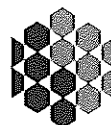


FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH,
SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Edwin Poots MLA



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

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Mr Patsy McGlone
54A William Street
COOKSTOWN
BT80 8NB

Our Ref: SUB/407/2014

Date: 22 May 2014

Dear Patsy

You recently posed a written Assembly Question (AQW 32529/11-15) in relation to the twenty incidents in which responses by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust were found to be below standard. You asked in relation to those cases in which the patient subsequently died, whether the families or next of kin have been notified of the Trust's below standard response in all eleven cases.

I regret that the reply I provided contained inaccurate information. There are very limited circumstances when it may not be appropriate or responsible to advise a family that a Serious Adverse Incident 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. I attach an amended response to AQW 32529/11-15 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 patients and families in the SAI process. 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

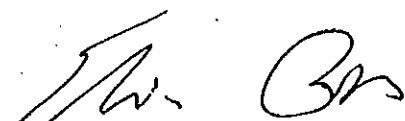
DATE FOR ANSWER: 3 April 2014

ORDINARY WRITTEN NO: AQW 32529/11-15

Patsy McGlone (Mid Ulster): - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in relation to the incidents in which responses by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust were found to be below standard and in which the patient subsequently died, whether the families or next of kin have been notified of the Trust's below standard response in all eleven cases.

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, in each of the cases involving a death, the families of those involved have been advised. 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