

# The Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths

Chairman: Mr John O'Hara QC

Ms Wendy Beggs  
Director of Legal Services  
2 Franklin Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8DQ

Your Ref: NSCB04/1  
NCSW50/1

Our Ref: AD-0548-13

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Dear Ms Beggs,

**Re: Claire Roberts File 150 – Other Patient Confidential Medical Records**

I refer to the above. As you will recall access to other patients records was permitted in order to explore whether any light could be shone on the whereabouts of Dr Heather Steen on 22 October 1996. That inquiry was necessary because Dr Steen did not see Claire that morning or indeed that afternoon or evening. It was hoped that the records of other children who were in the RBHSC might assist. The papers in that file were redacted by the Inquiry in conjunction with your client and were distributed on strict conditions as to their use. They must be returned to the Inquiry when the written submissions in Claire's case have been completed.

However a further issue has arisen from these records which bears on the evidence given about Claire's treatment. I attach a copy letter dated 6 March from Ferguson & Co to me. As appears from the letter the point concerns the drug midazolam given to Claire on 22 October by Dr Roger Stevenson who was then a SHO at the instigation of Dr Webb who was a consultant paediatric neurologist. It was agreed at the public hearings in Banbridge that Claire had been given a loading dose which was in fact an overdose of that drug in that she received 0.5mg rather than 0.15mg. How that came about is an issue of interest to the Inquiry.

In his oral evidence on 30 November Dr Webb stated that having examined Claire he had checked some papers which he held from training which he had received in Canada. On doing so he prescribed 0.15mg but that was somehow misunderstood and was instead administered as 0.5mg by Dr Stevenson. It was Dr Webb's evidence that he had not used midazolam since his return from Canada. In fact a close scrutiny of the records of one of the children's notes in File 150 shows that on 20 October 1996, just two days earlier, he had in fact prescribed it or indicated that its use would be required by the patient known in the anonymised File 150 as "W2". The relevant entry states:

**Secretary:** Bernie Conlon

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**"Starve from 6am+ we will need to give IV Midazolam"**

It is relevant to know whether the drug was in fact administered and, if it was, in what dosage. That being so the Inquiry seeks your assistance in pursuing the matter. I am aware that some of the patients or their families who were contacted about their confidential records responded by giving consent to their controlled disclosure. If "W2" or his/her family is one such individual/family the Chairman would be grateful if you would contact them again and seek their consent to the issue above being explored. If they did not respond before can you confirm that you will agree to support a further application to the High Court in order for this information to be obtained?

For completeness a copy of this letter and attachment will be copied to the representatives of all interested parties in Claire's case for their information and observation.

I would be grateful for your earliest response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Dillon', written in a cursive style.

Anne Dillon  
Solicitor to the Inquiry  
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