

Witness Name: Patricia Marquis

Statement No: 3

Exhibits: PM72 – PM73

Dated: 06 February 2025

THIRLWALL INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF PATRICIA MARQUIS

I, Patricia Marquis, Director for England at The Royal College of Nursing (“**the RCN**”) of 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN, will say as follows: -

1. I make this further supplementary statement in response to the oral evidence I gave to the Thirlwall Inquiry (“the Inquiry”) on 13 January 2025. The facts and matters contained within this statement are within my own knowledge unless otherwise stated, and I believe them to be true. Where I refer to information supplied by others, the source of the information is identified; facts and matters derived from other sources are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. I make this statement on behalf of the RCN and confirm that I am duly authorised to do so.

Safeguarding

3. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that their staff receive appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their role. The RCN understands that the provision of safeguarding training is a mandatory requirement for NHS employees.
4. The RCN published guidance for nursing staff ‘Safeguarding children and young people – roles and competencies for healthcare staff’ dated January 2019. [PM/72] [INQ0108784] which provides a competency framework, listing the set of abilities that enable staff to effectively safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children and young people. They are a combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that are required for

safe practice, guidance on the signs of harm, identifying abuse and neglect and the roles and responsibilities of nursing staff.

5. Different staff groups require different levels of competence depending on their role, their level of contact with children, young people and families, the nature of their work and their level of responsibility. Level 1 is applicable to all staff working in healthcare services regardless of their place of work. Competencies include:
 - a. Taking appropriate action if they have concerns, including appropriately seeking advice, documenting and reporting concerns safely.
 - b. Awareness of professional abuse and raising concerns about the conduct of colleagues.

6. Further guidance was published in July 2021 titled "Safeguarding Children and Young People – Every Nurse's Responsibility" IPM/731 [INQ0108785]. The guidance highlighted the issues that could help staff recognise the signs of possible abuse. It also offered guidance on when and how staff should seek further information, training, support and advice from their respective employer.

7. The guidance provides, under the heading managing allegations, that any allegation or concern that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly. Depending on the situation, an appropriate response may involve:
 - a. The police investigating a possible criminal offence
 - b. Local child protection services making enquiries and/or assessing whether a child is in need of support
 - c. The employer/organisation following the relevant disciplinary procedures with the individual concerned.

8. The guidance also notes that if an RCN member is concerned about the behaviour of a colleague or student, they must use local policy to raise their concerns. In the absence of a policy, RCN members are encouraged to contact their RCN steward or the advice line RCN Direct.

