

Witness Name: Prof. Joe McDonald
Statement No.: 1
Exhibits: N/A
Dated: 16/02/2024

THIRLWALL INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF Prof. Joe McDonald

I, Joe McDonald, will say as follows: -

1. I am a former NHS Consultant Psychiatrist, former NHS Trust Medical Director, former National Clinical Lead for IT in the NHS, accredited Clinical Safety Officer, former Professor of Health Informatics Practice at Newcastle University with over 35 years NHS experience and a special interest in Human Factors in patient safety incidents. I have chaired over 100 Serious Untoward Incident reviews at Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust including homicides and suicides. I am currently Medical Director at SARD JV Limited who provide appraisal and revalidation software for the NHS. SARD JV are a company part owned by the NHS that was born out of the Harold Shipman Enquiry and the requirement for all doctors to be annually appraised. I have been a student of NHS patient safety scandals for many years.

I would like to address only part C of the inquiry :

The fundamentals of my evidence are lifted from an article I wrote in October 2023. The short version is that as long as patient safety incidents and professional appraisals remain in separate silos we will continue to have patient safety scandals:

ExhibitJM/1 [<https://ethicalhealthcare.org.uk/2023/10/29/enough-is-enough-how-we-can-do-more-to-keep-patients-safe/>] INQ0101379

2. I hope this evidence is helpful, I would be very happy to have further discussions or give evidence in person.
3. To improve patient safety Serious incident reports should contain a machine readable element which would automatically alert appraisers to clusters of incidents around individuals, teams or locations. The opportunity to do this needs to be part of PSIRF See Exhibit JM/1.
4. The limitation on the existing serious incident reporting is the absence of any machine readable output to alert managers automatically.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed: _____ Joe McDonald _____

Dated: _____ 16/02/2024 _____