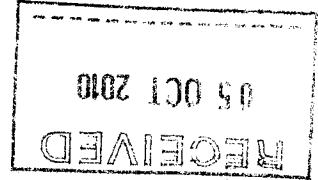


WITNESS STATEMENT TO THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE OUTBREAK OF
CLOSTRIDIUM DIFFICILE IN NORTHERN TRUST HOSPITALS

WITNESS NAME: SIOBHAN MCGUIGAN



STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE

I, Siobhan McGuigan, say as follows:

1. My name is Siobhan McGuigan and I am the daughter of the late Mrs Rose Reid who died on the 14th of January 2008 at Craigavon Area Hospital.

Mother's pre-existing Medical History

2. My mother was living on her own. She was mobile, very able to look after herself and was mentally and physically well.

She did not attend the doctor on a regular basis but had been having some trouble with her gallstones just before she died and had to be admitted to Mid-Ulster Hospital in September and October 2007 for treatment.

She was 83 years of age when she died.

Admission to Antrim Area Hospital

3. My mother was admitted to Antrim Area Hospital in November 2007 as she had been hallucinating and had an infection. She was admitted by ambulance to Accident & Emergency where she was examined and then transferred to Ward B1.

4. She was initially in an open six bedded bay and was in the first bed on the left hand side. The toilet was in the corridor outside. This was for a couple of days and then she was transferred to a single isolation room on the same ward.
5. My mother was using a bedpan in the open ward and I think that she had developed diarrhoea.
6. She was in Antrim Area Hospital for eight days and was then discharged and sent home.

Home

7. She was at home for about six weeks but in January 2008 started complaining of pains in her stomach and said that it was a different pain to the gallstones.

Admission to Mid-Ulster Hospital

8. On the 9th or 10th of January 2008 she had to be taken to Mid-Ulster Hospital and was admitted to Ward 1 for one night and then transferred to the high dependency ward where she stayed for about two and a half days.

Transfer to Craigavon Area Hospital

9. Then on Sunday morning she was transferred to Craigavon Area Hospital as she was very ill and she died there one day later on the 14th of January 2008.

Antibiotics

10. She had been given antibiotics in Antrim Area Hospital and had been told to keep taking them when she was at home. They were in tablet form and even when she ran out she got more supplies from her doctor.

Symptoms

11. After discharge from Antrim Area Hospital my mother lived a normal life for about six weeks until the pain started again. She was in pain for a few days before she was re-admitted to hospital.

Transfers

12. The transfers between hospitals were discussed with the family but no explanation was given as to why she was moved from an open ward to an isolation room.

Furthermore, on several occasions (once in Magherafelt Hospital and once in Antrim Hospital) my mother was moved between wards. However I was not informed about this on either occasion. In Magheafelt I had to ask where she was at and in Antrim I was simply informed that she had returned to her original ward – I never even knew she had been moved out of it.

Visits

13. The family visited her every day during normal visiting hours. This included myself, my brother and sister and their children together with other members of the family including my mother's brothers. She had a lot of visitors.
14. There were never enough chairs to sit on and visitors sometimes had to sit on the bed. Quite often there were more than two people around the bed.
15. The grandchildren would also visit her and I am quite annoyed now to think that we were exposing the grandchildren to the risk of infection as no information or advice was ever given to us regarding her condition or what precautions we should take.

C Difficile

16. We had never heard of C Difficile before and did not know anything about it.
17. We were only told that she had C Difficile in Mid-Ulster Hospital. A doctor just told me that she had C Difficile but did not give us any further information.
18. A different doctor had also told my brother that she had C Difficile but nothing else.
19. My daughter is a nurse and so we told her and she looked it up on the internet and that is where we got most of our information from.
20. I did not see any notices or leaflets about any of the hospitals. The outbreak was only announced in January 2008 at about the same time as my mother died and so it was only then that the details appeared on the television.
21. There was very little information given to us by the hospitals about C Difficile and it was only after she was admitted to Mid-Ulster Hospital that we were told that she had it.
22. I think now that she must also have had it in Antrim Area Hospital as why otherwise would she be transferred from an open ward to an isolation room.

Care in Antrim Area Hospital

23. My mother did not like Antrim Area Hospital. She did not like the nurses or the care provided. I did not think that they were very helpful and I did not like their attitude. I would have liked my mother to get more personal treatment and on a more one to one basis.

My mother was given a urine bag in Antrim Area Hospital and I noticed that it was quite heavy and full but even though I spoke to a nurse about it she made no attempt to empty it.

I did not see or speak to any doctors in Antrim Area Hospital.

Care in Mid-Ulster Hospital

24. The care was very good in Mid-Ulster Hospital and the family were much happier with the way in which she was being nursed and treated. It was more personal. We also got speaking to two doctors in Mid-Ulster Hospital who told us that she had C Difficile. My mother was more content when she was in Mid-Ulster Hospital and it was also much closer to where we all live.

Care in Craigavon Area Hospital

25. The care in Craigavon Area Hospital was excellent and although she was only there for one day the family were very satisfied with the way in which she was treated.

One comment I would like to make however relates to what the Doctor said to us approximately one hour before she died. He asked us if we were not curious to find out how my mother ended up in this state. By this I think he may have been suggesting that the treatment was not up to standard. He also asked if the hospital could undertake a post-mortem. This was put to us before my mother had died and I feel it was unusual.

Cleanliness

26. I was satisfied with the cleanliness of all the hospitals she was in. I never noticed any spillages and the bed linen was always clean.
27. I was sometimes in the toilets of the hospitals and found them to be fine.
28. We were however never advised to wash our hands or use the gel dispensers. Nor were we ever given any advice about her laundry and I never saw any biodegradable bags. We definitely should have been given advice about this and I am particularly annoyed because of the risk to the grandchildren.

Communication in Antrim Area Hospital

29. The communication in Antrim Area Hospital was nonexistent both from the doctors and the nurses. I approached the nurse one day for information and she told me that I would have to make an appointment to see one of the doctors but we were not able to get one before she was discharged and so she was sent home and the family had no information about her condition or anything else.
30. Her medication was just left lying on the bed with no instructions or anything else and no one was there to give us any advice and so we just left the hospital and went home.

Communication in Mid-Ulster Hospital

31. The communication in Mid-Ulster Hospital was reasonably good. The two doctors did tell us that she had C Difficile but very little more. The nurses were very good.
32. However once again we did not get any pamphlets or information about hand washing, use of gel or how to do the laundry.
33. We did however get some information about my mother's condition and they did phone me to the house and advise that she was being transferred to Craigavon Area Hospital as they had better facilities there.

Operation

34. She had a bowel operation in Mid-Ulster Hospital and developed sepsis and so she was transferred by ambulance to Craigavon Area Hospital. I stayed with her the whole time she was in Craigavon Area Hospital and the attention, communication and care from them was excellent.

I was very pleased with the way in which the staff dealt with both my mother and the family.

They were very caring and sensitive.

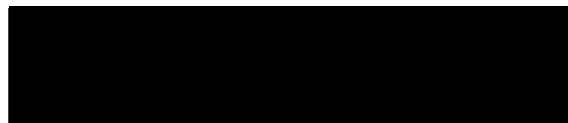
Death Certificate

35. I only found out that C Difficile was mentioned as a cause of death after I received the death certificate. I was not informed of this by the hospital.

I certify that this statement is true and correct to be best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated 1/10/16

Signed

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Stobhan McGulgan.

Stobhan McGulgan