

D256.

Dr Brian Herron
Consultant Neuropathologist
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Royal Victoria Hospital
Grosvenor Road
BELFAST
BT12 6BA

30th November 2001

RE: RACHEL FERGUSON, DECEASED
AUTOPSY NUMBER: NPPM 61/2001

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your postmortem report. The report of Dr Clodagh Loughrey was not enclosed but your secretary kindly faxed me a copy. I note that Dr Loughrey had not signed this (the space for the signature is blank) and I should be grateful if you would ask her to forward to me a signed copy of her report.

You may aware that in 1996 I held an Inquest into the death of a 4 year old child called Adam Strain. Bob Taylor was involved in his treatment at that time and I am sure he remembers the Inquest very well indeed. For your information I am enclosing 2 copies of the Postmortem Report and 2 copies of an independent report I commissioned from Dr Edward Sumner of Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. I should be grateful if you could pass one set of the papers to Dr Loughrey. The reason I am sending these to you is to enable me to discover whether there are any parallels between the death of Adam Strain and Rachel Ferguson. I would be very willing to meet with you, Dr Loughrey and Bob Taylor to discuss this. Would you be willing to mention this suggestion to them?

A further point I would wish you to reflect on is the cause of death you give in your report - Cerebral Odema. You do not specify an underlying cause for the Cerebral Odema yet in the commentary section of your report you mention 3 factors that would have led to the onset of the Cerebral Oedema. Because of that I am writing to enquire

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if these 3 factors should be referred to at 1(b). I assume the "fluids" issue is the most important. You will note the formulation of the cause of death given by of Dr Armour in relation to Adam Strain. Would a similar formulation of the cause of death in relation to Rachel Ferguson (ignoring the reference to the renal transplant operation) be appropriate?

I believe it would be advantageous if you felt able to give an underlying cause for the Cerebral Oedema. I am sure it is a question you would be asked at the Inquest. I will not send out copies of your report to those concerned until you have had an opportunity of considering this letter and until I have in my possession a signed copy of the report of Dr Loughrey.

Would you consider it advisable for me to obtain an independent report from Dr Sumner or someone similar?

With kind regards

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Yours sincerely

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