

Leckey Mr, The Coroner

From: McCarthy, Miriam [Miriam.McCarthy@psni.gov.uk]
Sent: 14 December 2001 14:13
To: 'esumner@psni.gov.uk'
Cc: 'jleckey.rcj@psni.gov.uk'
Subject: Hyponatraemia



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Dr Sumner,

I am currently drafting guidelines on the prevention of Hyponatraemia in children receiving IV fluids. We have a multidisciplinary group looking at this issue, on behalf of our CMO, Dr Campbell. The stimulus for this was the very tragic incident in Altnagelvin, some months ago.

I spoke to John Leckey today as I was aware that he was working on the Altnagelvin case. As you are also involved in this case I thought it would be helpful to contact you to discuss some of the detail of proposed guidelines. John agreed that this would be appropriate and I trust you find this acceptable.

The Hyponatraemia group have discussed how much detail should be put into guidance. Members thought that ideally specific fluid choices should be recommended but they also recognised that there is no absolute right or wrong and the patient's illness, condition, age, post-op status and serum sodium all play a role in dictating the choice of fluid. Members are also keen to stress in the guidance that any fluid has the capacity to cause hyponatraemia in a sick child.

Generic guidance displayed in clinical rooms etc as an A2 laminated poster may be a way forward in the first instance but it may need to be accompanied by specific fluid protocols in each paediatric/subspecialty unit. There is however concern that the early draft of guidelines (attached) may not go far enough in providing much needed advice for junior staff.

I would very much appreciate your opinion and any advice on existing guidance or protocols which may be helpful to draw on.
I would be delighted to have the opportunity to discuss this issue with you in more detail. My telephone number is [REDACTED]

Many thanks

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