

• Young, Christine

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**From:** Mulhern, Kevin  
**Sent:** 19 May 2004 15:25  
**To:** Gowdy, Clive; Campbell, Dr Henrietta  
**Subject:** Irish News/Lucy Crawford

**Importance:** High



Letter.doc

Secretary/CMO

Dr McCarthy has put together a first draft in response to the Irish News article. If we get an agreed response back to them by 4.30 we should just make tomorrow's paper, if not it will be Friday.

Happy to discuss

 Kevin

DHSSPS-C Gowdy

001-050-154

The Chief Medical Officer, Dr Henrietta Campbell strongly refuted claims made by Denzil McDaniel in yesterday's Irish News that she had undermined the coroners findings on the case of Lucy Crawford's death. "I have the utmost respect for the coroner, I fully accept his findings in this case, and I have never indicated otherwise" said Dr Campbell today. "I know that Lucy's death has been a tragic loss to her family and I want to extend my sympathy to them," she continued. Dr Campbell emphasised that new guidance on the prevention of hyponatraemia, introduced by her in 2002 should help ensure that a similar event will not happen again.

Dr Campbell also challenged Denzil McDaniel's assertion that one of her comments in a recent interview was 'nonsense'. "When interviewed for the television programme "The Issue" I wanted to stress the rarity of severe hyponatraemia and the difficulty of anticipating the individual response to fluid. Fluid management in children is a very complex area and medical experts nationally and internationally are still debating what the ideal approach should be".

Denzil McDaniel in his article 'They threw Lucy's life away' highlighted that the Chief Medical Officer was not told of Lucy's death at the time. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety acknowledges that at the time of Lucy's death a formal system for reporting untoward events was not in place. Much however has changed since 2000, particularly in the area of quality and accountability where more rigorous systems are now in place. In a broad programme designed to improve the quality of service, the Department is developing a system for reporting untoward events, and identifying those which require further scrutiny.