

BELFAST CITY HOSPITAL TRUST
incorporating
BELVOIR PARK HOSPITAL

LISBURN ROAD, BELFAST BT9 7AB

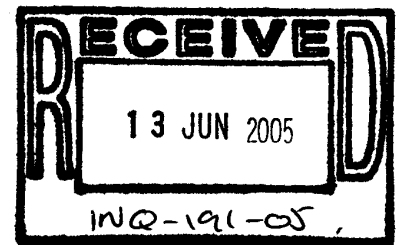
TELEPHONE [REDACTED]

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YOUR REF: FC-119-05
OUR REF: CG/001/DMD

9 June 2005

Ms F Chamberlain
Solicitor to the Inquiry
The Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths
3rd Floor
20 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB



Dear Ms Chamberlain

Re: Inquiry into Hyponatraemia – related deaths

You wrote to the Chief Executive on 17 May 2005 and asked a number of questions relating to the role of the Trust, monitoring, staff development, staff induction and learning from Coroners Inquests. I will answer your questions in the order in which they appear in your letter.

1. Please explain the role and responsibilities of your Trust.

The Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust (BCH) is comprised of Belfast City Hospital, Belvoir Park Hospital and the Eastern Area Breast and Cervical Screening Services. Its role is to provide a range of acute general medical and surgical services to the population of South Belfast. Additionally, the Hospital provides a number of Area and Regional services such as Urology, ENT Surgery, Cardiology, Dermatology, Haematology, Oncology and Nephrology. BCH also provides, in association with the South East Belfast Trust (SEBT), Mental Health Services for residents of South Belfast.

Belvoir Park Hospital provides Regional Radiotherapy and Oncology services (pending the opening of the Cancer Centre on the BCH site).



As a major Teaching Hospital, BCH plays an important role in undergraduate and postgraduate education of a range of health professionals.

BCH no longer provides inpatient paediatric services, except for children's ENT. This service is scheduled to transfer to the Royal Hospital Trust under the terms of the 'Developing Better Services' plan.

Children may be brought to our Accident and Emergency department. If requiring admission, they are referred elsewhere.

2. Please explain the interaction between the Trust and (i) the Health Board, (ii) the other Health Trusts within Northern Ireland.

The Trust is responsible for the delivery and operational management of services which are commissioned by the individual Health Boards and the Regional Medical Service Consortium (RMSC), made up of all four Health Boards. The majority of the Trust's funding comes from the Eastern Health and Social Services Board (EHSSB). On an annual basis, the Trust agrees levels of service and funding with the four Boards and RMSC. Performance in the delivery of these services is monitored by the Trust, the four Boards and RMSC during and at the end of each year. The Boards and RMSC determine the investment profile for new services, and provide the funding for these to take place.

The Trust works in collaboration with other Trusts in the co-ordination and delivery of services. Our current partners include the RHT, the Ulster Hospital, the Down Lisburn Trust and SEBT. Examples include the delivery of day case surgery at Lagan Valley Hospital by BCH surgeons and the South Belfast Mental Health Service referred to above.

3. Please explain how the Trust monitors the education and continuous development of its doctors and nursing staff. If there is an induction pack provided to doctors and nurses coming to work within the Trust for the first time please provide a copy of the same.

All medical staff are required to undertake annual appraisal, which includes assessment of their continuing Professional Development. A Personal Development Plan provides the basis for the subsequent year's programme for each doctor.

Nurses in the Trust have their own Personal Professional Portfolio.

As a major Teaching Hospital, BCH runs and leads a very wide range of educational activities for a variety of healthcare professionals, and has a range of development programmes for its own staff. BCH also works closely with other agencies, including the two Universities, the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Authority and the Beeches Management Centre in the areas of staff development and education.

Nurses have access to a wide range of education through the Post Registration Commissioning Process and with Service Consortium for skills based training. Each Directorate has an educational facilitator to lead and develop all Education Programmes in-house. In addition, the Trust has ten joint nursing appointments with Queens University Belfast to facilitate undergraduate and postgraduate education.

Considerable documentation could be provided about these areas on request. For the purpose of this response I have enclosed the following:-

- Junior Doctors Induction Pack
- Work Shadowing booklet
- Student Nurse Placement Pack
- Copy of Internet information for new staff
- Nurse recruitment documentation
- Preceptorship programme for New Nurses
- Staff Nurse Rotation Programme
- Staff Nurse Induction Programme

4. Please explain the role of the Trust in the education and continuous development of doctors and nurses coming from overseas to work within the Trust. If there is an induction pack provided to such staff please provide a copy of the same.

Medical staff from overseas must be fully registered with the GMC before the application is accepted. Those new to the Trust follow the same induction process as other doctors.

There is an Adaptation Programme for overseas nurses. This runs in parallel with the normal induction process. Examples of current documentation are enclosed.

5. Please explain the system in place within the Trust for the dissemination of information learned as a result of Coroner's Inquests or other events both within the Trust to the Board and to other Health Trusts within Northern Ireland.

I enclose for your information some documents indicating how lessons learned from Coroner's Inquests have been dealt with in the Trust.

- Draft minutes of the Risk Management Committee to be approved the next meeting on 7 July 2005.
- Schedule for Best Practice Forum (attended by a large number of doctors and nurses).
- Programme for Pre Registration House Officers (Autumn 2004)

I trust that the information provided is sufficient to answer your queries. If you require further detail or elaboration, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Dr K J Fullerton
MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Encs