

## **CHAIR'S UPDATE IN RELATION TO SITTING DAYS FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2022 AND BEGINNING OF 2023**

**ISSUED ON 20 OCTOBER 2022**

1. As you know I made public my intention that we would finish evidence relating to the patient experience as far as possible before the end of this year.
2. That aspiration was because the Inquiry started hearing this evidence in June of this year and it is important for any inquiry to make good timely progress if it can. I wanted if possible to receive all of the evidence about the patient experience before starting evidence from organisations. Indeed, before hearing from individual members of staff, it will be necessary to complete the evidence of the patient experience in order that staff may be in a position to consider and respond to criticism that may be made of them.
3. However, having heard 37 witnesses (including today's witness) so far this year we will only be in a position to hear from around 12 more this year and that evidence will be heard over a two week period between 22 November 2022 and 1 December 2022.
4. At this stage, there are unfortunately no further witness statements available to enable the Inquiry to schedule the final phase of evidence relating to the patient experience. Those would almost exclusively be statements that are anticipated from individuals affiliated to Action for Muckamore and the Society of Parents and Friends of Muckamore Abbey Hospital, who are Core Participants in this Inquiry. There are ongoing issues relating to the receipt of those statements and the Inquiry is liaising with their legal representatives with a view to achieving a resolution that will enable the evidence to be heard as soon as possible. I want to underline how important it is that we do receive that evidence and we have every intention to do so. Realistically, however, it will not be possible to hear that evidence until 2023.
5. In the meantime, while that evidence is being prepared, in the New Year we intend to move onto organisational evidence of a general nature. There is a good deal of evidence that the panel needs to hear relating to the legal and regulatory framework, the structure of various organisations, policies, methods and governance. We will be contacting several of our organisational Core

Participants over the next few weeks to organise receipt of that evidence. That is evidence of an informative nature and will not be affected by evidence relating to the individual patient experience at the hospital.

6. After the further 2 weeks in November this year, we are unlikely to begin hearings again until late January or early February 2023 and a further announcement will be made to all CPs once the dates are finalised.

Tom Kark KC

Chair

20 October 2022