

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

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MARTIN E BRADLEY

I, Martin Bradley, aged over eighteen years, pursuant to a written request dated 20th August from the Public Inquiry into the Outbreak of Clostridium Difficile, make the following statement:-

1. I am the Chief Nursing Officer of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, ("DHSSPS"), Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3SQ.
2. I took up the position of Chief Nursing Officer with DHSSPS on 24 October 2005. Prior to that I was Director of the Royal College of Nursing in Northern Ireland.
3. The Clostridium Difficile Inquiry has asked that I address the following question :-

“Whether as Chief Nursing Officer you or your staff were aware of concerns regarding staffing levels in nursing in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (and its legacy Trust), not only in respect of the outbreak period (June 2007 to August 2008) but also the period prior to it. Please exhibit to your statement any relevant correspondence, memoranda etc in respect of the issue.”

4. Following a series of meetings in 2006 with Ms Bronagh Scott, Director of Nursing at the United Hospitals Trust (the Legacy Trust, which incorporated

Antrim, Whiteabbey and the Mid Ulster Hospital). I became aware of concerns over the level of nurse staffing at Antrim Hospital. Those concerns were being managed by the United Hospitals Trust by using agency staff, bank hours and overtime.

5. I raised these issues in conversations with Ms Elizabeth McNair, Chief Nurse at the Northern Health and Social Services Board (NHSSB). At that time the NHSSB commissioned services from the United Hospitals Trust. I suggested that both the NHSSB and the Trust come to an agreed analysis on the nurse staffing situation and how any funding issues might be addressed.
6. Between June and August 2006 the NHSSB undertook a review of nurse staffing levels across the United Hospitals Trust, and recommended funding of an additional 69.55 whole time equivalent (WTE) qualified nurses and 25.24 WTE support staff. The funding required amounted to £2.275 million.
7. Subsequently, and as a direct consequence of that review, the NHSSB allocated £200,000 for nurse staffing for the remainder of the 2006/2007 financial year and increased this to £400,000 from 1 April 2007.
8. During the outbreak of Clostridium Difficile, in and around the period of 2007 to 2008, the NHSSB allocated an additional £500,000 non recurrently to assist the Northern HSC Trust. The Northern HSC Trust took a decision in May 2008 to allocate £1.9 million recurrent funding for nurse staffing.
9. These issues were being addressed against a tight financial situation and with an acknowledgement that the reform of services would potentially lead to greater efficiencies in the use of the nursing staff.
10. My involvement in these matters was to provide advice to the Director of Nursing in the United Hospitals Trust on how these matters might be progressed with the NHSSB as the Commissioner of services.

11. I have no written records regarding these matters. The issues were pursued through conversations with the individuals concerned.

12. I attach for information a copy of the NHSSB "Summary of Outcomes from Review of Nursing Levels and Impact of Ongoing Modernisation and Reform Agenda on Staffing Levels".

I confirm that the contents of this statement are true.

Signed: _____

Dated: **2 September 2010**

Martin Bradley, Chief Nursing Officer

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety