

Appendix 1

Explanation of PCC's role as an Independent Public Advocate

The Patient and Client Council (PCC) was created on the 1st April 2009 as part of the reform of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland. We are an independent, informed and influential voice that advocates for people across Northern Ireland on Health and Social Care.

The Patient and Client Council has been asked to act as an Independent Public Advocate in relation to the Public Inquiry into the abuse at Muckamore Abbey Hospital. In the context of public inquiries, Independent Public Advocates are responsible for supporting families, carers, and current and former patients by:

- Understanding their needs and their interests.
- Providing support to ensure that families, carers, and patients can understand the purpose and proceedings of the public inquiry.
- Supporting families, carers, and patients to be able to be fully involved in the inquiry process.
- Providing support to those families, family members, and patients who want it.
- Engaging with other public bodies that are responsible for the inquiry in the best interests of families, carers, and patients.

The PCC cannot provide legal advice to individuals involved in the Inquiry.

In order to fulfil its duties as an Independent Public Advocate, the PCC is independent of the other bodies involved in the Inquiry (e.g.: the Department of Health, the Health and Social Care Trusts). However, the PCC works closely with these bodies in order to communicate the views of families, carers, and current and former patients.

Patient and Client Council
9th floor
BT Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3BT

Freephone : 0800 917 0222