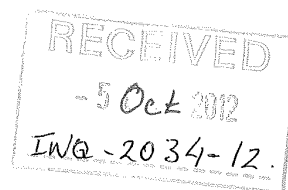


Your Ref:
AD-0419-12 &
AD-0423-12

Our Ref:
HYP B04/2

2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ
Date: 2842 NR Belfast 3
5th October 2012

Ms Anne Dillon
Solicitor to the Inquiry
Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths
Arthur House
41 Arthur Street
Belfast
BT1 4GB



Dear Madam

RE: INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA RELATED DEATHS- CLAIRE ROBERTS

We refer to the above matter and to your letters dated 25th September 2012 and 27th September 2012, references as quoted above.

In relation to the requests contained in your letter dated 27th ult, we are instructed by our client the Belfast Trust that it has undertaken a thorough search of all relevant paper and computer records held by the Trust and that it can find no evidence of Dr Steen having ever asked the Trust's Litigation Office to clarify whether, on Tuesday 22nd October 1996:-

1. She was present in the hospital; and/or
2. In the ward; and/or
3. Contactable

Furthermore, we have again examined the Brangam Bagnall/MSC Daly file relating to Claire Roberts Inquest and we can see no evidence of any such requests having been made of the Litigation Office via Gary Daly/ Brangam Bagnall. Incidentally, all such requests, if made, would have been directed to the Trust's Litigation Office, and not to the instructed solicitors.

In addition, we have received instructions from Mr Peter Walby, that Dr Steen had two clinical sessions in the former Royal Hospitals Trust in 1996, and the rest of her employment was with the North & West Belfast Trust (Answer Q3b, Dr. Steen's Witness Statement). She had ward duties in Allen Ward on a Tuesday morning and duties in Cupar Street Clinic (N&WBT) on a Tuesday afternoon. Mr Walby raised the issue of her non-attendance at the Tuesday morning ward round on 22 October 1996, in an email sent on 27th January 2012 at 12:40pm (copy enclosed).

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Mr Walby has advised us that Dr Steen did not make any requests to him concerning whether she was present in the hospital or ward or contactable on Tuesday 22 October 1996.

As regards whether the Trust undertook any investigation or interrogation of the computer systems in the hospital including 'PAS', Mr Walby instructs us that he did not think of doing this on behalf of the Trust as Dr Steen's Tuesday morning ward round (whether performed or not) would not have been registered on the Royal Hospital's computers.

It is the Belfast Trust's instructions that the PAS system records the patient's details including the date of admission to hospital, the patient's date of birth, admission date, hospital number together with detail of the NAMED CONSULTANT and the speciality. This system does not record any other details, including the presence of the named Consultant on ward rounds or otherwise.

We are further instructed by Mr Walby that Dr Steen's Tuesday afternoon clinic for the North & West Belfast Trust has not been registered on the Royal Hospital's computer systems including 'PAS'.

For the avoidance of doubt, it was never suggested by Dr Steen to Mr Walby or the Trust's former or present solicitors that the PAS system could be interrogated with a view to obtaining information which would assist in establishing her whereabouts on 22nd October, 1996.

I trust this clarifies the position.

Yours faithfully



Angela Crawford
Solicitor

Conlon, Bernie (IHRD)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2012 13:33
To: Angela Crawford
Subject: FW: N&W Job Description

From: Walby, Peter
Sent: 27/01/2012 12:40
To: Steen, Heather
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: N&W Job Description

Heather

Personnel have had the old N&W files trawled in McConnell's storage and your file is not there unfortunately so we cannot trace a copy of your job description current at the time of Claire's admission. I do think it would be in your interests if we could be clear on your sessional commitments and wonder whether you could look for this at home. I know now it is a long time ago but would you not have kept it with other contract documents etc which would have had relevance to the development of your CV etc?

Your answers to Q 1d, 3a, 3c revolve round this issue.

It is going to be awkward if you are not able to explain why you did not do your normal Tuesday ward round as one of your two RBHSC sessions isn't it?

Peter

PS The Inquiry want an answer today as to why your statement is late. What do you want me to say to them please? [REDACTED] may have asked you already.

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