

MAHI Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry

STATEMENT BY CHAIR AS TO RULES AND PROCEDURE

ISSUED ON 10 NOVEMBER 2021

The Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry is a statutory public inquiry established under the Inquiries Act 2005, to examine the issue of abuse of patients at Muckamore Abbey Hospital.

The Inquiry was first announced on 8 September 2020 and for the purposes of section 5 of the Inquiries Act 2005, the Inquiry was formally set up on 11 October 2021. The Minister for Health for Northern Ireland, Robin Swann, set the Terms of Reference following consultation with the Chair.

The Chair Tom Kark QC was formally appointed on 10 June 2021.

Section 17(1) of the Inquiries Act 2005 provides:

“Subject to any provision of this Act or of rules under section 41, the procedure and conduct of an inquiry are to be such as the chairman of the inquiry may direct.”

Section 41(1)(a) provides that rules dealing with evidence and procedure may be made by the “appropriate authority”. Section 41(3)(d) provides that the appropriate authority is the First Minister and deputy First Minister acting jointly, as regards inquiries for which a Northern Ireland Minister is responsible.

No rules having been made for Northern Ireland, the Chair intends to adopt and apply the rules of procedure as set down in the Inquiry Rules 2006 laid before Parliament on 11 July 2006 (SI 2006 No. 1838) unless in his view exceptional circumstances require a departure from those rules.