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S O L I C I T O R S

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Our Ref: NB/KD/R0298.002

Your Ref:

12 June 2008

Superintendent Tom Woods
PS Branch
Police Service of Northern Ireland
nasharragh
42 Montgomery Road
BELFAST BT6 9LD

Dear Tom

Re: Claire Roberts, deceased

I refer to our recent discussion when I mentioned that at the recent sitting of the O'Hara Inquiry both Mr. & Mrs. Roberts advised me that they were both worried about the ongoing Police investigation and the prospect of having to become involved in a criminal trial if charges were taken against any of the medical staff involved in Claire's treatment.

I suggested to Mr. Roberts that it might be advisable for him to write to you setting out his concerns and he has in fact forwarded me a letter, a copy of which is attached. He has instructed me to request that the concerns raised in the letter be taken into account.

Yours sincerely



Nigel Barr
Ferguson & Co

CR - PSNI

097-025-229

Sub Office - 14 The Square - Portaferry BT22 1LW - Tel: [REDACTED]



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11 JUN 2008

09 June 2008

To: Tom Woods
PS Branch
Police Service of Northern Ireland
Lisnasharragh
42 Montgomery Road
Belfast
BT6 9LD

Dear Mr Woods

Our daughter Claire was admitted via the A & E Department of the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children on 21st October 1996. She was pronounced dead on 23rd October 1996. We were advised at that time that there was no need for an inquest. From 1996 up until 2004, as Claire's parents, we wondered what had caused our child's death and whether anything could have been done to prevent that.

It was only after watching an Ulster Television Insight programme on 21st October 2004 that it became obvious to us that our daughter's death was not isolated and that hyponatraemia had played a significant, if not main, role in our daughter's death.

Following on from that programme, we met with the Clinical and Management Team at the Royal Victoria Hospital on 7th December 2004 and were advised at that meeting, for the first time, that hyponatraemia had played a part in our daughter's death.

Thereafter on 16th December 2004, our daughter's death was referred to the Coroner for Belfast for an inquest.

That inquest was held on 4th May 2006.

Following on from the inquest, Mr O'Hara QC, as Chairman of the Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related deaths, advised us that he was including our daughter's case in his inquiry. This was in March 2008.

On 30th May 2008 Mr O'Hara QC outlined the timetable for that inquiry. Claire's case plays a pivotal role in the inquiry.

We are firmly of the view that the inquiry, and not any criminal investigation, will help us come to terms with why our daughter died, how could her death have been prevented, what lessons should have been learned and how could events such as this be prevented from happening in the future.

Our daughter died twelve years ago and from our point of view the sooner the inquiry commences its work the better. We would be most anxious that there is no further delay. For our own part we do not want, nor have we ever wished for, a police investigation. However, we appreciate that there are public interest issues at stake.

Nonetheless, the more delay there is the more difficult it will be for the inquiry to achieve its aims and for us, as Claire's parents, to obtain the answers we so desperately want. Furthermore, over the years my wife and I have suffered considerable stress and anxiety and any further delay will only serve to aggravate this.

We would ask you therefore to reconsider the necessity for any further police investigation into our daughter's death and if this cannot be done to expedite the investigation so that the inquiry can proceed in the most effective way and the answers to our questions for which we have waited almost twelve years may be answered.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Roberts', written over the typed name.

Alan Roberts