

Young, Christine

From: Gowdy, Clive
Sent: 01 November 2004 12:34
To: Maguire, Philip
Cc: Owens, Ambrose; Young, Christine
Subject: FW: MINISTER ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION INTO UTV INSIGHT PROGRAMME

Philip,

I have made some changes, as shown. Before it can be signed off, we would need to let John O'Hara see it to ensure that he is content - this can be done through Noel Kelly.

I would be happy to discuss.

-----Original Message-----

From: Maguire, Philip
Sent: 29 October 2004 18:36
To: Gowdy, Clive; Young, Christine
Cc: Owens, Ambrose
Subject: MINISTER ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION INTO UTV INSIGHT PROGRAMME



MINISTER
ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION INTO UTV INSIGHT PROGRAMME

Secretary

please see attached a draft press release re Minister's announcement on the investigation into the Insight programme. I need to fill in the detail re who John O'Hara is-will get from Ambrose on Monday. I have put the last two paras in square brackets in the sense that it may look that we are defending ourselves before the investigation takes place. On the other hand we could use this as an opportunity to re-assure the public while an investigation takes place.

Grateful for your clearance on this

Philip

MINISTER ANNOUNCES CHILD DEATHS INQUIRY INVESTIGATION INTO UTV INSIGHT PROGRAMME

Minister with responsibility for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Angela Smith, has today announced that she intends to hold has appointed Mr John O'Hara QC to conduct an investigation inquiry into the issues raised by the recent UTV Insight programme 'When Hospitals Kill'.

~~The programme focused on a condition known as hyponatraemia and the death of three children, Lucy Crawford, Raychel Ferguson and Adam Strain.~~

~~John O'Hara [detail here his status/background] will lead the inquiry.~~

The Minister said: "I regard it as very am very concerned by the serious issues raised by this programme and feel it is vital that they are investigated properly. It is important that the general public should have confidence in the health service and that the treatment they receive is of the highest standards in the standards of performance of all who work in it. This television programme has raised a number of serious issues and allegations which need to be investigated.

"The death of a child is tragic and is something which my Department takes very seriously. I have spoken to the three families who were involved in the programme and have told them that there will be an fully independent investigation.

"I am grateful to John O'Hara for agreeing to undertake this inquiry and I know that he will pursue a rigorous investigation of the issues.

~~["It is important that we learn from the lessons of such incidents and over the last few years we have taken steps to ensure similar incidents do not happen again. Following the death of Raychel Ferguson from hyponatraemia in 2001, the Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland, Dr Henrietta Campbell, developed guidance to prevent a similar incident happening again. This guidance was the first of its kind in the UK and has been incorporated into clinical practice in Northern Ireland since 2002.~~

~~"My Department has also sought to strengthen the systems for quality assurance with Trusts. In particular, work is underway to improve the mechanism for reporting and investigating untoward incidents in hospitals."~~

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The UTV Insight programme 'When Hospitals Kill' was broadcast on Thursday, 21 October 2004. It focused on the death of three children, Lucy Crawford, Raychel Ferguson and Adam Strain.

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MINISTER ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION INTO UTV INSIGHT PROGRAMME

Minister with responsibility for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Angela Smith, has announced that she intends to hold an investigation into the issues raised by the recent UTV Insight programme 'When Hospitals Kill'.

The programme focused on a condition known as hyponatraemia and the death of three children, Lucy Crawford, Raychel Ferguson and Adam Strain.

John O'Hara [detail here his status/background] will lead the inquiry.

The Minister said: "I am very concerned by the serious issues raised by this programme and feel it is vital that they are investigated properly. It is important that the general public have confidence in the health service and that the treatment they receive is of the highest standards.

"The death of a child is tragic and is something which my Department takes very seriously. I have spoken to the three families who were involved in the programme and told them that there will be an investigation.

["It is important that we learn from the lessons of such incidents and over the last few years we have taken steps to ensure similar incidents do not happen again. Following the death of Raychel Ferguson from hyponatraemia in 2001, the Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland, Dr Henrietta Campbell, developed guidance to prevent a similar incident happening again. This guidance was the first of its kind in the UK and has been incorporated into clinical practice in Northern Ireland since 2002.

"My Department has also sought to strengthen the systems for quality assurance with Trusts. In particular, work is underway to improve the mechanism for reporting and investigating untoward incidents in hospitals."]

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