

## Trevor Birney

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**From:** Christine Stewart [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 April 2004 14:54  
**To:** Trevor Birney  
**Subject:** RE: UTV Insight - Lucy Crawford case.

Trevor

Got your e mail. I have asked Dr Hanrahan for guidance on the issues you raised. I'll get back to you ASAP

Regards

Christine

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Trevor Birney [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 April 2004 11:45  
**To:** Christine Stewart  
**Subject:** UTV Insight - Lucy Crawford case.

Christine,

Further to my recent conversation with you in relation to the death of Lucy Crawford, I want to request a briefing from the RVH.

In April, 2000, Lucy was transferred to the Royal from the Erne Hospital. She was effectively dead when she left Enniskillen and only survived a few hours before the life support machine was turned off. At the recent inquest into her death, Coroner John Leckey found that Lucy had died from cerebral oedema caused by dilutional hyponatraemia. However, a "localised" post mortem carried out by Dr. Dennis O'Hara at the Royal found that she had died of gastroenteritis - which she had been suffering from when admitted to the Erne. Nowhere in his report did he mention hyponatraemia.

Some of those involved in the case are now pointing to this failure to find the exact cause of death as something of a concern.

However, as in the past, the Royal will have a completely different perspective on this. We have already identified issues surrounding Lucy's notes which were not delivered to the Hospital for Sick Children with Lucy but only arrived by fax several hours later.

I would like to speak to someone in relation to the following areas:

1. What was Lucy's condition when she arrived at the Royal? How critical was the failure of the Erne to send Lucy's notes with her? 2. Why was the post mortem carried out by a paediatric pathologist at the Royal? 3. What is the Royal's understanding of the exact cause of death? 4. How many cases of dilutional hyponatraemia in children has the Royal seen in the past 10 years? We are aware of the death of a children called Adam Strain in 1995 and of another case involving a 14-year-old girl who almost died from hyponatraemia and later took a case against the hospital.

Dr. Donncha Hanrahan, Consultant paediatric anaesthetist, was involved in Lucy's treatment and gave critical evidence at the inquest and may be the person who would be most appropriate. At this stage, we would welcome an off-the-record conversation. We do not envisage requesting a formal interview.

You can give me a call on [REDACTED] at any time to go over this.

Cheers.

Trevor.

Trevor Birney  
Editor, Current Affairs

UTV

Ulster Television

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## Trevor Birney

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**From:** Christine Stewart [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 June 2004 12:47  
**To:** Trevor Birney

Trevor

I've spoken with Dr Hanrahan - he feels that he is unable to help.

sorry I can't be more helpful

Christine

Christine Stewart  
Press and Public Relations Officer  
Royal Hospitals

## Trevor Birney

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**From:** Christine Stewart [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 May 2004 12:56  
**To:** Trevor Birney  
**Subject:** RE:

Trevor  
Sorry Bob says no - sorry I can't help  
C

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Trevor Birney [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 May 2004 11:34  
**To:** Christine Stewart  
**Subject:** RE:

Christine,

Any word from Bob the doctor yet?

Trevor.

Trevor Birney  
Editor, Current Affairs  
Ulster Television

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Christine Stewart  
[mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** 27 May 2004 14:22  
**To:** Trevor Birney  
**Subject:**

Bob is doing a cardiac catheterisation at the moment won't be able to

UTV



get to him until about 4pm

C

## Trevor Birney

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**From:** Christine Stewart [redacted]  
**Sent:** 27 May 2004 14:22  
**To:** Trevor Birney

Bob is doing a cardiac catheterisation at the moment won't be able to get to him until about 4pm

C

## Trevor Birney

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**From:** Christine Stewart [redacted]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2004 14:46  
**To:** Trevor Birney  
**Subject:** RE: Lucy Crawford

Trevor  
Will do my best to get a reply for you  
Christine

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Trevor Birney [redacted]  
**Sent:** 19 May 2004 15:08  
**To:** Christine Stewart  
**Subject:** RE: Lucy Crawford

Christine,

Thank-you for your reply.

It is disappointing, to say the least, that the Royal doesn't have anyone who can give us advice on issues of such public importance.

However, can I ask a further couple of questions?

1. Does the pathologist or the Dr. (in this case Dr. Hanrahan) take the ultimate decision on whether a Coroner's post mortem should be carried out?
2. Which pathologist did Dr. Hanrahan speak to following Lucy's death?
3. Has the Royal revised any of its practices in relation to the death of infants following Lucy's death?

Talk to you soon

Trevor.

Trevor Birney  
Editor, Current Affairs  
Ulster Television

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Christine Stewart  
[mailto:[redacted]]  
**Sent:** 17 May 2004 15:36  
**To:** Trevor Birney

Subject:

Trevor

In reply to your e mail of May 5

Our consultants have declined the offer to talk further about the Lucy Crawford case, feeling that they said everything relevant at the inquest.

However regarding your queries about the local post mortem, I have some information which may be of use.

It would be normal procedure for the Royal to involve a paediatric pathologist in this type of case (sudden death of a child).

As to why the localised post mortem recorded a different cause of death to the coroner's findings - the localised post mortem recorded the condition which being present led to the death.

Using the example of meningitis; one person could say meningitis, another multi organ failure, and another heart attack; and they would all be right to some degree. Guidance from pathologists is that the cause of death is the condition without which the person would not have died, meningitis in this example.

Regarding the number of deaths from dilutional hyponatraemia - We are aware of two cases in which the coroner has suggested dilutional hyponatraemia as a cause of death. The coroners office could possibly elaborate as I am bound by patient confidentiality.

regards

Christine

**Trevor Birney**

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Christine

**Trevor Birney**

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**From:** Christine Stewart [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 May 2004 10:00  
**To:** Trevor Birney  
**Subject:** RE: UTV Insight - Lucy Crawford case.

Trevor

Sorry for the delay - hope to talk with Dr Hanrahan this morning and will get back to you before close of play today.

C

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Trevor Birney [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 May 2004 09:17  
**To:** Christine Stewart  
**Subject:** RE: UTV Insight - Lucy Crawford case.

Christine,

✓ luck with my request for briefing re: Lucy Crawford?

Hope to hear from you soon.

Trevor.

Trevor Birney  
Editor, Current Affairs  
Ulster Television

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