV News asked for a comment regarding our results in the Dr. Foster report that has been issued nationally to all news outlets.
Also issued to:	BBC Midlands Today The Press Association ITV News
Trust response	
<p>The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust is committed to ensuring the best possible care of all patients. We take mortality indicators very seriously and this is one of a number of tools we use to assure ourselves of the quality of our care. Current independent analyses (including the HSMR) show that the Trust is not an outlier for mortality. Indeed, recent reports suggest a significant and sustained improvement.</p> <p>The most recent data from Dr Foster (April – August 2012) shows the Trust mortality figure as 100 which is well within the expected range. Similarly, the Department of Health’s own measure of mortality (the SHMI Index), which is more up to date than the published figure from Dr Foster shows a significant improvement over the last year and no excess deaths at Dudley Group.</p> <p>We continue to undertake work to improve the quality of our clinical care and, in addition, have invested in improving our collection of data which is used by Dr Foster and other third parties to calculate NHS mortality scores. Importantly, our crude mortality rate has fallen and this gives us particular reassurance about the quality of our care as this is not related to data issues.</p>	

In Dudley we use all three independent mortality indicators (HSMR, SHMI and RAMI) as well as our own monitoring procedures to highlight areas for potential further analysis or investigation. In particular a review of all deaths is undertaken by a senior consultant.

In addition, each month, a specialty department meets the Chair of the Trust, the Chief Executive, the Medical Director and local GPs to discuss and explain mortality levels in their department. We also undertake patient safety walkrounds where directors talk to frontline staff to discuss any concerns and Nursing Care Indicators which audit quality of care on the wards.

We are pleased to say that on all occasions where we have responded to a mortality alert notified to us by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), both we and the CQC were assured of the quality of our care.

We welcome all information that will help us with our efforts to continually improve our patient care.