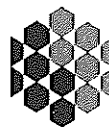


FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH,
SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Edwin Poots MLA



Department of
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Mr William Hay MLA
Speaker
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Our Ref: SUB/407/2014

Date: 22 May 2014

Dear William

You will recall that I made a statement to the Assembly on 8 April 2014 on Health and Social Care: Promoting Quality and Good Governance. As part of ongoing work with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, it has come to my attention that one piece of information which was provided to me at the time by the Northern Trust and which I included in my statement is inaccurate and should be revised. In my statement I said that "The Trust has advised me that it has informed the families in all 20 cases." However on the basis of the updated information provided by the Trust, this line in my statement should read as follows:

"The Trust has advised me that it is taking steps to ensure that, where appropriate the families in all 20 cases have been informed that the case was an SAI."

This reflects the position that there are very limited circumstances when it may not be appropriate or responsible to advise a patient or family that a Serious Adverse Incident has occurred or where it is appropriate to delay telling them. This is the position with some of these cases. The main reason in such cases is likely to relate to concerns with regard to the vulnerability or mental health and well being either of patients or next of kin.

However, I am determined to ensure that cases where patients or families are not told that a Serious Adverse Incident investigation is underway should be exceptional. I have instructed the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to introduce new monitoring arrangements around the involvement of patients and families with Serious Adverse Incident Investigations. These arrangements are now in place and the HSB will both monitor and offer challenge to those cases where it is proposed not to involve patients and families in the SAI process.

Edwin Poots MLA
Minister for Health Social Services and Public Safety