

HIA REF:

NAME:

DATE:

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – 1995

Witness statement of LN 25

LN 25 will say as follows:-

1. I am now [REDACTED] years old and retired. Between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I was employed at Lisnevin Remand Centre (the 'Centre') which was then situated at Kiltonga, Belfast Road, Newtownards. I was employed at this time in two roles as an Assistant to the Gym Teacher and as a Care Worker. I left the Centre in [REDACTED] to pursue alternative employment and returned in [REDACTED] by which time the Centre had moved to the old Borstal building outside Millisle. I resumed my employment as a Care Worker and eventually became a Manager in or around [REDACTED] having completed a Management Studies Diploma during that period. The Centre then moved to Woodlands, Bangor in or around [REDACTED] and it was at this time that I retired at the age of [REDACTED]. I never worked at the Woodlands Centre.
2. There was a senior Management structure within the Centre during normal office hours, i.e. 9:00-17:00. During those hours I was not the overall Manager, but was responsible for overseeing the teaching staff, the dining room staff and the cleaning staff generally. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] During the course of my employment I considered myself reasonably well respected and popular amongst both the staff and boys alike.
3. I have read the witness statement of HIA 418 dated 18th May 2015 which has been provided to me, and wish to be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations raised therein, insofar as I am able to do so. I have no more than a vague recollection of HIA 418. I am very surprised by HIA 418's allegations. As stated, during my time in the Centre I occupied a general supervisory role over different units and can attest that I never witnessed nor was party to any instance or culture of bullying or intimidation within the Centre created or carried out by either myself or other staff members. There was no religious segregation amongst the units and boys were simply placed into units on the basis of availability irrespective of age or background. I am also surprised that HIA 418 cannot recall the names of the individual staff members against whom he raises allegations of assault, intimidation and bullying, as these individuals would have been working with the young people within the unit on a day-to-day basis and were well known to them by name.
4. In paragraphs 5-7 of his witness statement HIA 418 refers to "the Block". "The Block" was a colloquial term for the separation unit within the Centre. The separation unit was used when a young person became so violently disruptive, disruptive and/or out of control as to represent a danger or disruption to staff members, fellow residents or himself. In those circumstances the offending resident would be sent to the separation unit to give him time and space to calm down. There was a very clear set of Regulations in place which staff members were required to follow when a young person was referred to the separation unit. I cannot recall precisely the nature of these Regulations given the passage of over 20 years.

Usually residents would only remain in the separation unit for a short period of time however, in the event of serious incidents of violence or aggressive/disruptive behaviour; a resident could remain in the separation unit for a longer period. Separation time was defined by Senior Management in each particular instance; it is impossible to be more specific in this regard.

5. From my experience and recollection it is not true that residents were given very little to eat and drink during spells in the separation unit. The Regulations provided that food and drink were never to be withheld from the occupants of the separation unit. Food was served at the same time as the rest of the Centre, i.e. breakfast at 09:00, lunch at 13:00 and dinner at 17:00. The occupant of the separation unit would be fed the same quantity and quality of food as the rest of the young people in the units. The only difference was that food was served in a hard plastic tray, and plastic cutlery was used to ensure the safety of the young person. Water and other drinks such as juice, tea and coffee were provided at meal times and also between meal times upon request.
6. I cannot recall whether the separation unit room had a broken window as claimed by [REDACTED] HIA 418. It was an empty room with a blue mattress on the floor. The purpose of the room was to ensure that an agitated resident would not be able to harm himself or others and it was therefore necessary to ensure it contained no furniture or other items which may have allowed the resident to do so. To the best of my recollection the room was kept clean and toilet facilities were available by knocking on the door upon which an officer would bring the young person to the toilet located at the bottom of the corridor. There was also an office at the end of the corridor which was staffed full-time whilst a resident was in the separation unit. A set of the Regulations referred to in paragraph 4 above were kept in this office for reference purposes. A staff member was required to enter a written report in the record at 15 minute intervals regarding the behaviour of the young person in the separation unit. When that member of staff deemed the young person to have calmed sufficiently during such an interval, the young person would be returned to his unit. I would say, however, that I witnessed a certain culture amongst the young people within the Centre that being taken to "the Block" was seen as a 'badge of honour'.
7. There were medical and psychology staff working at the Centre who were employed to attend to the residents' physical and mental health needs.
8. Staff members were properly trained to use certain restraining techniques in the event of violent or disruptive behaviour in order to minimise the risk of injury to the young person, staff and/or other residents. By definition such techniques were used to restrain the resident but I certainly would not consider the techniques to have had the effect described in [REDACTED] HIA 418's statement and cannot ever recall witnessing such scenes at any time during my employment at the Centre. While I fully accept that I was aware that such restraining techniques were used by staff members, and that during the course of my employment I was occasionally required to restrain residents myself, I totally refute that the manner in which such actions were carried out amounted to the intimidation, bullying or assault of residents.
9. There was a working and effective complaints procedure in place within the Centre, whereby a senior member of Management would assess any complaints made by residents against any members of staff. To the best of my knowledge, during my employment at the Centre, I had a clean disciplinary record.

10. In paragraph 12 of his witness statement **HIA 418** raises the allegation that I made disparaging remarks about his religion, or the religion of other residents, by the alleged prohibition of playing cross shots in snooker. I must state that I am both confused and surprised by this allegation. I categorically deny using such terminology in a disparaging fashion and would state that the thought never entered my head to connect such a term with any form of religious discrimination. A 'cross shot' is common sporting parlance for a shot whereby a snooker player attempts to get out of a snooker position by hitting the ball off one or more cushions. This was and is quite common terminology in the context of a snooker game as far as I am concerned, and if it was used at all, would have been used absolutely innocently in that manner. I find it both incredible and distressing for it to be suggested that such terminology was in any way sectarian and I can categorically state, to the best of my knowledge, that there was never an instance of such terminology having been adopted by members of staff or the young people in such a fashion within the Centre.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: **LN 25**

Dated: *14 October 2015*

[Redacted]

22

LEAVE

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Wednesday

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

for remaining
smoke and act

HIA 418

asked to see "me this morning"
when I brought him in to my office he starting crying, he
wanted moved class because Jim [Redacted] was bulling him
I would ask staff to keep an eye on this situation [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

8.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

"CONFIDENTIAL"

Appendix 4A

Investigation into an incident on Saturday [REDACTED]

1. This was an incident in which a Remand Unit boy sustained a broken collar bone and a member of staff sustained an injury to his chest resulting in him being unfit for work for a period of 4 weeks.
2. *Circumstances:* [REDACTED] LN 113 [REDACTED] a Remand Unit boy was singing and whistling loyalist songs in a Common Room. He ignored staff requests to stop and when asked to go to his room it is reported that he refused and became aggressive.
3. I am in receipt of reports from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I interviewed each of these six members of staff who were either directly involved in, or witnessed, some part of the incident. [REDACTED] LN 113 [REDACTED] declined to make a statement, but subsequently his Solicitor indicated that he would be pursuing a claim for injury.
4. When it became evident that [REDACTED] LN 113 [REDACTED] was not going to comply with staff efforts to quieten him down other boys in the room were led to another area. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] remained with LN 113 attempting to quieten him down and subsequently inviting him to go to his room. In the event they were unsuccessful and had to restrain him when he became aggressive. By this time they had been joined by HIA 138 who had been attracted by LN 113's aggressive shouting. In the process of restraining LN 113, LN 26 [REDACTED] received a blow to the chest from a flailing elbow and LN 113 fell or was brought to the ground where he was held for a time until he agreed to walk to his room. Whilst moving to his room he was difficult but fairly controlled until reaching the vicinity of his room, where he again became physically aggressive and had to be restrained. This point of the proceedings was witnessed by [REDACTED]. When he had calmed down again LN 113 was placed in his room where he complained of pain in his shoulder.
5. Both LN 113 and LN 26 [REDACTED] were examined by the nurse who recommended that both attend a casualty department. This was quickly arranged and where both examined, X rayed and treated.
6. The point that LN 26 [REDACTED] sustained his injury can be pin-pointed. It is less certain at what point LN 113 [REDACTED] was injured but it would seem most likely that it occurred when he was restrained for a second time outside his room in Copeland corridor.
7. *Observations:*
 - (a) [REDACTED] LN 113 [REDACTED] is a tall, heavily built and somewhat ungainly youth. His behaviour swings from being placid and amiable to being overtly aggressive.
 - (b) That the current means of restraint is to use the body weight of the largest members of staff.

(c) None of the staff involved have received any formal training in restraint techniques.

(d) I found no evidence that any member of staff had acted improperly.

8. **Summary:**

Both injuries can be attributed to staff attempting to legitimately restrain a physically awkward young person when he was being aggressive. Also that the staff lacked the appropriate skills to achieve the task competently.

Sufficient staff should be trained in child management techniques to assure safe handling at all times. Ultimately all staff who supervise children should receive such training and be provided with regular opportunities to practice and maintain their skills.

9. **Action:**

Plans are being finalised to provide relevant training for 15 staff during September [REDACTED]. By [REDACTED] all relevant staff will receive similar training. Two selected staff will progress to become trainers. The trainers will provide initial training for all subsequent new appointments and ongoing skill practice for all staff.

LN 80
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Superintendent Donaldson,
R.U.C.,
John Street,
NEWTOWNARDS

Dear Superintendent Donaldson,

Re: LN 114 (former Lisnevin Remand Boy) - ALLEGATION THAT HE WAS ASSAULTED BY A MEMBER OF STAFF IN LISNEVIN:

I understand that [REDACTED], Acting Director of Lisnevin, has been in touch with you in relation to the LN 114 case. Certain aspects of this case cause the members of the Lisnevin Board of Management to be concerned. Perhaps it would be helpful if I gave a brief history of events as they were reported to us.

- (a) LN 114 of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], was resident in the Lisnevin Remand Unit from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED].
- (b) The boy alleged that he had been assaulted by a member of staff on [REDACTED] and made a Statement of Complaint at Newcastle R.U.C. Station on [REDACTED].
- (c) The matter was referred to R.U.C., Newtownards for investigation (R.U.C. Ref. No. [REDACTED]) and the decision was that no further police action would be taken.
- (d) A Sunday newspaper carried an article on the whole affair on the [REDACTED].
- (e) [REDACTED] acting on Board instructions contacted R.U.C., Donaghadee and asked the police to look at this matter again with a view to establishing whether or not new evidence had come to light.
- (f) [REDACTED] reported to the Board on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that he had been informed by R.U.C., Donaghadee, that following investigation no new evidence had come to light but in the interest of thoroughness the case was being referred to the D.P.P. for an independent ruling.
- (g) [REDACTED] presented a letter dated [REDACTED] from R.U.C., Donaghadee which stated that the common assault allegation by LN 114 was statute barred because of the time factor and therefore could not come before a court.

It has been brought to the Board's attention that throughout this affair key witnesses were never interviewed by police.

I am sure you will appreciate that Lisnevin Board is keen to ensure that good practice prevails in these matters and in this case our anxiety is heightened by the fact that a variety of sources have expressed an interest. In this respect we have informed all those who have brought it to our attention that the matter has been referred to the police. The N.I.O. have been kept fully informed throughout.

We do not seek to interfere or influence your enquiries, but we would like clarification of those points which concern us. To this end we would be happy to co-operate in any way and if it would be helpful, I would be pleased to meet you at your office. As I am out of my office quite a lot at this time perhaps contact could be made through the Lisnevin Board Secretary, [REDACTED] at Millisle 861846.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Board Chairman

5

ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINTS AT LISNEVIN REFERRED BY NIACRO INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATION SCHEME - [REDACTED]

	DATE	REF NO	NAME	NATURE OF COMPLAINT	OUTCOME	RECOMMENDATION
1	[REDACTED]	104	[REDACTED]	PHYSICAL ASSAULT - STAFF	DID NOT COMPLAIN	CHECK RECORDS
2	[REDACTED]	106	[REDACTED]	DITTO	SOLICITOR TOLD	NO ACTION —
3	[REDACTED]	107	[REDACTED]	DITTO	NO COMPLAINT	CHECK RECORDS
4	[REDACTED]	103	[REDACTED]	ALLEGED VERBAL ABUSE <i>BY STAFF</i>		NO ACTION —
5	[REDACTED]	112	[REDACTED]	* ALLEGED BULLYING	STAFF VIGILANCE	NO ACTION —
6	[REDACTED]	113	[REDACTED]	SELF Injury	TO SEE PSYCHOL	NO ACTION —
7	[REDACTED]	116	[REDACTED]	VERBAL ABUSE - STAFF	STAFF ADVISED	NO ACTION —
8	[REDACTED]	65	[REDACTED]	CONCERN RE EARLY BEDS	* LED TO RIOT, 4-30/11/94	
9	[REDACTED]	117	[REDACTED]	PHYSICAL ASSAULT - STAFF		CHECK RECORDS
10	[REDACTED]	6	[REDACTED]	• PRIVACY WHILE IN SHOWER		CHECK RECORDS
11	[REDACTED]	7	[REDACTED]	* ALLEGED BULLYING <i>by another boy</i>	REF JOINT FORUM	NO ACTION —
12	[REDACTED]	8 AND 15	[REDACTED]	* ALLEGED PERSISTENT BUL'G <i>by other boys</i>	STAFF VIGILANCE	NO ACTION —
14	[REDACTED]	4	[REDACTED]	ALLEGED PHYSICAL ASSAULT <i>By STAFF</i>		CHECK RECORDS
15	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	RESTRAINT BEHAVIOUR BOY <i>ONE</i>	REF JOINT FORUM	NO ACTION —

protest by boys with signs in room

