

Home Truths: One year update

Introduction

On 13 June 2018, I published *Home Truths – A Report on the Commissioner’s Investigation into Dunmurry Manor Care Home*. The report made 59 recommendations to seven Relevant Authorities (RAs) with the overarching aim of improving the standard of care for older people. In that report I committed to reporting back, one year on, on the progress made by those RAs in implementing my recommendations.

I know that families are anxious for progress to be made swiftly, as am I, and I appreciate your patience and understanding as I continue to see through what is an extremely complex investigation. Many of you will be aware of other developments since *Home Truths* was published, including separate investigations by other agencies, into what happened at Dunmurry Manor. I very much welcome this response from key authorities to the serious findings uncovered by my investigation. I hope that this update provides some clarity and insight into the investigation process to date.

Responses from RAs

As you are aware, the RAs were required to submit responses to the *Home Truths* recommendations setting out whether they accepted the recommendations and, if so, how they proposed to implement them. Responses from all RAs were received on time.



Over 400 responses in total were analysed by my office (seven responses to each of the 59 recommendations.) The responses were further assessed at several meetings with my expert panel, and the investigation team.

Given the nature and magnitude of the recommendations made to the seven RAs, which included four Health and Social Care Trusts, the RQIA, the Department of Health and Runwood Homes, this has undoubtedly been a complex task.

Having reviewed the responses, the next stage of the investigation was to determine whether or not I considered that they were “adequate”.

Following the extensive analysis, I felt strongly that further information was required in respect of a number of the recommendations. I have therefore responded to each of the RAs requesting additional information on some aspects of their responses so that I can be fully assured that the appropriate action has and is being taken. Until this further information has

been received and assessed, I am legally bound under the COPNI Act 2011 to continue to carry out the investigation in private. Therefore I am not in the position to discuss just yet the adequacy or not of the responses received to date. It is my hope and belief that I will be in a position to do this later this year.

Actions of other authorities

Following the publication of *Home Truths* a number of other investigatory and regulatory authorities have commenced their own investigations into issues highlighted by the report.

This includes a criminal investigation by the PSNI and the appointment of an independent review team (CPEA Ltd) by the Department of Health. I am also aware that the Department of Health has been in contact with the families of residents of Dunmurry Manor Care Home.

Over the past year, my team has contributed in so far as it can to all of these processes and it will continue to do so.

Current context

There is clearly much more progress to be made to ensure that the recommendations from *Home Truths* are fully implemented to better protect older people now and in the future.

Older people in Northern Ireland have a right to be protected and to receive the highest standards of care at all times and therefore I am determined that the failures identified in my investigation are responded to in full and in a manner that ensures older people are better protected.

I wish to thank the families of residents of Dunmurry Manor for their continued support and dedication in this difficult process and I remain committed to meeting with families once this investigation process has concluded and provide a more comprehensive update.

In the meantime, I hope that this update report provides an explanation of the ongoing process, my unwavering commitment to seeing through this investigation and the steps taken to date to ensure the implementation of my recommendations aimed at making real changes for the benefit of our older people in care.

Should you have any concerns, queries or additional information you wish to bring to my attention, please contact my office at:

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