

ORGANISATIONAL MODULES 2024

**MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL INQUIRY
WITNESS STATEMENT**

**Statement of Lindsay Fisher
Date: 10th September 2024**

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

The statement is made on behalf of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in response to a request for evidence by the Inquiry Panel.

This is my second statement to the Inquiry.

There are no exhibits to my second statement.

1. My first statement to the Inquiry provided information relating to the effectiveness and adequacy of current Adult Safeguarding structures and an overview of the role of the PSNI within the various iterations of the Joint Protocol for Investigation of Adult Safeguarding in Northern Ireland.
2. The Inquiry has requested evidence related to the effectiveness and adequacy of historical Adult Safeguarding investigations carried out by the PSNI. Given the large quantities of data involved I have sought to address this request by the provision of various tables and spreadsheets containing the required information in a user- friendly format.
3. Whilst it is important to note that during the period 1999-2021, which is the focus of the Inquiry's work, Adult Safeguarding investigations were being conducted across the whole of the province. Muckamore Abbey Hospital has been the largest and foremost facility for the care of learning-disabled adults within Northern Ireland since it opened in 1948.

4. I have outlined in my previous statement the large proportion of Adult Safeguarding referrals originating from MAH and will, therefore, utilise data relating to MAH as the basis of this evidence.
5. At the outset of the Inquiry in 2022, and in order to assist the Inquiry, PSNI provided information to the Inquiry detailing how, during the years 1999-2022, almost 5,000 occurrences had been recorded by PSNI relating to MAH.
6. This information was gleaned from a spreadsheet entitled "Muckamore Occurrences Master spreadsheet", (hereafter, "the Spreadsheet") created by PSNI Higher Analyst Mr Sean Clarke who has provided a statement to the Inquiry outlining the methodology used.
7. The Inquiry has requested information from the PSNI relating to the statistical breakdown of staff-on-patient complaints throughout the time period covered in the Spreadsheet. PSNI Criminal Justice Branch are responsible for the records management and storage of investigations and in order to assist the Inquiry, produced a statistical breakdown detailing the percentage of complaints which involved allegations against staff members by or on behalf of a patient, the actions taken by PSNI in response to these allegations, and the outcomes relating to each investigation. I have liaised with Chief Inspector Blemmings of Criminal Justice Branch who has provided the table at paragraph 12. This outlines cases that, when reported, were already statute barred, those that were reported with a no prosecution directed or caution given.
8. MAHI have requested the following information from PSNI, "Please provide a statistical breakdown of "staff-on-patient" complaints prior to Operation Turnstone."
9. I have been informed by Ms Catherine Mallon, Criminal Justice Department that, subject to the margins of error discussed in the evidence of Mr Sean Clarke, 3890 incidents were recorded at Muckamore Abbey Hospital within the time period covered by the Inquiry's terms of reference, prior to the beginning of Op Turnstone. Of those 3890 incidents, 358 are staff-on-patient complaints.

This means 9.2% of incidents are related to staff-on-patient complaints. In four incidents it is unclear whether it is a staff-on-patient incident.

10. MAHI then requested PSNI to provide an indication of the actions taken by police in relation to those complaints, and PSNI can confirm, from the information provided by Ms Catherine Mallon, Criminal Justice Department that of the 358 incidents noted above, in 104 incidents files were sent to the DPP/ PPS for review. Of the remaining 252 incidents many of these have been submitted as part of the Op Turnstone investigation, however as they were submitted on paper to PPS and there is no outcome from court, this is not reflected on PSNI systems yet. MAHI have previously been supplied with information and figures in relation to the files submitted under Operation Turnstone and their current status.

11. Lastly, PSNI were requested to provide information relating to the outcomes of any files sent to PPS. The Criminal Justice Department has compiled the following table:

1	Adult Caution	3
2	Discretionary Disposal	1
3	Duplicate occurrences, previously investigated/ reported	27
4	Enquiries ongoing	1
5	File to PPS	10
6	File to PPS (patient is suspect)	1
7	Historical (reported when offences where Statute Barred or further investigation could not take place)	25
8	Incidents under investigation by op Turnstone	51
9	NFPA	146
10	NFPA but passed to social services to review	42
11	No prosecution directed	39
12	Not guilty verdict	4
13	Pending	4
14	Prosecution	4

12. In order to assist the Inquiry, the PSNI Criminal Justice Branch has retrieved all of the pre-Turnstone files noted in the table above and has made them available for inspection by the MAHI at PSNI premises in Belfast.

13. Should the Inquiry require any further evidence, information or clarification, PSNI will provide same as soon as practicably possible.

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:

10/9/24