

Mr Stuart MacDonnell
Chief Executive
Northern Health and Social Services Board
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
BALLYMENA
BT42 1QB

Our Ref: FC-109-05

Date: 17 May 2005

Dear Mr MacDonnell

Re: Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths

As you may be aware, on 1 November 2004 Angela Smith, the then Minister with responsibility for Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland announced the setting up of the above Public Inquiry into the events surrounding and following the deaths of 3 children; Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson. I am appointed as solicitor to the Inquiry.

There are in addition to the events surrounding these children's deaths, a number of general issues that will be considered by the Chairman of the Inquiry when the oral hearings commence in October/November 2005. For example, the role of the Health Boards, Trusts and the DHSSPS, their interaction with each other and their responsibilities. In order to assist the Chairman I would be grateful if you would provide clarification in relation to a number of matters to help us understand the role of the Health Boards in Northern Ireland. In particular:

1. Please explain the role and responsibilities of your Health Board;
2. Please explain the interaction between your Health Board and HSS Trusts;
3. Please explain what role if any the Board has in the education and continuous development of doctors and nursing staff employed by the Trust;
4. Please explain the procedure in place within the Board for disseminating information learned as a result of Coroner's inquests or other events both to the Trusts and to your colleagues or other Health Boards in Northern Ireland;

Secretary: Ambrose Owens **Deputy Secretary:** Sharon Lindsay
The Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths, 3rd Floor, 20 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8GB
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5. Please explain the interaction between the Health Board and the DHSSPS, in particular, how information that comes to the attention to the Board that may impact on the future care of patients within other Health Boards is disseminated to the DHSSPS, other Health Boards and Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely



FIONA CHAMBERLAIN

Solicitor to the Inquiry

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