

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2004 4:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FAO: Margaret Kelly/ Urgent-Draft Press Statement and Communications Strategy

Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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PR578.doc



2Preparing
communications Stra.

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Confidential doc attached for comments and views see below
-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 May 2004 16:04
To: Mills Hugh; 'Mullan Harry'; 'Jenny Irvine'; Gormley Michael; 'Reilly Maggie'; Cody Diana; [REDACTED]
Subject: Urgent-Draft Press Statement and Communications Strategy
Importance: High

Please find attached copy of press statement in relation to LC case.
On reading full statement and consideration of Editor note,
please forward any views or comments on or before Tuesday 1st June.

on behalf of Bridget O'Rawe, Director of Corporate Affairs

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DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT

The Chairman of Sperrin Lakeland Trust, Mr Harry Mullan, has confirmed plans to commission an analysis of aspects of the Trust's handling of the Lucy Crawford case. Currently, the Trust is co-operating with the General Medical Councils examination of the clinical aspects of Lucy's case.

Commenting, Mr Mullan said "Immediately following the Inquest into Lucy's death, we stated we would be reflecting on the Coroner's conclusions. In the course of this reflection on how we, as an organisation, handled this tragic case, we recognised some flaws in systems and processes. At our Clinical and Social care Governance Committee meeting, on Thursday the 20th May, I proposed plans to establish a steering group to oversee a process, used in healthcare, known as 'root cause analysis'. These proposals were endorsed by the Committee. I have since written to Lucy's parents to share our plans with them, and remain hopeful that they may feel able to contribute to this process."

Setting out the terms of reference of the 'root cause analysis', Mr Mullan emphasised the commitment of the Trust and its officers to reflect on how improvements could be made. "Our primary goal is to learn lessons and improve our practice. Additionally, where we identify process issues which have wider implications, we will want to inform the appropriate authorities," said Mr Mullan.

Mrs Jenny Irvine, Non-executive director for the Trust, will be chairing the steering group. She will be joined by Dr Diana Cody, the Trust's medical director; Mrs

Margaret Kelly, Chief Nurse for the Western Health and Social Services Board; and
Mrs Maggie Reilly, Chief Officer of the Western Health and Social Services Council.

The analysis will examine a range of systems including the Trust's arrangements, at that time, for adverse incident investigation and the complaints process and will take account of more recent changes and improvements. The steering group will be supported by a representative of the NHS Modernisation Agency Clinical Governance Support Team. A specialist independent consultancy firm will co-ordinate the use of the 'root cause analysis' approach.

It is anticipated that the exercise will take 4-6 months to complete, culminating in a report and recommendations to the Trust's Clinical and Social Care Governance Committee for approval.

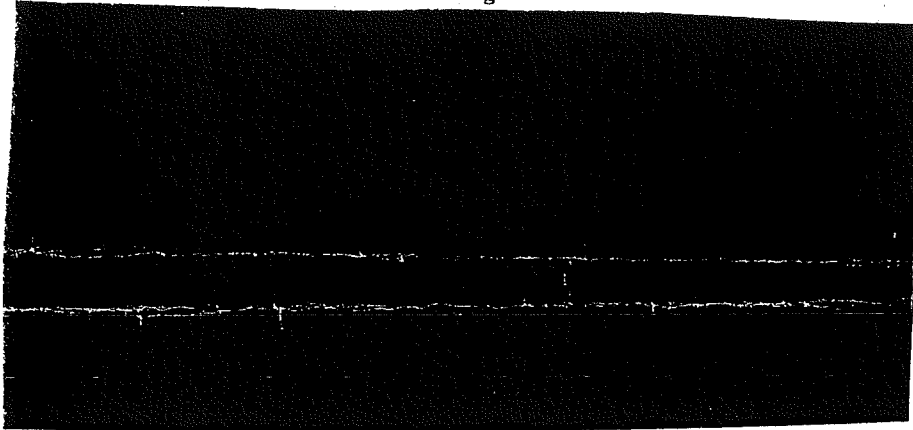
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NOTE TO EDITOR

1. The Coroner's inquest into Lucy Crawford's death, concluded its findings on 20 February 2004.
2. The Coroner referred aspects of Lucy's clinical care to the General Medical Council for examination.
3. 'Root Cause Analysis' is increasingly used in the health care setting, to examine events/processes/systems surrounding adverse incidents and "near misses." It originates from the aviation industry, where it is used to determine causation factors in aviation incidents.
4. The NHS Modernisation Agency Clinical Governance Support Team is a GB based organisation. It has a particular responsibility in supporting health care providers implement governance arrangements under the Quality legislation.
5. Mr Harry Mullan is the recently appointed Chairman of Sperrin Lakeland Trust.
Mrs Jenny Irvine is a non-executive director, and has a background in nursing.

Further enquiries should be directed to:

Janet Hall
Communications/Public Affairs Manager



Preparing Communications Strategy/Plan: LC case

General Literature-Research Review on Crisis Communications

- ◆ Don't underestimate the impact of bad press
- ◆ Don't underestimate the lengths press will go to, to get a story/information/comment
- ◆ Involve incident management team
- ◆ Involve key people in same
- ◆ Agree one spokesperson - avoid temptation of others "stepping in"
- ◆ Agree and be clear on issues and message
 - demonstrate care
 - explain actions
 - admit mistakes - don't attempt to justify
- ◆ Avoid constant press pressure by announcing a time for briefing
 - publish a timetable of meetings if problem is ongoing
- ◆ Don't be caught unprepared – don't pretend to know
- ◆ Consider public enquiry line
- ◆ Keep staff advised

OPTIONS

1. Straight written press statement from Chairman with personal comment from Mrs Jenny Irvine as Chair.

PROS

- ◆ Retain control of content
- ◆ Not caught on the hop
- ◆ Using Jenny could present softer side/perspective

CONS

- ◆ Will not end there
 - ◆ Potentially add to perception of Trust "hiding"
2. Statement issued at press conference - number of variations on who to involve:
 - (i) all key players present, one spokesman ie. Chairman
 - (ii) as above with Chairman and Mrs Irvine commenting
 - (iii) Only Chairman and Mrs Irvine? accompanied by Trust public affairs manager (Mrs Hall or Ms O'Rawe) - as at (i) above with others commenting
- *option (ii) preferred

Content of press conference – focus on delivering statement only or invite questions
- former better - latter could go out of control.

Remind ourselves - this is primarily an internal process, for us to learn - our audience, we agreed, was not the media nor indeed necessarily the public. Cynics will perceive negatively, however we present.

I conclude option 1 is the best option, with fall back being 2(ii) with no questions. Decline interviews, given review only commencing.

We will have to plan for conclusion of RCA and how we handle at the time.

Director of Corporate Affairs

27th May 2004