



MEDIA STATEMENT

*Draft with Anne O'Brien's
recommended changes - these were
not made here.*

The Chairman of Sperrin Lakeland Trust, Mr Harry Mullan, has confirmed plans to undertake an analysis of aspects of the Trust's handling of the Lucy Crawford case. Currently, the Trust is co-operating with the General Medical Council's examination of the clinical aspects of Lucy's care.

Commenting, Mr Mullan said "Immediately following the Inquest into Lucy's death, we stated we would be reflecting on the Coroner's conclusions. In the course of this reflection on how we, as an organisation, handled this tragic case, we recognised some flaws and areas where improvement was needed. At our Clinical and Social care Governance Committee meeting, on Thursday the 20th May, I proposed plans to establish a steering group to oversee a process, used in healthcare, known as 'root cause analysis'. These proposals were endorsed by the Committee. I have since written to Lucy's parents to share our plans with them, and remain hopeful that they may feel able to contribute to this process."

Setting out the draft terms of reference of the 'root cause analysis', Mr Mullan emphasised the commitment of the Trust and its officers to reflect on how improvements could be made. "Our primary goal is to learn lessons and improve our practice. Additionally, where we identify process issues which have wider implications, we will want to inform the appropriate authorities," said Mr Mullan.

Mrs Jenny Irvine, Non-executive director for the Trust, will be chairing the steering group. She will be joined by Dr Diana Cody, the Trust's medical director and there will be representation on the group from the Western Health and Social Services Board. The first task for the steering group will be to agree the terms of reference for the work to be undertaken

DHSSPS

008-019-050

The work will include the examination of a range of systems including the Trust's arrangements, at that time, for adverse incident investigation and the complaints process and will take account of more recent changes and improvements. The steering group will be supported by a representative of the Northern Ireland Clinical & Social Care Governance Support Team ~~NHS Modernisation Agency Clinical Governance Support Team~~. A specialist independent consultancy firm will manage the use of the 'root cause analysis' approach, and develop a report to the steering group on findings and recommendations. The steering group may also commission external opinion and advice.

It is anticipated that the exercise will take 4-6 months to complete, culminating in a report and recommendations from the steering group to the Trust's Clinical and Social Care Governance Committee for approval.

... ENDS

NOTE TO EDITOR

1. The Coroner's inquest into Lucy Crawford's death concluded its findings on 20 February 2004.
2. The Coroner referred aspects of Lucy's clinical care to the General Medical Council for examination.
3. 'Root Cause Analysis' is increasingly used in the health care setting, to examine events/processes/systems surrounding adverse incidents and "near misses". It originates from the aviation industry, where it is used to determine causation factors in aviation incidents.
4. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has commissioned the NHS Clinical Governance Support Team in England (Part of the NHS Modernisation Agency) to assist with the implementation of Clinical & Social Care Governance in Northern Ireland. A Clinical & Social Care Governance Support Team for Northern Ireland has recently been established to assist HPSS organisations in improving the quality of health and social services provided to

patients and clients across the Region. ~~The NHS Modernisation Agency Clinical Governance Support Team is a GB based organisation. It has a particular responsibility in supporting health care providers implement governance arrangements under the Quality legislation.~~

4.

5. Mr Harry Mullan is the recently appointed Chairman of Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

Mrs Jenny Irvine is a non-executive director and has a background in nursing.