Whether suspicions should have been raised earlier and whether Letby should have been suspended earlier

258.   My understanding is that there were 13 deaths on the Neonatal Unit between June 2015 to June 2016.

259.   Reflecting on the period June 2015 to June 2016, my statement to the Inquiry demonstrates that I was not fully aware of the number or circumstances of the neonatal deaths or the number or circumstances of the children who experienced sudden or unexpected deteriorations in condition.

260.   I now recognise that it would have been appropriate for the hospital to have reported the overall increase in neonatal deaths that occurred in June 2015 as a serious incident. This would have then triggered a comprehensive investigation into the increased mortality rate at a much earlier stage however, given the small number of cases reviewed, this may not have resulted in Letby's earlier suspension.

261.   With hindsight, on receiving the Thematic Review of Neonatal Mortality report (INQ0003251], this should have also been received at the Divisional Governance Group for Urgent Care and then subsequently at Quality, Safety and Patient Experience Committee (QSPEC) as an agenda item rather than taking assurances through the minutes of the Women's and Childrens Governance Board. This would have prompted a transparent discussion at Executive level at an earlier stage.

262.   The governance arrangements i.e. ward to board reporting were not sufficiently robust to ensure that the voice of the Neonatal Unit, a small specialty within a much bigger adult care providing division, was heard both at divisional and executive level meetings. With the Consultant Paediatricians actively working around the governance arrangements that were in place by emailing the Executive Team directly, this meant that there was a lack of transparency, monitoring and professional challenge around the increase in mortality rate on the Neonatal Unit at divisional and executive level meetings. This meant that key information did not reach the appropriate Groups and