

RGH/O/265/GB

A.49/GEN

14 March 2005

Mr Peter Walby FRCS Ed
Associate Medical Director
Royal Group of Hospitals and
Dental Hospital
Health & Social Services Trust
Litigation Management Office
4th Floor Bostock House
Grosvenor Road
BELFAST BT12 6BA

Dear Mr Walby

INVESTIGATION OF HOSPITAL DEATHS

I refer to previous correspondence in connection with the above. I apologise for my delay in returning to you. This matter was overlooked on our BF system.

You did forward quite extensive documentation to us some time ago.

I have reviewed the documentation which you have provided.

I appreciate that during early 2004 the Coroner was liaising with various Agencies including the Police Service of Northern Ireland in an effort to establish a Protocol dealing with the investigation of Hospital Deaths.

The current system is that the Medical Director or Clinical Director of the Hospital in question will arrange to obtain Statements from the staff involved and forward them to the Coroner. The individual staff members do not normally be interviewed by a Police Officer. In many incidents the individual may have consulted his or her Legal Advisor prior to making a Statement and the Legal Advisor may have an input into how the Statement is drafted.

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In Mr Leckey's letter to Mr Michael McBride of 30th January 2004 he identified that he had agreed that in future a Police Officer would interview those staff members involved and that the existing system would be discontinued. It was anticipated that the Police Officer concerned would call upon the Trust to provide assistance in identifying those staff members involved and seeking their co-operation for interview.

I would be obliged if you would advise whether or not further correspondence has been received from the Coroner on this issue and if so can you please forward the same to me for consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Gary Daly
for Brangam Bagnall & Co

GD/ZL/14/03-05