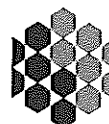


FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH,
SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Edwin Poots MLA



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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Ms Daithi McKay MLA
12 Main Street
DUNLOY
BT44 9AA

Our Ref: SUB/407/2014

Date: 22 May 2014

Dear Mr McKay

You recently posed a written Assembly Question (AQW 32775/11-15) in relation to how many of the twenty patients, or their families, were contacted in advance of my written statement on the Northern Health and Social Care Trust on 28 March 2014.

I regret that the reply I provided contained inaccurate information in two respects. Firstly, there are very limited circumstances when it may not be appropriate or responsible to advise a patient/family that a Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) has occurred or where it would be appropriate to delay telling them and this is the position with some of these cases. The main reason is likely to relate to concerns with regard to the vulnerability or mental health and well being either of patients or next of kin.

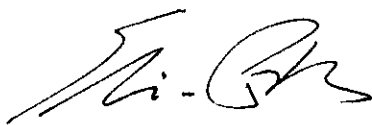
Secondly, the Trust has now advised that in one case a family had not been advised that their case had been investigated as an SAI until shortly after 28 March. I attach an amended response to AQW 32775/11-15 for your information. I have also copied it to the Speaker and Members.

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 HSCB will both monitor and offer challenge to those cases where it is proposed not to involve, or where there is a delay in involving, patients and families in the SAI process.

I attach an amended response to AQW 32775/11-15 for your information. I have also copied it to the Speaker and Members

I trust this information is helpful and apologise for any confusion this error may have caused.

I am copying this letter to the Assembly Library Services for their information.



Edwin Poots MLA
Minister for Health Social Services and Public Safety

Copy to the Speaker and Members

NOTE: ENC

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

DATE FOR ANSWER: 24 April 2014

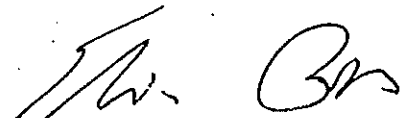
ORDINARY WRITTEN NO: AQW 32775/11-15

Daithi McKay (North Antrim): - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many of the twenty patients, or their families, were contacted in advance of his written statement on the Northern Health and Social Care Trust on 28 March 2014.

Edwin Poots

The Northern Health & Social Care Trust identified to my Department 20 separate incidents in which the response by the Trust was below standard. The Trust further advises that, where appropriate, the patients/families of those involved have been advised and that in one case this communication took place after 28 March.

This is a sensitive issue for families and requires careful interaction. It is also important to understand that families may choose to decline engagement with the Serious Adverse Incident process.



Date: 22/5/14

Signed and approved by the Minister for Health Social Services and Public Safety