

Bradgate Unit: Calls for inquiry into quality of care

By [Leicester Mercury](#)

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

By Cathy Buss

A health watchdog is considering asking the Health Secretary to hold a public inquiry into the quality of care at a city mental health unit.

It follows a call from a city councillor for a public inquiry after a damning report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) about the Bradgate Unit, on the Glenfield Hospital site.



1.

The Bradgate Unit, at Glenfield Hospital, may soon be subject to a public inquiry

The Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, which runs the unit, has been served with two warning notices by the CQC over poor standards.

It has also been under fire over the suicides of nine patients since the start of 2010.

Leicester councillor Baljit Singh, from the Evington ward, believes "serious consideration" should be given to getting a public inquiry.

He said: "In view of the critical nature of the CQC investigation into operational failures, which may have contributed to suicides, I do think there should be serious consideration to request the Secretary State of Health to institute a public inquiry. To me, an inquiry like this would carry out a detailed investigation.

"Where there has been loss of lives, how do you reconcile that with just an apology?"

"We need to know what kind of systems are in operation, where changes have been made, who has overseen them and the resolution, to ensure systems are more robust.

"Suicides seem to happen time and time again. There is no greater tragedy than the loss of life, especially when it is unnatural."

Coun Rory Palmer, deputy city mayor and chairman of the council's health and wellbeing board, said: "Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust has apologised and set out an action plan.

"Ultimately, it needs to be judged on its actions.

"The trust needs to get to a point to provide assurance it is heading in the right direction."

However, Coun Palmer added that "formal avenues" through the scrutiny commission and the health and wellbeing board remained open "if we feel the need to secure more impetus or pace".

Coun Michael Cooke, chairman of the council's health and community involvement scrutiny commission, said he is seeking advice on whether a referral for a public inquiry can be made to the Health Secretary.

A spokesman for the NHS Trust said: "The trust met with the city's health overview and scrutiny committee in early September to hear the concerns of the council, and we will be returning to its next meeting, where the progress on addressing quality concerns at the Bradgate Unit will be further discussed. We are working hard to resolve the issues highlighted."

Dr Peter Miller, a child psychiatrist and medical director of the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, takes over the reins as chief executive of the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust on October 1.