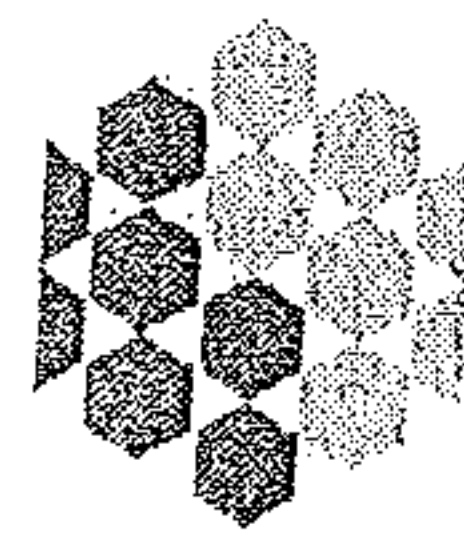


From the Permanent Secretary
Clive Gowdy CB



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

BY EMAIL

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Castle Buildings
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BELFAST BT4 3SQ

Tel: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

cc [REDACTED]

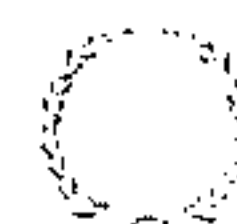
From: D C Gowdy
Date: 29 November 2004
To: Nigel Hamilton

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ETTA CAMPBELL

1. As I mentioned to you, senior staff in this department have been shipping a lot of unfair criticism in the wake of the setting up of the Hypontraemia Inquiry. This has been particularly so in the case of Etta Campbell. As well as a call for her suspension from Iris Robinson and some of the families involved in this issue, she has received the attached letter from Dr Deeney MLA.
2. Etta is particularly upset by the virulent criticism in that letter and is concerned as to the action she should now take. I have sent the letter to Noel Kelly and have received the attached advice from him. As you will see, he suggests that you should be aware of the correspondence and of the advice he is tendering.
3. Etta is currently in Boston on the Leadership course and I will need to discuss this matter with her on her return. In the meantime, I would welcome any comments you may have on this issue.

D C GOWDY
Permanent Secretary

DHSSPS



073-044-175

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Dr Henrietta Campbell
Chief Medical Officer
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BT4 3SQ

HC/0106/11 DK

RECEIVED

23 NOV 2004 D

CMO'S OFFICE

22nd November 2004

Dear Dr Campbell,

I write to you again having not yet received a reply to my last letter to you concerning the terrible plight of our patients here in Tyrone and, as I mentioned, particularly our mothers and children.

However, on this occasion my concern, and the reason why I write to you, is different but I feel, equally as serious.

Like the many other Doctors that I have spoken to since March of this year, I "squirmed" in disbelief as I watched your interview with Ferghal Mc Kinney as his Programme (The Issue) was shown on our television screens just over eight months ago.

Like many of our colleagues I simply couldn't believe my ears when I heard you describe the treatment received by the poor unfortunate girl Lucy Crawford as being the accepted treatment at that particular time when we, as Doctors, all know this to be totally incorrect.

Indeed, twenty years ago when I worked in hospital it was known then that sodium repletion is needed for patients with persistent vomiting, and that this would usually be supplied with normal saline which, of course, should be "run in" at a low rate (particularly in children and the elderly) to prevent intravascular overload and any resultant congestive heart failure problems.

Yet, on our television screens, we hear our Chief Medical Officer state that "running in" a very low sodium solution (so further diluting the already depleted circulatory sodium) at a lethally high rate was the accepted therapy in 2001!!

As experienced Doctors too, we know that regular electrolyte checks, and again particularly in the young and the elderly, have been for many years a vital element in therapy when treating fluid or electrolyte loss for whatever reason e.g. vomiting, rather than the "blind" rapid infusion of any intravenous fluid.

As senior Doctors also we watched in horror once again in the recent Insight programme as we heard our senior Doctor and Chief Medical Officer state, and

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somehow blame, the deceased children's "abnormal or unusual reaction" to the grossly negligent treatment they received, as the cause of their own deaths !

All Doctor's should, and do, know that the normal reaction to such cruel therapy for any child is in fact death and the abnormal reaction would be to somehow survive this grossly negligent therapy.

Many of our Colleagues, including myself, tried to consider (as Doctor Evans stated during the Insight Programme) that these statements may have been made in innocence, and ignorance, by yourself.

However, I and others believe that it is inconceivable that such a senior Doctor as yourself can be so deficient in medical knowledge, the sort of knowledge that Mrs Ferguson on the recent Insight TV Programme quite correctly stated that any experienced medical student should have.

It is, therefore, my opinion, and the opinion of everyone I talk to here in Tyrone, that the purpose of your false medical statements was to collude with the cover up of vital medical facts and so protect a health management team, namely the Sperrin Lakeland Trust (SLT) - a health management team that we all in this part of Northern Ireland have totally no confidence in, and know to have been behaving outside the law for many years now.

The protection of medical management is not in anyway the remit of our Chief Medical Officer and, as you are well aware, a cover up of vital medical facts, or the collusion with those intentionally carrying out such concealment, is a serious issue indeed and does amount to serious professional misconduct.

I believe that, as our Senior Chief Medical Officer, you have let down our profession here in Northern Ireland and your own personal and professional reputation and integrity must now be seriously damaged.

Thank God for our honest colleagues across the water (Doctors Sumner and Evans) who at least have shown our Northern Ireland public that there still is some honesty present in our once noble and respected profession.

Indeed, your statements on television re: the standards of treatment have made a "laughing stock" of our profession within Northern Ireland and that includes the many dedicated and brilliant members of our profession that live and work here.

I have just heard and read that the Inquiry to be conducted by John O' Hara QC and ordered by the Minister of Health, Angela Smith, is to be a wide ranging Inquiry with Mr O' Hara to be given scope to "report on any other relevant matters which arise in connection with the Inquiry" and in the Ministers own words were she states "the terms of reference I have set for the Inquiry and the powers available to it are wide ranging and should ensure that the Inquiry deals with all the issues of concern".



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I have to say that I am delighted with the Minister's statement and commend her for doing this, but I do also have to say at this stage that I am somewhat concerned that the senior secretarial staff allocated to Mr O' Hara will indeed be senior secretarial DHSSPS staff. I understand too that this has given cause for concern to the unfortunate families who lost their children as a result of this whole debacle.

I understand, and believe, that Mr O'Hara is a dedicated legal professional who will use his skills, and undoubted ability, to unearth the truth.

I really hope that he does this and if he "digs deep" enough, I believe that a whole "rotten can of worms will be opened up" when, as they should be, the activities of Sperrin Lakeland Trust over the past number of years are looked at and publicly exposed.

I believe that these activities must be looked at, as they are so relevant to why Sperrin Lakeland Trust have been involved in these "cover ups" and why the name of this Trust keeps coming up time after time in such cases in Northern Ireland.

I think Mr John Leckey the Belfast Coroner would agree with me in that this is not a "once off" for this particular management group.

We will, of course, be hearing more of Sperrin Lakeland Trust in our courts with at least one other similar such case (involving the death of a child & another probable cover up of the cause of death) to be exposed and made public in the not too distant future.

I should state, Dr Campbell, that I have been working as a General Practitioner in West Tyrone, and in the Carrickmore practice, for almost 18 years, having started at the end of 1986.

I am now Chairman of the Omagh and District General Practitioners Association and have been so since the year 2000. We comprise almost 30 General Practitioners and I have taken an interest for many years in the health services in our area and, indeed, how they have been managed & delivered.

Since the formation of Sperrin Lakeland Trust in 1996, I have watched their activities with some interest and, I have to say, I have had some deep concern about SLT's activities from approximately 1997 i.e. one year after they were up and running as our health management team.

This group has always been "Fermanagh-based", and "Fermanagh-biased", in that virtually all of the senior people with executive powers i.e. Directors, Managers and Executives, have been (and continue to be to this day) from the Fermanagh section of this health catchment area.

What I mean by this is that they all live in Fermanagh and have had an absolute determination from 1997 that the new hospital providing for the South West of N. Ireland would always be built in their "own patch".

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I pointed this out to the Health Minister last February i.e. of the 26th of February 2004, when I asked Angela Smith to actually stand down this group of people who, I believe, have been acting outside the law in a corrupt fashion & for many years now.

The Health Minister then asked me to provide evidence of my allegations and I intend to do this when I meet with her next week.

Back in February too, I mentioned to our Health Minister that if they could not be removed from our midst then this totally imbalanced and biased situation should be redressed but that still has never been looked at, or dealt with, in any sort of fair or just fashion.

From the day and hour that it was obvious that only one Hospital could be provided for the South West of Northern Ireland, it became quite clear to me that this Trust were absolutely "hell bent" that they would do all within their power to see to it that Fermanagh would be the chosen location.

They have been ably led in this determined effort by their Chief Executive Mr Hugh Mills and, indeed, seem to have succeeded !

SLT's C.E.O., Hugh Mills, has already set himself up as Fermanagh's hero and given himself the title of "Project Manager" (or something similar) so has he can overlook, and supervise, and see to it that the hospital he helped deliver to his beloved county is "nothing but the best" !

You must remember that just over half the population provided for by Sperrin Lakeland Trust (SLT) live in West Tyrone yet we have had very little say ever as regards Executive functions in this Trust Board.

SLT's actions, which I believe have amounted to corruption, have been primarily two fold :-

The first of these, which has been going on for some years, has been the complete and utter demoralisation of our health care staff in Omagh by practicing such activities as professional development obstruction, improper contract issues (offered only temporary contracts for Tyrone County Hospital in Omagh but offered permanent contracts if staff move to the Erne in Enniskillen), financial misappropriation with more funds going to the hospital with least surgical activity i.e. the Erne hospital, as opposed to the hospital with most surgical activity i.e. the Tyrone County Hospital in Omagh.

On many, many instances now there have been complaints to me (often in a confidential and terrified manner from our health care staff in Omagh) of staff bullying and harassment with the resultant instillation of the general feelings of fear and terror.



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These feelings persist in the minds of our professional health care staff in Omagh to this very day.

SLT's goal, or aim, for Omagh has always been the lowering of standards here in our Hospital with the subsequent development of a mindset in our population as so:-

"Sure we may as well have the Hospital closed here in Omagh as standards and medical services have become so poor".

I have to say that Sperrin Lakeland Trust have been completely successful in this and our situation in Tyrone County Hospital is now approaching the danger zone i.e. many of us, as GP's, are now concerned about the standard of treatment our patients will now receive and this has occurred as a result of the continued actions of Sperrin Lakeland Trust within our Hospital and community in Omagh & West Tyrone.

The Fermanagh population too has also suffered and we have seen that now illustrated recently on our television screens.

The other or second aim or objective of SLT has been the "bolstering up" or protection of the Erne Hospital in Fermanagh "at all costs".

Before Maurice Hayes made his recommendation on the sighting of the new Southwest Hospital, Sperrin Lakeland Trust had extreme difficulty in recruiting new Consultants for both Paediatric and Obstetrics/Gynaecology.

To find anyone for these posts SLT (to use their own words) had to "trawl the world".

It was quite clear to all of us at that time that new modern day and young Consultants saw no future in a hospital in Fermanagh with such a small population and, therefore, were not keen to apply for such permanent posts.

However, SLT were absolutely determined that it must not be seen that Consultants will not come to Fermanagh, whenever they were working so hard towards a new Acute Hospital being built in this very county and so SLT went to extreme lengths to find Consultants somewhere, or anywhere, in the World.

They were, of course, eventually successful but when you trawl anywhere or anything you are liable to get poor standards or quality and at least three of the Consultants employed or recruited were considered (by all of us here as senior doctors) to be well past their "sell by dates" !

I have to say that one of the Paediatric Consultants that did come to Fermanagh was of an extremely high standard but she left and, as I understand, left because standards in Paediatrics and amongst her Paediatric colleagues in the Erne hospital were so poor.

With substandard Consultant services, blunders were inevitable.

And, again, to protect the reputation of Fermanagh, and the Erne Hospital, when these blunders occurred they then had to be somehow concealed or covered up.



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It is very significant, Dr Campbell, that the death of the young Crawford girl and, indeed, a death [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] both occurred at a time just prior to Maurice Hayes making his decision on where the new hospital should be sited.

I think that this is very significant, indeed, and both of these deaths were as a result of poor standards and wrong procedures or treatments given and then, too, with the Inquests suitably not occurring until many years later.

You see then how our Fermanagh patients have also suffered with firstly substandard medical care causing the deaths of their loved ones and then the causes of these tragic deaths being hidden from all to see, or covered up.

I should say too, at this stage, that only for Mr John Leckey, the Belfast Coroner, the causes of these deaths would still have been accepted as "natural causes".

I write at length on all of this as I have followed this whole situation for many years and I am deeply concerned about the situation that we now have in the whole South West of Northern Ireland.

In my time here I have never seen such poor services in both of our Hospitals (Omagh & Enniskillen) and now we have a situation where we have totally lost all confidence, and all trust, in our health management team here.

I too have a wife and three children, and all of whom I love dearly, and it concerns me greatly that my family, my friends and my patients are being exposed to these poor health services provided by, and the unlawful health practices carried out by, this health management known as Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

By making your statements on television this is the group of people, and this is the type of people, that you are trying to protect.

Therefore, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and as a Senior Doctor & General Practitioner, I feel now that I must ask you to do the honourable thing and resign from your position as our Chief Medical Officer.

I now know that there are many other Doctors who feel the same as I do but I believe that you should be given the option to stand down yourself rather than be forced to do so at a later time.

The SLT management team, I believe, have involved themselves in criminal actions. Like the rest of society, they should be amenable to the accepted law of the land and the laws of decency.

As a matter of some urgency, SLT must also be removed from our area here in the South West and, I believe, that these individuals involved in such practices should not ever again be employed in our once proud and noble N.H.S.

Our N.H.S that I have been proud to work in for over 24 years was, as set up in 1948 by the futuristic thinking Welsh Minister for Health at the time Aneurin Bevan, once



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the envy of the rest of the World and yet now we have within our NHS such groups & individuals as Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

I am meeting the Health Minister again next week – Monday 29th November 2004.

Following on from her request to me last February to provide further evidence, I hope to have with me at least one senior member of medical staff who will collaborate my statements and will provide the evidence required for the Minister to do what she really now must do.

Angela Smith now must remove and stand down this management team who I, and the whole of the community that I am privileged to work in as a G.P. and that I now represent politically as an M.L.A, have totally lost confidence and faith in.

I believe too that my political colleagues in Fermanagh feel that their population, or constituents, feel the same i.e. that people like this have no place in our NHS.

Both of our areas, therefore, have suffered as a result of this Trust and so SLT, I now firmly believe must be removed forthwith.

Considering the statement by the Health Minister Angela Smith were she states that “I believe that it is of the highest importance that the general public has confidence in the quality and standards of care provided by our Health and Social Services” you can see that, as there is now no confidence at all in our Health Services in the South West and how they are managed, our Health Minister really now has really no alternative and must do what is right for all of our patients.

At a time when we see suspensions pending results of Inquiries of people for much lesser offences, then doing nothing with SLT is not an option and is, & will continue to be, a serious indictment of our DHSSPS.

All of these suspensions are taking place pending inquiries and yet I, and all of the people in this area, find it difficult to understand and find it totally unacceptable that the Chief Executive of Sperrin Lakeland Trust and his Senior Executive Officers are still in place, even though this group of people are quite rightly, and deservedly, now the subject of a police investigation and now to be subjected to a wide ranging Government ordered judicial and full public inquiry.



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I do believe this to be a terrible indictment on our DHSSPS and I will be pointing this out to the Minister, Angela Smith, when I meet her next week.

As I pointed out to the Health Minister at our last meeting on 26th Feb. 2004 legislation exists – HPSS N. Ireland Order 1991 – Dissolution of Trust

Part IV Article 23 Section (2) Subsection (b)

“if the Department considers it appropriate in the interests of the health and personal services”

The removal of SLT is not only appropriate for our health & personal services here in this part of N. Ireland – it has now become an absolute essential !!

Lastly, I will finish this rather lengthy letter by stating that I will be offering my services (with the details and knowledge that I have of the activities of the Sperrin Lakeland Trust for the last seven years) to both Mr O’ Hara QC and MR Jim Gault the PSNI Senior Investigating Officer.

Mr. O’Hara, I hope, will be encouraged to look into all of these activities of SLT – which I believe amount to corruption – and, of course, our good and decent professional health care workers must be allowed to break their terrified silence (they all have jobs, mortgages etc.. & feel that they will be punished in an “occupational way” by their SLT bosses if they come forward) and so be able to reveal the whole truth and therefore reveal the real reasons why SLT have been involved in these deliberate cover ups of very important medical and “human life” facts.

It should be made clear to all of my professional health care colleagues here in Tyrone that “Whistleblowing” is often very essential and especially here where we are talking about human lives.

Also, it must be clearly understood that “Whistleblowers” will be protected, as is also provided for under N. Ireland law.

I do believe that the activities of these people have been criminal and that they should face the courts.

I do believe that the truth will now come out and that the public should be entitled to hear the truth of what has been taking place in our National Health Service and within the jurisdiction in this part of the UK.

As a General Practitioner, and with Independent Contractor status, I am able to speak out openly and publicly as long as my statements are truthful and are in the best interests of my patients.

I have consulted with my own legal advisers in London and have been informed that the interests of my patients should always be of paramount importance and it is for this reason that I must do the right thing.

The right thing at this time for our patients here in this part of Northern Ireland is the removal of Sperrin Lakeland Trust.



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I now honestly believe that your statements were an attempt to protect this group of dishonest health managers and so, therefore, I feel that you should also do the right and honourable thing and resign from your position as our Chief Medical Officer. I have to say that I will be asking Angela Smith to remove you from your position if you do not choose to resign yourself.

I hope that Angela Smith continues to show the courage to deal with this situation but if it is not dealt with fully, and therefore, to the needs of our patients, I fully intend to take this to the Health Secretary himself, Mr John Reid.

I believe that your own particular situation must also be resolved now and that you should do so before all of this is exposed publicly in our Courts. I think too that if we do not have a satisfactory resolution to your position that I, like the Ferguson family, but in my own position as a Senior Doctor & M.L.A., will have no alternative, or choice, but to report yourself to the General Medical Council for serious professional misconduct.

I will finish now by stating that this letter, as you can see, is of a serious nature but I do believe that I must do what is right for our patients and public here in W. Tyrone. I am determined to follow this through and see to it that we do receive our health care rights and I will take this whole problem and issue just as far, or just as high, as I deem necessary.

I intend to keep the pressure on our Health Minister to resolve this dreadful health situation that we have in the South West of N. Ireland and I intend to keep in contact with those that I need to, and to keep involved with the impending legal situation.

Therefore I will be copying this rather lengthy letter to our Health Minister and indeed to Mr O' Hara and to Mr Jim Gault.

Both the inquiry and police investigation are public matters and so both of these men should know my views.

Feel free to reply to me if you so wish to either my Stormont or Constituency Office. However, I will understand if you are presently unable, or are not willing, to make any comments to myself on this whole sad series of events with tragic results as, quite obviously, you too will be subjected to questioning and investigation from now, and during the first half of 2005.

Sincerely yours

Dr Kieran Deeny

M.L.A.

DHSSPS

Chairman of Omagh and District GP Association

073-044-184

Young, Christine

From: Norris, Hilary
Sent: 26 November 2004 10:44
To: 'john.o'hara@[REDACTED]'
Cc: Gowdy, Clive
Subject: Inquiries Bill

SENT ON BEHALF OF ANDREW HAMILTON



JO'Hara - Inquiries
Bill.doc



Press Release -
Inquiries Bill...

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