

ORGANISATIONAL MODULES 2024

**MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL INQUIRY
WITNESS STATEMENT**

Statement of Ian Sutherland

Dated 7th of June 2024

I, Ian Sutherland, make the following statement for the purpose of the Muckamore Abbey Hospital (MAH) Inquiry.

I make this statement, in response to a request by the Inquiry Panel as the co-author of a report dated July 2022 titled: "Independent Review of the Learning Disability Resettlement Programme in Northern Ireland".

This is my first statement to the Inquiry.

There are no documents exhibited to my statement.

Qualifications and positions

1. I am a qualified social worker. I completed my training in 1986. I hold a BA (Hons) degree in Psychology from 1982. I hold a Masters degree in Health and Social Services Management from 1994.
2. I have held the following positions. From 1982 I have held a range of posts in social care and social work, including as an Approved Social Worker under the legislation in England and Northern Ireland. During the 1990's I held a range of managerial roles for mental health and disability services in Northern Ireland. Between 2002 and 2007 I was the Director of Mental Health and Disability Services and Executive Director of Social Work in Craigavon and Banbridge Community Health and Social Services Trust (CBHSST). Between 2008 and 2014 I served as a Trustee and Board Member of the Social Care Institute for Excellence (United Kingdom). From 2011 – 2015 I was Director of Children's Services and Executive Director of Social Work, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT),

Northern Ireland. Between 2016 and 2021: Director of Services for Children and Adults, Medway Council, Kent. Since 2021 I have been an Associate/Consultant for the Health and Social Care Leadership Centre (HSCLC) in Belfast. I am currently the Independent Chair and Scrutineer for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Module

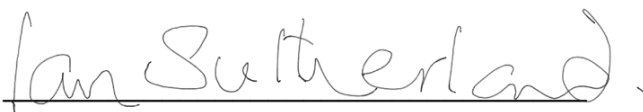
3. I have been asked to provide a statement for the purpose of M6: Resettlement.
4. In 2021 I was approached by the HSCLC as one of their Associate/Consultants and invited to undertake a review which was being commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board (later the Strategic Planning and Performance Group of the Department of Health (DoH)) to review the resettlement programmes for individuals living at Muckamore Abbey Hospital. A co-reviewer was appointed along with myself to undertake this piece of work, Ms Bria Mongan.
5. The Terms of Reference for the review were agreed with the HSCB and DoH, after consultation with senior leaders in learning disability services from the five HSC Trusts.
6. Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review built on a stated intention from DoH and HSCB to strengthen the existing oversight arrangements for the resettlement of patients from MAH (MAH) and other learning disability hospitals whose discharge plans have been delayed. The review team were required to work with stakeholders to identify both good practice and barriers and develop an action plan to ensure that the needs of the patients are being considered and are met. The review was to include consideration of the effectiveness of planning and delivery for the proposed supported living and alternative accommodation schemes which were in development to support the resettlement plans for these individuals.

7. The review team were to work collaboratively with stakeholders, with the commitment of the Chief Executives and the Directors, engaging appropriately with relevant staff, agencies, families and service users.
8. Timescale: The timetable for the work was to take place over a six-month period which began in effect in November 2021.
9. The Review Team were required to give particular consideration of the current care plans for all the service users in MAH and critically analyse the actions taken to identify and commission suitable community placements. In addition, they were asked to look specifically at the following areas:
 - Length of time patient has been in MAH and where they were admitted from
 - Ascertain if resettlement has already been trialled
 - Summarise the policy and practice evidence base in relation to resettlement programmes.
 - Identify those individuals where plans are absent or weak in relation to their resettlement
 - Work with leaders in the appropriate Trusts to ensure that suitable resettlement plans are developed.
 - Critically evaluate the progress of resettlement plans as devised by the responsible Trust for the identified individuals.
 - Business cases which have been completed or are still in process identifying any positive outcomes and any strategic or operational barriers. Make recommendations for actions that would strengthen or accelerate the delivery of proposed pipeline schemes.
 - Review to what extent the engagement strategies employed individually by Trusts, and collectively by the system as a whole have been effective in supporting the delivery of the MAH resettlement programme.
10. Inter-Agency Working: The review team were asked to consider whether/how the agencies and professionals involved in resettlement of patients, have worked effectively with each other at each and every stage of the process.

11. Parental/Carer Engagement/Advocacy: The review team were also asked to consider as a critical factor whether and to what extent the families of the patients were engaged in decision making around resettlement. In this context the review team were also asked to explore whether and to what extent, independent advocacy and support was provided.
12. Outside of Scope: Whilst there are Issues relating to children and young people with learning disability/Autism who may be subject to delayed discharge in other settings, this population were not included within the terms of reference for this review.
13. The report was fully co-authored with Ms Bria Mongan.

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: 

Date: 7th June 2024