



The **Regulation** and
Quality Improvement
Authority

Family Information Leaflet

Advice for relatives involved in Phase 2 of
the Expert Review of Records of Deceased
Patients of Dr M Watt

On behalf of RQIA, we wish to offer our sincere sympathy to you on the death of your loved one. We are aware that our contact with you may prove difficult and painful and may further impact on your grief and sorrow. We apologise for any potential distress this may cause.

We have identified a number of organisations who can offer you emotional support, should that be of benefit. In addition, our Family Liaison Team can arrange independent counselling services should this be required. Contact details are included in this leaflet and on our website www.rqia.org.uk

Families might also find our *Coping with Grief* leaflet useful at this time.

Background

In 2018, the Department of Health commissioned a series of reviews following a number of concerns raised about the care and treatment provided by Dr Watt, Consultant Neurologist.

This included asking RQIA to commission an expert review of the records of all patients or former patients of Dr Watt who have died over the past 10 years (2008 - 2018). This is known as the Expert Review of Records of Deceased Patients of Dr Watt.

The review will be conducted in a phased manner, given the significant scale of the work involved.

Phase 1

Phase 1, which involved our preparatory work for this Review, is complete. This included the development of a Legal Framework to allow RQIA to access the clinical records of the deceased patients' of Dr Watt, the development of a suite of operational protocols to ensure the safe management of the clinical records, and the establishment of a project team. The legal framework has been signed (formally adopted) by the Chief Executives of the relevant Health and Social Care (HSC) bodies.

Phase 2

Phase 2 will entail the expert review of the records of patients whose family members have approached the RQIA with concerns about their care and also the records of patients who had been identified as part of Cohort 1 of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's live patient recall but unfortunately died before their review appointment.

We have commissioned the Royal College of Physicians to establish an Expert Review Panel of experienced consultants from outside of Northern Ireland to review the records selected for Phase 2 of the review.

Becoming involved

RQIA wishes to provide the families of the patients' whose records have been selected for Phase 2 of the review with the opportunity to share their experiences regarding the care and treatment provided to their relative by Dr Watt with our Family Liaison Team, for consideration by the expert review panel.

Family involvement and the information they share will help to inform and learn from this Review.

Families will be offered the opportunity to contact RQIA to arrange to meet with our Family Liaison Team. There are a number of ways to do this:

- Send an email to expert.review@rqia.org.uk with your name, your deceased relative's name, their date of birth and date of death, and your contact details and a member of our Family Liaison Team will get back to you; or
- Telephone **0800 052 0012** to speak to a member of our Family Liaison Team.

We can then arrange for one or two family members to meet with our Family Liaison Team, or possibly one family member accompanied by a friend or an advocate.

When making arrangements for the meeting, we will consider issues such as location, accessibility and Covid-19 restrictions. If appropriate, meetings could be held by video link such as a Zoom call.

Family members who would prefer not to meet with the Family Liaison Team are welcome to telephone RQIA on **0800 052 0012** and we will arrange for the information they wish to share to be recorded over the telephone.

Recording the information

The team will ask some questions to help the family to share their experiences about the care and treatment provided to their relative by Dr Watt, and will record the information on a standard form. RQIA will then, with the family's permission, share the information they provide with the expert review panel.

What happens next

On completion of the review of the records selected for Phase 2, the Royal College of Physicians will provide RQIA with a report of its findings. These will be shared with the Department of Health, and published on RQIA's website.

Reports will not identify any individual patient or their family members and confidentiality will be upheld at all times.

RQIA will, if the family wishes, arrange to provide feedback on the findings of the review of their deceased relative.

We appreciate that families may wish to have no further engagement with RQIA regarding this review, and will respect decisions in this regard.

Useful contacts

RQIA's Family Liaison Team

Tel: 0800 052 0012

expert.review@rqia.org.uk

Lifeline - 24 hour support for those in distress or despair

Tel: 0808 808 8000

Samaritans

Tel: 116123

CRUSE Bereavement Care

Tel: 028 9043 4600 or 0808 808 1677

www.cruse.org.uk

Contact Us

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor, Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place
Belfast BT1 3BT

www.rqia.org.uk

Tel: (028) 9536 1111

Email: info@rqia.org.uk