

Departmental Solicitor's Office

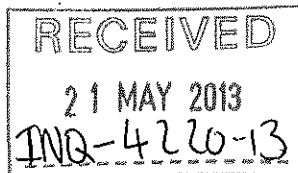


Department of
**Finance and
Personnel**

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Mr Brian McLoughlin
Assistant Solicitor to the Inquiry
Inquiry in Hyponatraemia-related Deaths
Arthur house
41 Arthur Street
BELFAST BT14GB



Your Ref: BMeL-0089-13
Our Ref: LIT 0477/08/B5/CR

Date: 21st May 2013

Dear Mr McLoughlin

RE: RAYCHEL FERGUSON (LUCY CRAWFORD AFTERMATH)

I refer to the above and your request for information dated 10 May 2013. I would confirm that, having conducted a search of a number of business areas within the Department, the only reference to guidance in relation to Coronial matters has been identified at Page 18 of Guidance on Death, Stillbirth & Cremation Certification, issued in 2008.

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/guidance-death-stillbirth-and-cremation-certification-pt-b.pdf>

Therein it states:

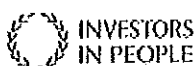
Coroner's Investigations

When a coroner directs a post-mortem examination a police officer will act on behalf of the coroner in making the necessary arrangements, and investigations. All medical staff should facilitate the police officer in these duties.

GMC guidance *Good Medical Practice* paragraph 32 states "you must assist the coroner or procurator fiscal, by responding to inquiries, and by offering all relevant information to an inquest or inquiry into a patient's death. Only where your evidence may lead to criminal proceedings being taken against you are you entitled to remain silent."

In relation to hospital deaths, the police officer will require a member of staff to formally identify the body and to provide brief particulars of the background to the death.

DFP/13/338946/CR/IR



Should you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Rodgers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

CATHERINE RODGERS

for The Solicitor

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

DFI/13/338946/CR/RM