

004/2

Witness Statement Ref. No.

NAME OF CHILD: Adam Strain

Name: Dr Donagh O'Neill

Title: Consultant Psychiatrist

Present position and institution:

Consultant Psychiatrist, Sligo Mental Health Service

Previous position(s) and institution(s):

[Since your Witness Statement of 25th February 2005]

Consultant Psychiatrist, Sligo Mental Health Service

Membership of Advisory Panels and Committees:

[Identify by date and title all of those since your Witness Statement of 25th August 2005]

Other Statements, Depositions and Reports:

[Identify by date and title all those since your Witness Statement of 25th February 2005]

OFFICIAL USE:

List of previous statements, depositions and reports :

Ref:

Date:

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Witness Statement to the Inquiry

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANSWERING:

Please attach additional sheets if more space is required. Please identify clearly any document to which you refer or rely upon for your answer. If the document has an Inquiry reference number, e.g. Ref: 049-001-001 which is 'Chart No.1 Old Notes', then please provide that number. If the document does not have such a number then please provide a copy of the document.

INQUIRIES ARISING OUT OF YOUR INQUIRY WITNESS STATEMENT

With reference to your Inquiry Witness Statement dated 25th August 2005 please provide clarification and/or further information in respect of the following:

(1) Answer to Question 1 at p.2

"I was a Senior House Officer in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. I conducted a medical history and examination at 2330 hours on 26th November 1995 (058-035-131 and 132). I recorded investigation results in the medical notes (058-035-144) and I ordered a chest x-ray on 26th November 1995 (057-019-028 and 029). I prescribed antibiotics (057-021-033) on 26th November 1995 and paracetamol (057-021-034) on 27th November 1995 as recorded on the prescription sheet"

(a) Describe your work commitments to the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC) from the start of your employment there and particularly over the period 26th November to 28th November 1995

I recall being a basic grade SHO at the RBHSC from August 1995 to January 1996. Although it is difficult to recall due to the time lapse, I would have carried out all the duties of a basic grade SHO at the RBHSC, such as admitting patients and carrying out ward duties under the instruction and supervision of senior staff at the hospital. I would have taken part in the on call rota as a basic grade SHO. I would have worked under the instruction and supervision of senior colleagues. Although it is difficult to recall due to the time lapse I believe that the on call rota would have involved working one night in every three or four nights. Following a night on call I believe that I would have ended duty at either 0900 or 1300 hours the following day. As a basic grade SHO I do not recall attending theatre, PICU or attending A&E at this time.

(b) State the times at which you were on duty between 26th and 28th November 1995 and in particular:

- whether you were on duty and present in the hospital at all times or
- whether you were on call during that period

Although it is difficult to recall due to the time lapse, I am reasonable sure that I was on call as a basic grade SHO on the 26th November 1995. I cannot recall whether I was on call on Saturday 25th November 1995. I think that I would have started duty at 0900 on 26th November 1995 and I would have been on call as a basic grade SHO in the hospital until 0900 on the 27th November under more senior supervision. Although it is difficult to recall, I would have ended duty in my recollection at either 0900 or at 1300 on the 27th November 1995. Although it is difficult to recall due to the time lapse, I would have returned to my duties as a basic grade SHO on the 28th November 1995 working from

0900 to 1700 on the medical or surgical wards. On return to work on the 28th November 1995 I would not have had any duties in my memory involving PICU, theatre or A&E. Whilst on call my duties as a basic grade SHO in the hospital would have included admitting patients to the renal ward and carrying out basic duties and instructions under the supervision of the renal ward staff and more senior staff. Apart from these on call duties, I do not recall having any other duties or involvement with the renal ward during my time working as a basic grade SHO.

- (c) **State what contact you had with Adam between his admission on 26th November 1995 and the withdrawal of ventilatory support from him on 28th November 1995, including where that contact took place, its nature and purpose**

As the basic grade SHO on call, my contact with Adam Strain is as described in my previous statement. My role was to admit the patient at the request of the renal team, record investigation results ordered by the renal team in the medical file for the renal team information and order a chest x-ray and prescribe antibiotics and paracetamol at the request of the renal staff and under supervision of senior staff. I do not recall having any other role in Adam Strains care.

- (d) **Describe what you considered to be your role in relation to and responsibilities towards Adam from learning on 26th November 1995 of a potential donor kidney for him until 28th November 1995 when ventilatory support for him was withdrawn, and in particular:**

- from Adam's admission to RBHSC until his arrival in theatre
- while Adam was in theatre until his admission to PICU
- from admission to PICU until his death

My role as the on call basic grade SHO on the 26th November 1995 was to admit the patient, record investigation results in the medical notes for the renal team and order a chest x-ray and prescribe antibiotics and paracetamol at the request of the renal team and under supervision of more senior staff. As a basic grade SHO I do not recall having any other role in Adam Strain's care. As a basic grade SHO, I do not recall having any role or duties with Adam Strain in theatre or in PICU or being called to see Adam Strain in theatre or in PICU.

- (e) **Describe your experience, by 26th November 1995, of assessing the electrolyte results of a child who was being prepared for a renal transplant**

My role as the on call basic grade SHO on the 26th November 1995 was to record the investigation results ordered by the renal team in the medical notes whilst I was on call, for the more senior member of the team to review. I cannot recall the grades of the more senior members of the team who would have made the clinical care decisions about Adam Strain on the night of the 26th November 1995.

- (f) **Prior to 26th November 1995:**

- describe your experience and involvement in preparing patients for paediatric renal transplants (specifically identifying those patients of less than 6 years), the dates of those renal transplants and the location where they took place
- state your experience in preparing paediatric patients (specifically identifying those patients of less than 6 years) for paediatric renal transplants who were polyuric

As a basic grade SHO I do not recall having any other experience or involvement in preparing patients for renal transplant.

- (g) **Since 27th November 1995:**

- describe your experience and involvement in preparing patients for paediatric renal

- transplants, the dates of those renal transplants and the location where they took place
- describe your experience in preparing paediatric patients, who were polyuric, for paediatric renal transplants
- explain how your practice has been affected by lessons learned through Adam's death

Since 27th November 1995 I do not recall having any experience or involvement as a basic grade SHO in preparing paediatric patients for renal transplants.

(h) Identify the renal transplant protocol, if any, governing your actions in respect of Adam over the period 26th November to 27th November 1995

As a basic grade SHO on call, my role was to carry out the admitting duties outlined above at the request and under the supervision of the renal team. I do not recall the renal transplant protocol governing my actions.

(i) Describe any discussions that you had with Dr Savage over the pre-operative fluid management plans for Adam, including what was discussed and when and where those discussions took place

As a basic grade SHO I do not recall having any role or discussion with Dr Savage regarding pre-operative fluid management.

(j) Describe and explain the pre-operative fluid management plan for Adam and your role in implementing it, including:

- any changes that were made to it, the reasons for those changes and the person who authorised them
- your role in attempting to gain i.v. access to Adam after the cannula inserted at 1.30am on 27th November 1995
- your role in attempting to obtain a further blood sample from Adam after the cannula inserted at 1.30am on 27th November 1995

As a basic grade SHO I do not recall having any role in the fluid management plan. I do not recall attempting to gain i.v. access to Adam after the cannula inserted at 0130 on 27th November 1995 (Ref 057-014-019). I do not recall attempting to gain a further blood sample after the cannula inserted at 0130 on 27th November 1995.

(k) Transcribe your handwritten notes made to the prescription for antibiotics for Adam on 26th November 1995 (Ref: 057-021-033) in relation to the dose, time of administration and method of administration

Transcribed handwritten notes (Ref 057-021-033)

26/11/95 vancomycin 25mg/l maintenance via PD cannula
26/11/95 gentamicin 6mg/l maintenance via PD cannula

This entry is not timed

(2) Answer to Question 2 at p.2

"I recorded investigation results in the medical notes at 11pm on 26/11/1995. I recorded a medical history and examination at 11.30pm on 26/11/1995. I requested a Chest X Ray and prescribed antibiotics on 26/11/1995"

- (a) State at what time the blood sample was taken from Adam for laboratory analysis, the results of which you record at 11.00pm (Ref: 058-035-144)

I do not recall ordering or taking the blood sample. The records note that Dr Cartmill records the blood samples being taken at 9.30pm on 26.11.95 (Ref 058-035-144)

- (b) Transcribe your handwritten note of the "investigation results" made in Adam's medical notes at 11.00pm (Ref: 058-035-144)

Transcribed handwritten note (Ref 058-035-144)

Hb 10.5	Na 139	Prothrombin time 12.3
PCV 0.32	K 3.6	PTTK 28.4
WCC 9.5	U 16.8	Thrombin Clotting 20.6
Pt 336	Ca 2.59	Fibrinogen 3.58
	Creatinine 702	XD P < 250
	Alb 40	
	Phos 1.28	

- (c) State whether you made any notes on or completed any of the transplant form (Ref: 057-007-008) and if so, state:

- which notes you made
- when those notes were made
- the source of information for those notes

I did not complete any of the transplant form.

- (d) State whether you assessed the sodium blood chemistry result which you recorded at 11pm and whether you reviewed Adam's fluid regime in light of that result and if so, what action you took as a consequence of that review

I recorded the investigation results for the renal teams information. I do not recall reviewing or having any role in the fluid regime.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- (3) Describe in detail the education and training you received in fluid management (in particular hyponatraemia) and record keeping through the following, providing dates and names of the institutions/bodies:

- (a) Undergraduate education
- (b) Postgraduate education and training
- (c) Hospital induction programmes
- (d) Continuous professional development

I do not recall the fluid management training or record keeping training I received during my undergraduate education at University College Dublin or as a postgraduate or during hospital induction programmes or during continuous professional development.

(4) Prior to 26th November 1995:

(a) State your knowledge of children with hyponatraemia

(b) State your experience of children with hyponatraemia, including the:

- **estimated total number of such cases, together with the dates and where they took place**
- **number of the children who were aged less than 6 years old**
- **nature of your involvement**
- **outcome for the children**

As a basic grade SHO I do not recall having any experience or role in the management of children with hyponatraemia.

(5) Describe in detail your role, if any, in the care and treatment of Adam prior to 26th November 1995, including:

- **your knowledge of his condition, medication and previous treatment**
- **the fluid management regime employed on each occasion and**
- **the lessons you learned from your prior treatment of Adam**

I do not recall having any role in the care and treatment of Adam Strain prior to 26th November 1995

(6) Describe in detail your experience, since 27th November 1995, in the care and management of children with hyponatraemia

I do not recall having any role in the care and management of children with hyponatraemia since 27th November 1995

(7) Identify the medical Registrar on duty between 8pm on 26th November and 7am on 27th November 1995

I do not recall who the medical Registrar on duty was between 8pm on 26th November and 7 am on 27th November 1995

(8) Identify precisely from Adam's medical notes and records the entries that you made or which were made on your direction and state below:

- (a) when each of the identified entries was made**
- (b) the source of the information recorded in the entry**

(8)(a)(b) I conducted a medical history and examination at 2330 hours on 26th November 1995 (058-035-131 and 132) at the request of the renal team and under more senior supervision. I recorded investigation results in the medical notes (058-035-144) for the renal teams information. I do not recall ordering or taking these blood tests. I ordered a Chest X-Ray on 26th November 1995 (057-019-028 and 029) at the request of the renal team. I prescribed antibiotics (057-021-033) on the 26th November 1995 and paracetamol (057-021-034) on 27th November 1995 at the request of the renal team and under more senior supervision.

(9) Provide any further points and comments that you wish to make, together with any documents, in relation to:

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- (a) the care and treatment of Adam from his admission for the renal transplant surgery on 26th November 1995 to his death on 28th November 1995
- (b) Record keeping
- (c) Communications with Adam's family about his care and treatment in respect of the renal transplant surgery
- (d) Lessons learned from Adam's death and how that has affected your practice
- (e) Current 'protocols' and procedures
- (f) Any other relevant matter

THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

Signed:

Donagh O'Neill

Dated: 17 4 11