



n e w s r e l e a s e

CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

June 21st 2005

The Eastern Health and Social Services Council discussed the issue of “Clinical Negligence” at its June meeting.

A representative of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board gave the Council an overview of the management of a claim for medical negligence, the scale of the issue and the measures in place to safeguard patients and ensure quality care.

The Council was reassured to hear that no funds are redirected from frontline health care budgets to redress any instance of medical negligence and that the Board addresses this issue with sensitivity and care towards each person coming forward.

The Council sought clarity on the Board’s approach to patient safety in regard to negligence claims. The Council believes that patient safety and care should be at the centre of any discussions on clinical negligence.

Whilst acknowledging that the Board and Trusts have made patient safety a major priority, the Council does not believe there is room for complacency. Every effort must be made to get things right first time. Council will continue to monitor and challenge the Health Service in fulfilling its responsibilities for patient safety on behalf of patients and their families.

Richard Dixon, the new Chief Officer of the Council said;

“Instances of clinical negligence should always be dealt with sensitively by all service providers.

Patient safety demands strong safeguards and accountability from all who provide care to people.

In recognising that sometimes things can go wrong, a strong commitment to learn from mistakes and improve services is essential if the causes of mistakes are to be dealt with as well as the consequences. Knowing who or what is at fault allows lessons to be learned.”

Notes to Editor

“The Eastern Health and Social Services Council was set up in 1991 to represent the interests of the public in health and social services in the Eastern Board area.”

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