



13 September 2016

Ms Bernie Conlon
Secretary to the Inquiry
Arthur House
41 Arthur Street
Belfast
BT1 4GB

Dear Ms Conlon

I am writing regarding your letter of 16 August 2016 requesting clarification on a number of issues. I have responded to these below.

1. Serious Adverse Incidents

- a) There are two projects being taken forward by the Guidelines and Audit Implementation Network (GAIN) which joined RQIA in April 2015.
- i) GAIN Strategic Project: Examining learning arising from SAls involving suicide, homicide and serious self-harm' and
 - ii) GAIN Strategic Project: Examining learning arising from SAls involving the death of a patient

Both projects are managed using project management structures with individual component work streams. There are two multiagency project boards which oversee the delivery of the projects and ensure all relevant stakeholders are appropriately engaged. Project teams have been established to undertake the core work in relation to the projects.

The first project was initiated in November 2015 and commenced in January 2016, following agreement of the project brief by the Department of Health.

All fieldwork for the project has been completed and the next steps are to be determined at the next meeting of the project board, which is scheduled for 27 September 2016. It is anticipated that the project will close by the end of 2016, with a report being provided to the Department of Health on completion of the project.

The second project began in early November 2015. The completed fieldwork has included questionnaires to governance departments, focus group discussions and the production of two videos to be used as part of training for HSC staff. The report of the project is being prepared with the aim of providing this to the Department of Health by end of November 2016.

b) The primary objective of the report by RQIA 'Quality Assurance of the Review of the handling of all Serious Adverse Incidents reported between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2013' was to provide assurance that all staff involved in the completion of the look back exercise were diligent in their undertaking, to ensure that the work was completed by the required date. Based on the findings from the quality assurance exercise, RQIA further confirmed that the information submitted provides an accurate reflection of the handling of each SAI reviewed.

During the review a number of common issues emerged for further consideration, including the issue of interface incidents. In its conclusion, RQIA recommended that the generic issues and the individual reflections of trusts from the exercise are used to inform the future development of the SAI arrangements.

The issue of interface incidents and the need for clear guidance on which trusts should take the lead role in the investigation was one of the generic issues raised through this process.

Since publishing the report RQIA has not taken any further steps in taking this matter forward.

2. Meetings between RQIA and Department of Health Sponsor Branch

I have enclosed requested agendas.

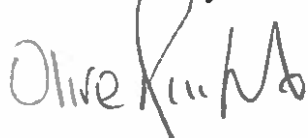
3. Whistleblowers

I have attached a copy of the Review of Whistleblowing Arrangements in Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland which was published on 9 September 2016. This report makes eleven recommendations for enhancing arrangements in Northern Ireland.

On page 42 of the report, the review team set out their consideration of how independent oversight of the handling of whistleblowing cases should be taken forward in Northern Ireland. The RQIA review will inform a wider review of whistleblowing by the Department of Health.

Please contact me if you require any further clarification.

Yours sincerely



Olive Macleod
Chief Executive

Encs