

[REDACTED]

Case in HM Coroner's Court
- Tuesday 17th - Thursday 19th February 2004

The patient was a 17 month old girl who was transferred from the Erne Hospital in the early hours of Thursday 13th April 2000 to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. She had a history of being unwell since Tuesday, and was admitted to the Erne Hospital on the Wednesday evening with a history of poor oral intake, vomiting and an increased temperature. Her Sodium level on admission was 137mmol/L. She was given intravenous fluids in the Ward, however at approximately 0300 hours on 13th April 2000 she developed a seizure and was given rectal diazepam. Also her breathing became erratic and she stopped breathing. Her sodium level at this time was 127mmol/L. It was necessary for the patient to be intubated and ventilated. It was noted that before leaving the Erne Hospital her pupils were dilated and unreactive.

On arrival at the Children's Hospital she was mechanically ventilated and soon required drugs to maintain her blood pressure. Her sodium level after arrival was 145mmol/L. She remained completely unresponsive.

Brain stem viability tests were carried out on Friday 14th April 2000, at 0850hrs and 1030hrs, and sadly they were negative. As a result, brain stem death was diagnosed and following consultation with her parents, the patient was disconnected from the mechanical ventilator at 1300hrs and by 1315hrs she had no heart beat.

The Coroner's Office was contacted.