

The Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths

Chairman: Mr John O'Hara QC

M. J. O'Hara
ofc

Copy to Peter Wallby

Mrs Anne Balmer
Chair
The Royal Group of Hospitals &
Dental Hospitals HSS Trust
King Edward Building
Royal Victoria Hospital
274 Grosvenor Road
BELFAST
BT12 6BA

Our Ref: JOH-15-2004

Date: 01 December 2004

THE ROYAL HOSPITALS
06 DEC 2004

*Copy to
Mr McKee and
Dr McBride
06.12.04
John S.*

Dear Mrs Balmer

INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA-RELATED DEATHS

I am writing to you regarding the above Inquiry which was announced recently into the events surrounding and following the deaths of Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson. I attach a copy of the Terms of Reference and my statement of 18 November. The Inquiry is a statutory Inquiry and the powers are set out in the Health and Personal Social Services (NI) Order 1972, copy attached. Those powers include requiring any person to give evidence or to produce any books or documents which relate to the issues which are under investigation.

In the coming weeks I plan to develop preliminary proposals which will detail how I propose to conduct the Inquiry and these will issue to all interested participants for consultation.

To assist me in identifying the key issues which I may decide to investigate I need to gather notes, documents, records and reports from all available sources.

Therefore, I would ask that you arrange for all notes, documents, records and reports relating to Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson to be delivered to the Secretariat, Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths, 20 Adelaide Street, Belfast BT2 8GB by 10 December 2004. The papers should be indexed and tabbed. Please liaise with my office regarding the precise arrangements for delivery of the papers. I am happy to accept photocopies of the various documents provided that they are legible, however, originals must be retained and held securely.

Secretary: Ambrose Owens Deputy Secretary: Sharon Lindsay
The Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths, 3rd Floor, 20 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8GB
Email: inquiry@hndni.org Website: www.hndni.org Tel: 028 9051 7038 Fax: 028 9051 7237

I also require the names and contact details for all individuals who were involved in the care and treatment of Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson during their period in the Royal Group of Hospitals and the names and contact details of those individuals who were involved in any subsequent actions such as reviews or inquiries relating to the deaths. Should this include personnel who are no longer employed by your Trust then I would ask that, if possible, you also provide the appropriate contact details if you know them or, if you don't, the last known address.

It would be very helpful if you could identify the roles which each of these individuals played and if you could list them chronologically eg medical and nursing staff on duty at time of admission, medical staff in intensive care unit, personnel involved in internal review etc.

I should add that in order to assist witnesses, and their representatives, in the preparation of their evidence to the Inquiry I may have to make available to them copies of documents provided to the Inquiry and to place such copies on the Inquiry website.

I would ask that you arrange for a copy of this letter to be forwarded to your legal advisors.

Yours sincerely

John O'Hara

MR JOHN O'HARA QC
Chairman

Encs