

PRESS RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA-RELATED DEATHS

**In particular into the events surrounding and following the deaths of
Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson**

INQUIRY LAUNCHES PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT PROCEDURES

John O'Hara, Chairman of the Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths today published for public consultation the draft procedures within which he proposes to conduct the Inquiry.

The procedures describe the five key stages of the Inquiry covering document gathering, listing of key issues, taking of written statements, hearing oral evidence and the preparation and submission of the final report.

The closing date for comments is Friday 14 January 2005 and a public hearing is planned for 3 and 4 February 2005 to answer any outstanding queries on the procedures.

John O'Hara said "I believe that these draft Inquiry Procedures clearly demonstrate my stated intentions that this Inquiry will be conducted in a firm, fair and impartial manner. I look forward to receiving responses which will help me to finalise the procedures subject always to them being kept under review as our work progresses."

The Chairman announced the appointment of Counsel to the Inquiry, Monye Anyadike-Danes BL, and also stated his intention to appoint a solicitor to the Inquiry who will be independent of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

“A number of expert advisers will also be appointed from outside Northern Ireland who will have, as far as is possible no links or association with NI. I plan at this stage to include a paediatrician, a paediatric anaesthetist and a person experienced in Health Service Management, as well as a person from a nursing background with the necessary expertise,” he confirmed.