

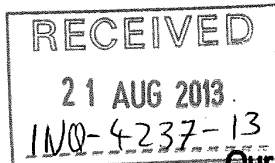


**Business Services
Organisation**

Directorate of Legal Services

— PRACTITIONERS IN LAW TO THE
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE SECTOR —

2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ
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Your Ref:
BC-0211-13
BC-0207-13

Our Ref:
HYPH099/04

Date:
21st August 2013

Mrs B Conlon
Secretary to the Inquiry
Arthur House
41 Arthur Street
Belfast
BT1 4GB

Dear Madam,

RE: INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA-RELATED DEATHS-RAYCHEL FERGUSON GOVERNANCE

I refer to your letter of 15th August 2013. The nature and extent of the searches conducted by the HSC Board have been highlighted in our previous correspondence and most recently in Ms Begg's letter of 20th June 2013. Most recently the HSC Board has commissioned searches in respect of your letter of 1st August 2013 (BC-0207-13).

The searches for documents have been focused primarily within Gransha Park House, former Head Quarters of the legacy Western Health and Social Services Board, although there was a search conducted in December 2012 which did extend to the other three legacy Board locations which sought to confirm that a specific letter had been issued by the former WHSSB Director of Public Health to colleagues in the other three Boards.

The Assistant Information Governance Manager based in the HSC Board's western offices, has coordinated the searches undertaken by the Board since November 2012, with staff who previously held the following posts carrying out the majority of the physical searches within their areas of responsibility or in locations where they held a post in one of the Legacy Directorates: -

- Former Office Manager in the Chief Executive's office within WHSSB Chief Executives Office – now HSCB employee;
- Former communications officer WHSSB amongst other roles – now HSCB employee;
- Former administrative support/secretarial support to legacy WHSSB senior staff – now HSCB employee;
- Former administrative support/secretarial support to legacy WHSSB senior staff within WHSSB Health Care Directorate – now PHA employee.

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In turn the abovementioned individuals were assisted by a number of other members of staff in the searches conducted by them.

The Assistant Information Governance Manager also initiated searches by BSO IT staff of computers/laptops within Gransha Park House looking for archived material/emails and facilitated access to a legacy Board server to allow searches of electronic folders to take place.

At present a further search is underway within the other three Legacy Board locations (North, South and East) in order to ascertain whether they hold any information or documentation regarding the 2000 minutes of the Area Board Chief Nurses meetings. I will revert to you on the outcome of those searches as soon as possible. However, to date the Board has not been able to locate the documentation sought in your letter of 1st August 2013 (BC-0207-13).

The Board has also made contact with Mr Bradley regarding your request. Mr Bradley instructs that these meetings by their nature were update meetings and had an element of mutual support for those attending. They would not have been seen as "formal" meetings in the strict sense of the word and it is his belief that notes of these meetings may not have been retained either after individuals left their posts or when the legacy Boards and Trusts were reorganised.

Furthermore Mr Bradley advises that the issues he focused on related to the safe administration of prescribed fluids, recording of fluid balance, patient observation etc, which he has already indicated would not have been unfamiliar to those present. It is his belief that these discussions were likely to have been regarded as a briefing or "heads up" on a current issue. For these reasons he cannot be sure if a written record would have been made.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Bolton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joanna Bolton
Solicitor Consultant