

November

2

2023



Update

Please see our other easy read information if you want to know more about the Inquiry.

Patient Experience Evidence

October

12

Patient experience evidence finished on 12th October.

Evidence is anything that you see, experience, read, or are told that helps us find out what happened.



The evidence given to us has been very important in helping the Inquiry to do its job.



62 witnesses have given spoken evidence

28 witness statements have been read to the panel

A summary of 16 witness statements were read. These gave information about things that happened outside of the dates the Inquiry is looking into.

Witness statements say what you say happened and what you saw. What you say is written down and you sign it.

About the Inquiry



The Inquiry is here to

- look into **abuse** of patients at the hospital
- find out why the abuse happened
- make sure abuse does not happen again.

Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly.



It will look at the part some staff and others had in that abuse.



A public Inquiry cannot say if a person has done a crime. We are not a court.

We look at everything to help us understand what happened in the hospital.



Inquiries say what needs to change to stop bad things happening.

These are called **recommendations**.

Recommendations need to be made as quickly as possible to help make good change happen.

Hospital Staff Evidence



From February – March we told hospital staff we wanted their help with the Inquiry

- on the radio
- in newspapers and
- on social media.



We have asked for written statements from some hospital staff.

More staff will be asked to help us going forward.

Not all hospital staff that patients and families talked about will be asked for evidence.



We understand that some staff might be worried saying things about

- a present or past employer
- another member of staff or
- the evidence given by a patient or their family.



We had 2 online meetings to give hospital staff information about the Inquiry and witness statements.



The law says nothing should stop people giving us evidence. We have tried to help them to do this.

NAPIER SOLICITORS

Napiers Solicitors will give hospital staff free and independent advice if they do not want to use Trust lawyers.



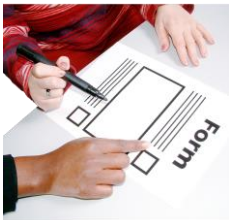
Hospital staff can talk to our counsellors for support.



Witnesses can ask to give evidence without anyone knowing who they are.



Some witnesses can have their witness statements read out instead of giving spoken evidence.



The Chair runs the Inquiry.
He has not made hospital staff give witness statements. But the law says he can.

We hope staff will volunteer statements.



Cleaver Fulton Rankin Solicitors will take staff witness statements.



Witnesses will be asked questions to help them give clear spoken evidence.



Hospital staff evidence will

- start with staff who worked day-to-day with patients and
- move onto senior management.



It is very important to hear from hospital staff about good and bad experiences of

- working at the hospital
- other staff and management.



Hospital staff and management will be asked to

- give information about the things patients and families have told us in their evidence and
- give us their views.



This will help us do our job as an Inquiry and

- understand patient experience evidence better
- and give staff a fair chance to have their say.



Hospital staff are not giving evidence

- to defend a crime or
- answer to something their work are looking into.

Evidence will not be used in court or to arrest staff.

Working with the police and courts



The Inquiry is happening at the same time as a big police investigation into abuse at the hospital.



We must be very careful not to do anything that stops police or courts doing their jobs.

Our plan to do this is called a **Memorandum of Understanding**.

Replying to criticism



Most patient experience witnesses have not said bad things about named hospital staff.

But some hospital staff have been named and very serious things said about them.

The Inquiry follows rules.



Rule 13(3) says that if bad things are said about a person they should be told and allowed to reply.

Hospital staff can do this if asked to give evidence. Sometimes this will be difficult to make happen.

For example

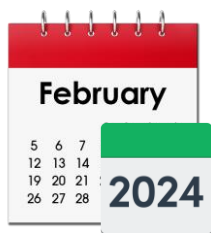
- if the person who gave evidence does not want people to know who they are or
- if the law says we are not allowed to tell staff what has been said about them.

Evidence and hearing plans



Hospital staff evidence will be taken on

- 13th November – 17th November
- 4th December – 11th December.



We hope to finish this part of hospital staff evidence by February 2024.



We will then look at old reports about the hospital.



We will also hear evidence from

- hospital management and inspectors
- people looking after health and social care in Northern Ireland and others.



Finally we, will then hear from people high up in the Trust and the Department of Health.



We have heard a lot of evidence about rules that staff were supposed to follow in the hospital.

We now need to look at how well these rules worked.



By the end of November we will

- write to everyone left that we want to help us and
- tell them what evidence we want from them.



Thank you to everyone who has helped the Inquiry so far.