



Witness Statement Reference Number

**WITNESS STATEMENT TO THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO OUTBREAK OF  
CLOSTRIDIUM DIFFICILE IN THE NORTHERN TRUST HOSPITALS**

**WITNESS NAME: HARRIETT CAMPBELL**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE**

I, Mrs Harriett Campbell, say as follows:

1. My name is Mrs Harriett Campbell and I live at an address which is known to the inquiry team.

I was a patient at Mid-Ulster Hospital in September 2007 and again in May 2008 and I had been diagnosed as having contracted C difficile.

I will be 51 years of age later this year.

2. Pre-existing Medical History

The only time that I was ever in the hospital before was for the birth of my children.

3. First admission to Mid-Ulster Hospital

I was admitted to Mid-Ulster Hospital on the first occasion in or about September 2007. I woke up one morning with very bad confusion. I did not know where I was and so an ambulance was called and it took me to the Mid-Ulster Hospital

4. I was examined at the Accident & Emergency Department and then admitted to Ward 1. I think it was an open 14 or 16 bedded ward. However later on that night I was moved to another twin bedded room. I was there for one night on my own, but on the second night another woman was moved into the room

with me. She was quite old and had dementia. I was told that she had died later on that year.

I spent two or three nights in this room and was then transferred back to the open ward for my last night in hospital.

5. I was having symptoms of diarrhoea and was having to use a commode in the single room. I had asked for the nurses to remove the commode as it was becoming overloaded and I did not like it being left in the room. The commode was not taken away or removed as often as I would have liked it to have been and it was also left in the room overnight. It was also there when my visitors called and I did not like it being there.
6. I was in the Mid-Ulster Hospital for about four days and was then discharged home.

7. Second Admission to Mid-Ulster Hospital

In or about May 2008 the same thing happened in that I awoke one morning extremely confused. My husband immediately took me in the car to the Accident & Emergency Department of Mid-Ulster Hospital where I was examined and on this occasion I was diagnosed with epilepsy. I have been taken epilem for this ever since.

8. I was transferred from Accident & Emergency to Ward 1 for three or four days when they carried out tests. I was then allowed home for three or four days, but I became very ill again and I had to be readmitted to Mid-Ulster Hospital. It would appear that I had had a very bad seizure and so on this occasion I was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. I was still having symptoms of diarrhoea. I was put into a small single room just off the Intensive Care Ward. I was on a drip and was the only person in this room.
9. I was there for four days and was then discharged home. I have not been back to the Mid-Ulster Hospital since that date.

10. I still have symptoms of diarrhoea. I have it every day.

11. Whiteabbey Hospital

I went to Whiteabbey Hospital about two months ago for further tests for my diarrhoea and bowel problems, when they used a camera to scan me, but nothing was found.

12. C Difficile

The first I knew that I had C difficile was in August 2009 when I received a letter from the inquiry team to tell me that I had been proved positive for C difficile when I was Mid-Ulster Hospital in September 2007. I have never been told this before by the Hospital or by my GP.

13. I feel very annoyed, bitter and depressed of being told two years later that I had contracted C difficile. I did not even know that the hospital was carrying out tests. I was not given the results and never knew that I had C difficile until I received the letter from the inquiry team.

14. The C difficile outbreak was on the television news at that time, but I thought it related to Antrim Area Hospital and did not know that it also related to other hospitals within the Northern Trust area. I felt sorry for the people who had it, not knowing that I was one those persons.

15. I was never given any advice or instruction regarding personal hygiene or washing. Nor was I given any advice about laundry.

16. I have now read up about C difficile on my own and I now realise what a fatal illness it is, but it leaves me very annoyed and depressed because no one told me about it at the time.

### 17. Visits

My husband, children, sisters and other members of my family all visited me in hospital during regular visiting hours. When I was in the intensive care the visiting was not as restrictive and they could come and go as they wanted.

One thing I noticed was that there were not enough chairs in the room and quite often my visitors had to stand.

18. I thought that the care was very good at the time. I mean that they looked after and treated me well, but I am very annoyed that no one told me that I had C difficile. The attitude of the staff was quite okay and they attended to my needs.

### 19. Cleanliness

The floors, walls and everything else in the wards and in the single room were clean and tidy. The bed clothes were changed regularly and there was no odour or smell about the hospital.

I did notice that the nurses wore gloves and aprons, but that these were not given to visitors.

There were also gel dispensers, but we were not told to use them. I noticed the staff washing their hands, but no advice was ever given to me or my visitors about this.

Neither myself nor any of my family were ever given any advice regarding the washing of the laundry.

The only thing I did not like was the fact that the commode was left sitting in the single room and was not taken away or emptied as often as it should have been.

## 20. Communication

I never at any time received any leaflets or pamphlets from the hospital about C difficile or anything else. Nor did I see any notices on the walls or notice boards. No one ever spoke to me about C difficile or gave me any advice whatsoever.

I was not told that the tests were being carried out, the results of those tests or given any advice regarding hygiene or precautions.

21. I only spoke to a doctor on one occasion and this was to do with my epilepsy. No one ever spoke to me about C difficile.

I was satisfied with the treatment I received but very annoyed by the lack of information I received from the hospital. I should have been told at the time that I had C difficile. I had a right to know this at the time.

## 22. Food

I was happy with the quality and service of the food.

## 23. Summary

There are really three things that annoyed me about my stay in hospital.

Firstly the commode should not have been left in the room. It should have been taken away and emptied. It was very unhygienic for it to have been left in the single room for so long.

Secondly I am very annoyed that I was not told by the hospital that I had C difficile and that it was some two years later after I received a letter from the inquiry team that I now realise that I contracted this terrible infection. I should have been told this at the time. I had a right to know this at the time and only finding out some two years later has left me very annoyed and depressed.

Thirdly when I was isolated in the single room I now presume that the hospital knew that I had contracted C difficile so why did they then move another woman into the room with me. I do not think it was right of them to do so.

24. I do not wish to give evidence at the oral hearing.

I declare that this statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed *Signature Protected*

Date *27<sup>th</sup> 2007*

Mrs Harriet Campbell