

**MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL INQUIRY
WITNESS STATEMENT**

**Statement of Alan Stout
Date: 26 March 2024**

1. I, **Alan Stout**, make the following statement for the purpose of the Muckamore Abbey Hospital (MAH) Inquiry.
2. The statement is made on behalf of the Northern Ireland General Practice Committee (“NIGPC”) of the British Medical Association (“BMA”) in response to a request for evidence by the Inquiry Panel.
3. This is my first statement to the Inquiry.
4. There are no documents produced with my statement.

Qualifications and positions

5. I am a qualified doctor. I hold the following qualifications: MB Bch BAO (1995), MRCP (2001). I work as a general practitioner. I have previously held the following position: deputy chair of NIGPC.
6. I am the Chair of the NIGPC. I have held this position since September 2018. I am deputy chair of Northern Ireland Council and I have held this position since 2000.

Module

7. I have been asked to provide a statement for the purpose of Module 6: Resettlement. This module is primarily concerned with paragraph 16 of the Terms of Reference which states that: *“The Inquiry will examine the adequacy and workings of the policy and process of discharge and resettlement of patients of MAH”*.

8. I have been asked to address a number of questions/ issues for the purpose of my statement. I will address those questions/issues in turn.

Questions

Q1. Please summarise the role and composition of the NI GP Committee.

9. NIGPC is a standing committee of the BMA and represents all general practitioners working in Northern Ireland. It considers and acts on matters affecting those engaged in general practice in Northern Ireland, including contractual matters.

10. NIGPC sits within the BMA. The BMA is the trade union and professional body for doctors in the United Kingdom. Doctors choose to join the BMA – it is voluntary and not all doctors are a member of the organisation. The BMA is not part of the National Health Service and does not exercise any regulatory or public functions in relation to any of the medical or care professions. Equally, NIGPC is not part of the health service or government in Northern Ireland and does not have any regulatory or public functions. A member of NIGPC sits as a representative on the Northern Ireland Safeguarding Board.

11. The current Chair is Dr Alan Stout and the Deputy Chair is Dr Frances O' Hagan. The current members are: Dr Ursula Brennan; Dr Johnny Burns; Dr Conan Castles; Dr James Crothers; Dr Tracey Cruickshanks; Dr Catherine Curran; Dr Carla Devlin; Dr Joe Dugan; Dr Nicola Herron; Dr Ian Kernohan; Dr Donagh MacDonagh; Dr Stuart MacDonald; Dr Donna Mace; Dr Allen McCullough; Dr Arnie McDowell; Dr Michael McKenna; Dr Paul Molloy; Dr Conor Moore; Dr Ciaran Mullan; Dr David Ross; Dr Susan Sproule; Dr Patrick Stirling; Dr Fionnuala Vernon; Dr Naoimh White; and Dr Andrew Wilson.

12. The NIGPC meets four times a year to discuss the latest issues for GPs in Northern Ireland and to develop policy and strategy.

13. Further details of NIGPC can be found on the BMA's website: <https://www.bma.org.uk/what-we-do/committees/general-practitioners-committee/northern-ireland-general-practitioners->

[committee#:~:text=The%20Northern%20Ireland%20general%20practitioners%20committee%20\(NIGPC\)%20is%20a%20standing,Northern%20Ireland%20C%20including%20contractual%20matters.](#)

Q2. Can you explain the involvement of the NI GP Committee in the process of resettling patients from Muckamore Abbey Hospital (MAH) into the community, and comment on the effectiveness of any such arrangements, throughout the time period within the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, that is between 02 December 1999 and 14 June 2021?

14. NIGPC did not play a role in the process of re-settling patients from Muckamore Abbey Hospital (MAH) into the community.

Q3. Do you wish to draw to the attention of the Panel any other matters that may assist in the Panel's consideration of paragraph 16 of the Terms of Reference?

15. There is nothing more that I wish to draw the Panel's attention to.

Q4. Please explain the role of the NI GP Committee in the commissioning and quality monitoring of learning disability services.

16. NIGPC does not play a role in the commissioning and quality monitoring of learning disability services.

Q5. In the period between 02 December 1999 to 14 June 2021, was the NI GP Committee aware of any concerns about:

- i the quality of care being provided in MAH;**
- ii neglect experienced by patients discharged from MAH; or**
- iii the level of medication provided to patients at MAH?**

If the answer to any of the above is yes, please explain when and in what circumstances the NI GP Committee became aware of the concerns and what action it took in response?

17. As far as I am aware, NIGPC was not aware of any concerns during this period, although we were aware of the wider issues through media reporting.

Q6. In the period between 02 December 1999 and 14 June 2021, was the NI GP Committee aware of any parents of patients in MAH seeking help to treat stress/depression arising from concerns about how their child was being cared

for in MAH? If so, when and in what circumstances was the NI GP Committee made aware of concerns and what action did it take in response?

18. As far as I am aware, NIGPC was not aware of any parents in MAH seeking to help to treat stress/depression arising from concerns about how their child was being cared for in MAH during this period.

Declaration of Truth

The contents of this witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I have produced all the documents which I have access to and which I believe are necessary to address the matters on which the Inquiry Panel has requested me to give evidence.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. R. 1'.

Date: 26.3.24