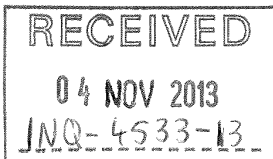




Business Services
Organisation



Your Ref:
AD-0644-13

Our Ref:
HYPW50/01

Directorate of Legal Services

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

2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ
DX 2842 NR Belfast 3

Date:
1st November 2013

Ms A Dillon
Solicitor to the Inquiry
Arthur House
41 Arthur Street
Belfast
BT1 4GB

Dear Ms Dillon

RE: INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA RELATED DEATHS WESTERN TRUST- AUDIT ISSUES

I refer to your letter dated 17th September 2012 (AD-0644-13) regarding Audit. I am instructed by the Western Trust as follows:-

Audit Issue 1

Erne Hospital

1(a) The Trust has located an audit tool created in or around the end of 2006 and same is attached (Attachment 1) together with the results of an audit from January 2007 (Attachment 2). The audit (Attachment 2) compared sets of notes of patients who received Intravenous fluids in January and February 2006 with notes from December 2006 and January 2007.

To date the Western Trust has been unable to locate any other documentation in relation to audit of compliance of the 2002 guidelines. The Trust's IT department is in the process of carrying out further searches for any further documentation and we will advise the Inquiry if those searches produce any relevant information.

1(b) In respect of the period prior to the development of the audit tool referenced at 1(a) the Trust has not established who was responsible in Erne Hospital for conducting audit of compliance with the 2002 guidance or who was reported to. It is noted that the Guidance issued in 2002 was sent to all Medical Directors and Directors of Nursing of Acute Trusts (the Medical Director for Sperrin Lakeland Trust responsible for the Erne Hospital in 2002 was Dr Jim Kelly and the Director of Nursing was Mr Eugene Fee). The Inquiry may wish to make enquiries with Dr Kelly through his legal representatives. The Trust has made enquiries will Mr Fee who has informed the Trust he does not recall the audit arrangements put in place to audit compliance.

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As noted above the Trust has been unable to locate any other audit information and searches are on-going. The audit tool (Attachment 1) was developed by S/N Mackie.

1(c) & 1(d) As stated above at answers to 1(a) and 1(b), the Western Trust has been unable to locate documentation in relation to audit of compliance with the 2002 guidance other than that referred to at 1(a) above. Please refer to the audit (Attachment 2) for details of how the audit was conducted and the results.

Altnagelvin Hospital

1 (a) As the Inquiry is aware steps were taken with regard to fluid administration for children in Altnagelvin Hospital shortly after the death of Raychel Ferguson. There was a change to remove the use of No 18 solution for surgical patients and to use Hartman's solution (see reference 026-010-011). Prescriptions had to be based on body weight and U&E results. In May 2002 the default solution was changed to 0.45% saline (half strength) in 2.5 Dextrose. (see reference 021-048-104). This change was made because of the perceived risk of hypoglycaemia in small children.

Fluid prescription charts were audited for compliance. Please see the enclosed audit documentation.

1(b) Please refer to the enclosed audit documentation at 1(d) below for details of who conducted the audits and who they reported to.

1(c) Please refer to the enclosed audit documentation at 1(d) below for details of how the audits were conducted and the results.

1(d) Please find attached the following documents in relation to audit:

- (i) Audit Topic Proposal Form 'IV Fluids in Children' dated 22/09/2002 (Attachment 3)
- (ii) 'Audit of record keeping of Intake & Output Charts' - Anne Marie McGurk, Senior Clinical Audit Assistant February 2003 (Attachment 4)
- (iii) Audit Topic Proposal Form and 'Audit of Documentation of Fluid Requirements & Fluid Balance on Children following Surgery' July 2003 (Attachment 5)
- (iv) Audit Topic Proposal Form 'Are we completing our IV fluid sheet correctly?' circa September 2004 and Audit results (Attachment 6)
- (v) Audit Topic Proposal Form 'The Management of Hyponatraemia in children admitted to AAH over a 21 month period' circa December 2005 and document entitled 'Management of Hyponatraemia Audit By Dr Aoife McMorow' (Attachment 7)
- (vi) Audit Topic Proposal Form 'Post-Operative Fluid Prescription in Paediatrics' by Mr M Blzavsar circa September 2005 (Attachment 8)

- (vii) Audit Topic Proposal Form 'Hyponatraemia in Paediatric Appendicitis' and document entitled 'Hyponatraemia in Paediatric Appendicitis Between Jan'04 – Dec '05'. (Attachment 9)
- (viii) Letter dated 6 July 2005 from Dr N P Corrigan, Consultant Paediatrician to Dr T McMurray, Postgraduate Dean, N.I. Medical & Dental Training Agency (Attachment 10)

Audit Issue 2

The Western Trust was established in April 2007 incorporating Altnagelvin Area Hospital and Erne Hospital. The documents included under this section are Trust documents.

2 (a) (i) Please find attached Audit Checklist of Fluids signed by Dr G Nesbitt. This relates to both Erne and Altnagelvin Hospitals (Attachment 11)

Please also find attached a letter from Dominic Burke Chief Executive WHSSB to Elaine Way Chief Executive WHSCT dated 27 June 2007 and a letter from Elaine Way to Dominic Burke dated 3rd August 2007 (Attachment 12). The letter from Elaine Way to Dominic Burke sets out the agreed actions within the Western Trust following the issue of the NPSA alert.

2(a) (ii) Please refer to the Audit Checklist of Fluids signed by Dr G Nesbitt (Attachment 11)

2(a) (iii) Please find attached a letter from Mrs Elaine Way Chief Executive to Dr Maura Briscoe dated 8 January 2008 (Attachment 13)

2(b) (i) Please find attached a document entitled 'Introduction of New Paediatric IV Fluids Maintenance Policy July 2007' and a summary document of briefing to CMT on Paediatric IV Fluids July 5th 2007 (Attachment 14). These documents record the steps taken with respect to the guidance.

2(b) (ii) In preparation for the RQIA review in-house audits of compliance were undertaken.

Please find attached minutes of a WHSCT Fluid Management meeting 24 September 2007 when these matters were discussed (Attachment 15).

2(b) (iii) Altnagelvin and Erne Hospitals carried out audit compliance through a NPSA Audit sheet (Attachment 11).

2(b) (iv) Dr Nesbitt took forward the audit through the NPSA Audit sheet. Audit reports were reported to the Medical Director.

2(b) (v) Please see the attached audit documentation for details of how the audit was conducted.

2(b) (vi) Please find attached the following:

- RQIA 2008 Independent Review (Attachment 16)
- Letter from Dr G Nesbitt, Associate Medical Director to Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer dated 24 June 2008 (Attachment 17)

- Letter from Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer to Dr G Nesbitt, Associate Medical Director dated 30 September 2008 (Attachment 18)
- Letter from Dr G Nesbitt, Associate Medical Director, to Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, dated 14 October 2008 (Attachment 19)
- Letter from Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, to Dr G Nesbitt, Associate Medical Director, dated 9 January 2009 (Attachment 20)
- Audit completed by Dr Patrick Stewart, Consultant Anaesthetist – 'Reducing the risk of harm in fluids prescribing: is 0.9% sodium chloride with dextrose superior to 0.45% sodium chloride with dextrose for maintenance? An Audit of electrolytes in children following appendectomy' (Attachment 21)

2(b) (vii) Steps continue to be taken to audit compliance with the 2007 guidelines.

The Trust instructs a review of the Trust database indicates the following audits were carried out:-

- Audit entitled 'IV fluids in 2011 Regional Audit'
- Audit entitled 'Management of IV Fluids in Children whilst inpatients Regional Audit'

Please also refer to the enclosed 2010 RQIA Independent Review (Attachment 22).


2(b) (viii) The Altnagelvin Junior Doctor's Handbooks for 2007 and 2008 are enclosed (Attachments 23, 24, 25 & 26). A section is included at Pages 39-41 entitled 'Prescribing Medication, Fluids and Pharmacy issues'. Specific mention is made to default solutions in paediatrics and the need to seek senior advice if unsure.

Please also find enclosed the following:-

- An extract from WHSCT 'Now' Newsletter, Issue Six March 2008 "Policy for Prescribing Intravenous Fluids to Children" (Attachment 27). The newsletter contains information regarding the Trust policy for prescribing intravenous fluids to children.
- Altnagelvin Hospital Speciality Trainee Induction Programme dated 7 August 2013 (Attachment 28). A talk on hyponatraemia by Dr Patrick Stewart, Consultant Anaesthetist, is listed for 11.55am.

Training for nursing staff within the Trust on the subject of fluid management for children has been carried out by the In-Service Nursing Education and Development Consortium (NEDC).

Yours faithfully


John Johnston
Solicitor