

Dr G A Nesbitt
Medical director
Altnagelvin Hospital

1st May 2002

Dr Henrietta Campbell
Chief Medical Officer
Castle Buildings
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4 3SJ

Re: Hyponatraemia in Children receiving intravenous fluids

Dear Dr Campbell,

Following the death of a child in Altnagelvin Hospital, which is thought to have followed severe hyponatraemia, many steps have been taken to ensure that such an event does not occur again. We are all anxious to learn from what was a dreadful experience and to share vital information with others. Guidance issued from your Department will help in this regard and we are grateful for the recent posters on the subject.

I am interested to know if any such guidance was issued by the Department of Health following the death of a child in the Belfast Hospital for Sick Children which occurred some 5 years ago and whose death the Belfast Coroner investigated. I was unaware of this case and am somewhat at a loss to explain why.

I would be grateful if you could furnish me with any details of that particular case for I believe that questions will be asked as to why we did not learn from what appears to have been a similar event.

Yours sincerely,

G A Nesbitt Medical Director