

From: Andrew Browne

Date: 12 August 2008

To: 1. Dr Carolyn Harper
2. Michael McGimpsey

**RE INV/421/2008: INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA-RELATED DEATHS:
MEETINGS WITH THE MITCHELL AND ROBERTS FAMILIES**

Summary

Issue: Following John O'Hara's decision to extend his Inquiry to include the deaths of Conor Mitchell and Claire Roberts, you met with the Mitchell and Roberts families on 4 August 2008. Following these meetings you asked that letters be issued to both families expressing your sympathy. Two draft letters are attached for your consideration.

Timing: Routine

Presentational Issues: There has been earlier media interest in the Inquiry.

**Special Adviser's
Comments**

Recommendation: That you issue letters to the Mitchell and Roberts families along the lines of the attached drafts.

Introduction

1. You met with the families of Conor Mitchell and Claire Roberts on 4 August 2008 in order to hear their stories at first hand and to allow them the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns in advance of the public hearings of the Inquiry.
2. Details regarding the background to the Inquiry, and the deaths of Conor Mitchell and Clair Roberts, were provided in the briefing for your meetings with the families (see **SUB/504/2008**).
3. Following the meetings, at which the families of both children were understandably very upset and angry, you asked for letters to be issued expressing your sympathies. Two draft letters are attached for your consideration.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that you issue letters along the lines of the attached drafts.

Ms Joanna Mitchell



Thank you for taking the time to meet with me last Monday. It was very useful for me to hear about your family's experiences first hand. I hope that the meeting was also of some use to you and that it went at least some way to addressing your concerns in advance of the forthcoming Inquiry.

I was deeply saddened to hear of your distress and how this was made worse by the events surrounding Conor's death. I apologise unreservedly if any of the actions or words of hospital staff, either then or since, have failed to measure up to the high standards of care that you have a right to expect.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you to talk about your case. My thoughts will be with you and your family over the months ahead.

Michael McGimpsey MLA
Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Mr and Mrs Roberts



Thank you for taking the time to meet with me last Monday. It was very useful for me to hear about your family's experiences first hand. I hope that the meeting was also of some use to you and that it went at least some way to addressing your concerns in advance of the forthcoming Inquiry.

I was deeply saddened to hear of your distress and how this was made worse by the events surrounding Claire's death. I apologise unreservedly if any of the actions or words of hospital staff, either then or since, have failed to measure up to the high standards of care that you have a right to expect.

As I promised when we met, I have written to the Chief Constable to try to expedite the police investigation into Claire's death. I will ensure that a copy of his response is copied to you when I receive it.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you to talk about your case. My thoughts will be with you and your family over the months ahead.

Michael McGimpsey MLA
Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety