

FORMAL COMPLAINT: MS CHRYS MUIRHEAD AGAINST MR GOEFF HUGGINS

STAGE TWO INVESTIGATION

INVESTIGATING OFFICER: Yvonne Strachan, DD Equality, Human Rights and Third Sector

1. Timing of the Complaint

Original email containing complaint dated 28 June 2014

Investigating Officer appointed 10 July 2014

The completion of this investigation has taken longer than anticipated and has been affected by the unusual business demands at this time and the impact of leave arrangements. I apologise to Ms Muirhead for this delay and thank her for her patience.

2. Summary of the Complaint

2.1 On 28 June 2014 Ms Muirhead emailed Geoff Huggins and Paul Gray, copied to a number of Scottish Government Ministers. The first part of the email addressed to Mr Huggins, restated concerns and issues that Ms Muirhead has raised with regard to Stratheden Hospital. A section of the email was addressed to Paul Gray, DG Health and Social Care, indicating the complaint that Ms Muirhead wished to make against Mr Huggins.

"I want to make a complaint about Geoff Huggins attitude towards me and his bullying manner in the Email he sent me on Tuesday past. I am not, and should not be, one of his targets. Firing off criticisms to a mother and carer who is trying to do the best for her sons, picking up the pieces after dehumanising psychiatric treatment flashbacks, anger and pain. I have had over 2 years of this treatment and enough is enough. What is the Scottish Government going to do about it? Are you going to hold your management team accountable or can they do what they like, say what they like, to people like me who have to exist on £61/week carer allowance?"

I am copying Scottish Government Ministers in to this email in the hope that someone will do something to protect me as a carer from verbal abuse from a highly paid government manager. Why should I have to suffer for poor management and leadership? I am exposing the abuses and failings of the system, backed up by news reporters from the Courier and Fife Herald. Why should we be doing your jobs for you? It's time for you to listen to what we are saying rather than silencing our voices"

(The full text of the email is provided as annex A)

2.2. The focus of the complaint is an email from Geoff Huggins sent to Ms Muirhead dated 24 June 2014 copied to a number of individuals from organisations in the field of mental health. In this email Mr Huggins raises concerns over aspects of Ms Muirhead's behaviour. He refers to her believing it is acceptable for staff, as part of their terms and conditions, to be spoken to in an abusive manner and makes clear that it is not. He indicates that when people disagree with her she describes them as bullying and justifies her behaviour with reference to her personal circumstances and history. He makes clear it is not justifiable. He states that her contributions to discussions are often made in a way that excludes or devalues the experience of others and prevents other voices from being heard. He indicates that this is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. He indicates that people have consistently treated Ms Muirhead with respect, involved her in meetings and

made every effort to accommodate her as a full participant. He indicates that Ms Muirhead will continue to be listened to and where appropriate the concerns she raises will be investigated. However she will not be afforded special treatment or consideration to the detriment of other service users or carers. He then asks her to consider her behaviour and the impact it has on the health and wellbeing of others.

(the full text of the email is attached as Annex B)

2.3 Ms Muirhead's complaint relates to the content and tone of the email. She believes that Mr Huggins' attitude towards her in the email is bullying and she refers to it as 'verbal abuse'. She suggests that she is a target for criticism and that the email is an attempt to 'silence' the voices of people 'exposing the failings and abuses in the (mental health care) system'. She believes it is not appropriate for someone in a senior Government position to write in such a way to her as an unpaid carer or to people in similar circumstances.

3. Framework for Considering the Complaint

3.1 DG Health and Social Care, in considering Ms Muirhead's complaint, felt that it was right to refer it to the formal SG Complaints Handling Procedure for a Stage 2 investigation. Yvonne Strachan DD Equality, Human Rights and Third Sector was appointed as the investigating officer.

3.2 Although not expressly referred to by either Ms Muirhead or Mr Huggins, the Scottish Government has an Unacceptable Actions Policy for dealing with people whose behaviour is deemed unacceptable for various reasons. This policy provides a framework to deal with such cases and has been referred to in the context of this complaint.

4. Terms of Reference of the Complaint

4.1 The terms of reference which were agreed with Ms Muirhead are as follows:

- a) Whether Ms Muirhead was treated correctly under the terms of the SG Unacceptable Actions Policy in Mr Huggins email of 24 June 2014
- b) Whether in the course of treating with her under the terms of the policy the tone and manner of Mr Huggins' email was bullying or amounted to verbal abuse and
- c) Whether in treating with Ms Muirhead under the policy Mr Huggins was (intentionally or not) acting unreasonably to silence and undermine an individual with a legitimate point of view to express.

5. Process of the Complaint

Pre – Interview

5.1. Ahead of interview, information was provided to Ms Muirhead about the complaint process, the proposed draft terms of reference and information was sought on her expectations from the process.

Expectations

5.2 Ms Muirhead outlined in her email of 14 July 2014 that she hoped that she would not be further denigrated or badmouthed by Scottish Government civil servants for raising complaints and speaking out. She further indicated that she wanted the investigation to take note of, and respect, her position as an unpaid carer, compared to the position of Mr Huggins who is in a lead Government role and accountable to the public including her. Ms Muirhead was clear that she did not expect the investigation to be about her behaviour or

her character. The complaint is about Mr Huggins and his behaviour and how he conducts himself with unpaid carers and members of the public.

6. Interview with Ms Muirhead

6.1 The investigating officer, Yvonne Strachan, met Ms Muirhead on 25 July 2014 in Cupar Old Parish Hall. Also present was Ben Plouviez who was in attendance to take notes.

6.2 The process for handling the complaint was explained. The Terms of Reference were agreed and it was understood that the focus of the investigation was around the email from Mr Huggins dated 24 June 2014.

6.3 The meeting touched on three main areas:

- a) Ms Muirhead's view of the email and its effects upon her;
- b) the events leading up to the Ms Muirhead's receipt of the email;
- c) the prior relationship with Mr. Huggins and others in the mental health community.

a) Effects of the email:

6.4 Ms Muirhead stated that the email was totally unexpected and that she had been 'floored by it'. She was upset by its content and tone and she felt attacked and humiliated. She found the suggestion that she would publish such an email on her blog hurtful and extraordinary. She believed that the email undermined her relationship with Plus Perth Group and with the wider mental health community through its copy list.

b) Events leading up to the email

6.5 Ms Muirhead confirmed that she had not received any warning or been spoken to about her behaviour by Mr Huggins prior to receiving the email.

c) Relationship with Mr Huggins and others

6.6 Ms Muirhead stated that she had known Mr Huggins for about five years and that she had always had a civil relationship with him— indeed indicating that she liked him. She was aware that his approach and manner were sometimes unconventional – she had blogged about his manner and approach without naming him or referring to personal matters of which she was aware. She indicated that the relationship was not always positive believing Mr Huggins to block her. She gave her application to the Project Ginsburg as an example and referred to his advice to her in 2010 to raise issues about practice at Stratheden Hospital with NHS Fife.

6.7 Ms Muirhead acknowledged that she is a vociferous campaigner and that she challenges people whose views she disagrees with. She stated that she had been threatened publicly with libel in the past but felt that she knew where to draw the line and that she thinks carefully about what she will say about people in a blog.

6.8 She did not understand the reference to special treatment or involving her in meetings in the email. She feels that she did not get special treatment and only gets invitations because she is persistent and challenges people and organisations to be heard. She also questioned the use of the term 'We' in the email; she said it implies that Mr Huggins presumes to speak on behalf of organisations across the whole mental health community.

6.8 Ms Muirhead regarded the relationships in the mental health community as hierarchical and consensual; she has referred to groups who are consulted by Mr Huggins as 'performing monkeys' and has challenged what she sees as favouritism and cronyism. She thought perhaps members of such a group may have been complaining about her and that this had prompted Mr Huggins' email. But she argued even if what the email had said was true, it was still necessary to ask whether the email was an appropriate way to write to someone.

7. Interview with Mr Huggins

7.1 The Investigating Officer, Yvonne Strachan, held an interview with Mr Huggins on Thursday 31 July 2014 in Victoria Quay, Edinburgh. In attendance was Chris Sinclair who was taking notes.

7.2 The process for handling the complaint, the terms of reference and the scheduling were explained. Mr Huggins was made aware that Ms Muirhead had been interviewed and he was clear about the substance of the complaint.

7.3 Mr Huggins did make two general points:

- when he had written the email he had not been expressly engaging the Unacceptable Actions Policy He was however aware of it and believed his actions and emails to be in keeping with its spirit.
- he asked if evidence had been provided to support the claim that Ms Muirhead had been subject to abuse or bullying over two years.

7.4 Ms Strachan noted his first point and indicated with regard to his second that the focus of the complaint is the nature and appropriateness of this particular email as outlined in the terms of reference.

The meeting focused on three areas:

- a) Background Information and lead up to the sending of the email
- b) The appropriateness of the email
- c) The decision to circulate it to a copy list.

a) Background

7.5 Mr Huggins explained that Ms Muirhead had been a regular correspondent and activist within the mental health community for a number of years. He estimated that he had received or been copied into over 1000 emails from her in the last four years. He was also aware that she blogged regularly. Mr Huggins highlighted that Ms Muirhead had been part of a number of groups over the years and had been invited to attend conferences and meetings. He indicated that efforts had been made to engage her. However, he contended that she made that difficult by her behaviour. He understood that she also had issues with regard to her engagement with organisations such as VOX – Voices of Experience and Crisis.

7.6 Mr Huggins indicated that Ms Muirhead's comments in correspondence and her interventions at events could often be personal, abusive and aggressive. He understood that she had experience and insight and that there were issues of significant importance to her with regard to the mental health system in Scotland. He acknowledged that she had a right to speak on such matters and that it was entirely reasonable for her focus on her personal and family experience. However he was clear that neither that experience nor the

fact that she is an unpaid carer and activist gave her the right to be abusive or was justification for inappropriate behaviour.

7.7 Mr Huggins indicated that he was aware that Ms Muirhead's attitude and behaviour had impacted upon members of staff including those in other organisations. Some had suffered from stress and anxiety as a result of engagement or correspondence with Ms Muirhead.

7.8 Mr Huggins confirmed that he had not raised these issues with Ms Muirhead prior to the email on 24 June. He indicated that approximately eighteen months previous there had been consideration of Ms Muirhead's behaviour as it was impacting on other organisations and whether this should be raised directly with her. It was agreed not to intervene as there was some concern about the effectiveness and impact of Scottish Government doing so at that time.

b) The email of 24 June 2014

7.9 The trigger for the email sent on 24 June was around the IIMHL in early June although it was set against the wider background of Ms Muirhead's behaviour over time. Ms Muirhead had put her name down to attend the match on Patient Safety which was largely for practitioners and so deemed less appropriate for her. In addition, when others knew she was attending they said they would not attend. Given the nature of this event, such withdrawal would impact significantly on its function. As a result Ruth Glassborrow from Health Improvement Scotland spoke to Ms Muirhead to indicate that it was not suitable for her to attend. There were subsequent inappropriate comments and criticisms emailed, tweeted and blogged by Ms Muirhead.

7.10 Mr Huggins felt action was necessary to explain to Ms Muirhead that her behaviour was unacceptable and to ask her to consider her impact on others. He felt it important in his role in the Scottish Government to address behaviour that was impacting on business and to speak up on behalf of those who had been affected by the manner of Ms Muirhead's interventions. He felt that the email needed to be clear and firm. Whilst robust, he believed it to be appropriate. He did not indicate that Ms Muirhead was to be excluded from future engagement or otherwise penalised but he did say that she would not be given special treatment over others nor given consideration to the detriment of other users and carers.

c) Circulating the email to the copy list

7.11 Mr Huggins explained that he believed it was necessary to exercise leadership in this matter and that as others and/or their organisations had been directly involved with Ms Muirhead and impacted by her behaviour, it was appropriate to copy them into the correspondence. He did this also to close down any attempt by Ms Muirhead to use the material selectively or to misrepresent it and to ensure that the whole of the correspondence was seen. He also added that this reflected the same approach which Ms Muirhead employed -that is to send correspondence to a wide copy list.

7.12 Mr Huggins suggested that there were a number of people who could be contacted for background information.

8. Additional Information

8.1 Following a request from Mr Huggins the investigating officer contacted the following people who or whose organisations had been recipients of the email.

Colin McKay: Mental Welfare Commission

Ruth Glassborrow: Health Improvement Scotland

Nigel Henderson: Penumbra

Lindsey Burley: SAMH

Joyce Mouriki: VOX

8.2 With the exception of Colin Mckay who is new to his position, the others contacted were aware of the issues surrounding the email. They indicated that there was a background of concern about the manner of Ms Muirhead's interventions and correspondence. From the discussion it was clear that:

- None of the recipients of the email from Mr Huggins had discussed its contents or had seen the email before its issue.
- All believed it to be a strong, firm but not inappropriate, bullying or undermining email
- Ms Muirhead's interventions could be personalised.
- There was appreciation of the leadership shown by Mr Huggins in sending the email.
- Emails/blogs from and interventions by Ms Muirhead were often deemed offensive and that these had an impact on people.
- It was also remarked that Ms Muirhead had many good points to make. Whilst her contributions were framed through her personal references there was a feeling that it was for the wider good.

9. Investigation Findings

a) Whether Ms Muirhead was treated correctly under the terms of the SG Unacceptable Actions Policy in Mr Huggins email of 2 June 2014

9.1 Whilst neither Ms Muirhead nor Mr Huggins have explicitly referred to or cited the SG Unacceptable Actions Policy in the originating email or the email of complaint, the Policy provides a basis on which to frame the consideration of the complaint.

9.2 The SG Unacceptable Actions Policy provides a framework for dealing with actions and behaviours of those engaging with the Government that impact on staff or undermine the ability to work effectively. It acknowledges that correspondents and complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected and that these rights are also accorded to staff.

9.3 The Policy outlines three broad areas within which actions are taken: - Aggressive and abusive behaviour; Unreasonable demands and Unreasonable persistence.

9.4 This complaint is considered under the first of these – Aggressive and abusive behaviour - which extends to behaviour or language – oral or written – which may cause staff to feel afraid threatened or abused. The policy makes clear that statements may be made in a variety of ways but that it is the overall context of the behaviour that is important.

9.5 Under the Policy, it is expected that in managing unacceptable actions, the person is warned immediately if their actions are tending towards unacceptable and the aim is to defuse the situation and bring the tone of the communication back to a more reasonable level.

9.6 The evidence provided during the course of this investigation indicates that there was concern about Ms Muirhead's behaviour and that staff in the Government, health service and in other organisations within the mental health field had been impacted by it. Mr Huggins has indicated that this behaviour was also impacting on the conduct of business. He has indicated that he believed Ms Muirhead's behaviour and actions were unacceptable. Further

it is clear that Mr Huggins deemed that there was sufficient concern about Ms Muirhead's behaviour to warrant writing to her to advise her of this concern and to request that she consider the impact of her actions on others.

9.7 The Policy states that its aim is '*that a person is warned immediately if their actions are tending towards unacceptable*'. It was clear from the evidence given that there had been concern about Ms Muirhead's behaviour for some time but there had not been any formal action taken before the email from Mr Huggins on 24 June 2014. Ms Muirhead is clear that Mr Huggins had not raised any concerns about her behaviour before this email.

9.8 As such I was keen to explore why an approach had not been made when concern about Ms Muirhead's behaviour first arose. Mr Huggins confirmed that there had been some deliberation at an earlier point about intervening around Ms Muirhead's behaviour as it was impacting on external organisations in the mental health field. This had not been pursued because there was some doubt about whether an intervention by the Government would be effective or appropriate at that time. When asked why others had not raised Ms Muirhead's behaviour with her, Mr Huggins indicated, and this was confirmed by others, that there was a fear amongst those engaging with Ms Muirhead that challenging her behaviour would result in abuse and reprisals in her blogs or through emails. Mr Huggins' concern about the nature of the correspondence surrounding the IIMHL Patient Safety match was a trigger for his email of 24 June 2014..

9.10 Given the above, I conclude that Mr Huggins deemed there was cause to write to Ms Muirhead and as such Ms Muirhead was treated correctly under the terms of the SG Unacceptable Actions Policy.

b) Whether in the course of treating with her under the terms of the Policy, the tone and manner of Mr Huggins' email was bullying or amounted to verbal abuse

Under this question I looked at two points:

i) Whether the tone of Mr Huggins' email was bullying or amounted to verbal abuse.

9.11 I am in no doubt that the Mr Huggins' email was unexpected and caused Ms Muirhead considerable upset. She clearly found the tone of the email contemptuous and referred to it as an attack. Ms Muirhead has indicated in her interview evidence the extent of her upset and the impact of the email on her ability to attend a Human Rights Conference on 25 June and on her domestic circumstances.

9.12 Mr Huggins' email is undoubtedly robust, firm and strong. It is particularly strong given that this is the first email sent regarding Ms Muirhead's behaviour and one from a Government official to an activist and unpaid carer involved in the mental health field. Without context this might be deemed to be disproportionate.

9.13 However in the light of the evidence presented about the background to the email and in considering it in the context of Ms Muirhead's interventions, correspondence, emails, blogs and posts, I do not find the email to be bullying or amounting to verbal abuse.

ii) Whether the manner of Mr Huggins' email was bullying or amounted to verbal abuse

9.14 Ms Muirhead has contended that the sending of such an email from a Government official to an unpaid carer and activist, irrespective of whether the content is correct, constitutes bullying. As the Policy on Unacceptable Actions indicates it is appropriate for

Scottish Government officials to warn people if their behaviour or actions are unacceptable. It is not the case that Government officials should accept abuse or inappropriate behaviour because of the role they play. Hence a Government official sending a member of the public an email about their behaviour or actions is not automatically bullying or amounting to verbal abuse. What is relevant is the context of the behaviour. In this regard, there is sufficient evidence that Mr Huggins believed he had cause to raise the issue of unacceptable behaviour with Ms Muirhead.

9.15 The second issue of relevance is the fact that Mr Huggins' email was copied to other parties. Ms Muirhead has contended that this was humiliating and undermined her relationship with those in the mental health field. She has queried why Mr Huggins should have referred to 'We' in the email and whether he presumed to speak for others. Mr Huggins has justified copying in recipients to demonstrate that leadership had been taken on this issue given their concerns, and to avoid selective reporting by Ms Muirhead which he felt had sometimes been her practice. He has used the term 'We' in the context of the email to refer to the Scottish Government.

9.16 Whilst I understand the rationale behind Mr Huggins copying in others to the email, I am not convinced that it was appropriate to do so particularly as he was writing to Ms Muirhead for the first time on her behaviour and actions. Whilst the recipients viewed the email as justified and appropriate and were grateful to Mr Huggins for having taken leadership on this matter – thus it was not in fact undermining Ms Muirhead's relationship with them - it is understandable that Ms Muirhead would have thought the email potentially undermining of her relationship with those organisations.

9.17 Whilst I conclude that the manner of Mr Huggins' email was not bullying or amounting to verbal abuse, I do find that it was inappropriate to have copied in recipients to the email.

iii) Whether in treating with Ms Muirhead under the Policy Mr Huggins was (intentionally or not) acting unreasonably to silence an individual with a legitimate point of view to express.

9.18 Ms Muirhead has contended that Mr Huggins' actions were part of an attempt to 'block her' and to silence an individual with a legitimate point of view about the system of mental health care in Scotland. She finds such a situation unacceptable because she is passionate and deeply concerned about issues relating to the mental health system particularly as they have affected her and her family.

9.19 Mr Huggins has made clear that he believes that it is reasonable for Ms Muirhead to focus on her experience and that of her family and acknowledges that a contribution to wider mental health considerations can come through such personal reflections and advocacy. However Mr Huggins has challenged the manner in which this is done. He argues that, in fact, the manner in which Ms Muirhead behaves has the effect of limiting others' expression of their legitimate points of view.

9.20 In the email of 24 June 2104, which is the substantive document, Mr Huggins outlines the areas of concern with regard to Ms Muirhead's behaviour. He makes clear in that email what is not acceptable. However he also indicates that the Scottish Government will continue to listen to Ms Muirhead and where appropriate investigate concerns that she raises. Although, he has indicated that Ms Muirhead will not be given special treatment or consideration to the detriment of other service users or carers.

9.21 Having considered the evidence, I conclude that Mr Huggins' email did not seek to silence Ms Muirhead as an individual with a legitimate point of view or indeed to stop criticism or challenge. Rather it was intended to bring home the inappropriateness of the

way in which those views, challenges and criticisms were being made, to stop behaviours deemed unacceptable and to prompt reflection on the impact of them on others.

9.22 Having said that, I believe that Mr Huggins could have been clearer in his email about assuring Ms Muirhead that she was not debarred from engagement in future, assuming appropriate behaviours.

10 Conclusion

10.1 Ms Muirhead is undoubtedly passionate about trying to improve the provision of mental health support in Scotland and draws understandably on her experience and that of her family. She is articulate and a determined campaigner and has dedicated herself to taking issues forward

11.1 Mr Huggins is clearly a well- respected senior civil servant with considerable experience in the mental health field. He likewise wants to see improvement in the mental health system in Scotland and to provide voice and opportunities for the engagement of practitioners and those with, and understanding of, lived experience.

11.3 The complaint was considered under the terms of reference which focused on whether the email sent by Mr Huggins was in keeping with the Policy on Unacceptable Actions, whether it constituted bullying and verbal abuse and whether it sought to silence expression of an individual's legitimate point of view. In seeking to determine on this it was necessary to consider not only the actual email but the context. In so doing it was clear that there was concern about the manner in which Ms Muirhead conducted her activity; that it has often been deemed inappropriate and it led to Mr Huggins feeling it necessary to write to her about her behaviour.

11.4 In considering the evidence I am of the opinion that the complaint by Ms Muirhead against Mr Huggins is not upheld. However, I believe that the email in question should not have been copied to others and that the email could have been clearer with regard to future engagement.

11.5 **I recommend that:**

- a) the Policy on Unacceptable Actions is reviewed to provide guidance on the appropriateness of making information available to others during the course of considering issues of unacceptable behaviour.**
- b) Mr Huggins considers carefully the appropriateness of copying correspondence to others in future situations of this nature.**
- c) It is made clear to Ms Muirhead that the email does not bar her from having a voice or from future events and meetings which it is appropriate for her to attend. However it is recognised that this is on the understanding that Ms Muirhead demonstrates acceptable behaviour in the manner in which she engages and participates in such meetings and events.**

Yvonne Strachan

DD Equality, Human Rights and Third Sector

3 September 2014

Annex A

Complaint Email from Ms Muirhead

From: Chrys Muirhead [<mailto:chrismuirhead@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, June 28, 2014 08:49 PM GMT Standard Time
To: Huggins G (Geoff); Gray P (Paul) (Health)
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing; Michael Matheson <Michael.Matheson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>; Nicola Sturgeon <nicola.sturgeon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>; First Minister
Subject: 'Stratheden Hospital nurse struck off after violent incident with patient' Courier article yesterday - my complaint

Geoff

Yet another Stratheden Hospital nurse struck off for assaulting a patient, in November 2012:
<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/local/fife/stratheden-hospital-nurse-struck-off-after-violent-incident-with-patient-1.443951>

My blog post about it, including Fife Herald article on same topic:
<http://strathedenhospital.blogspot.co.uk/2014/06/stratheden-hospital-nurse-struck-off.html>

I told you, through Emails in 2010, about the issues in Lomond Ward, Stratheden, to do with the nurses treatment of patients. I then met with you and Basil Haddad, lead for Mental Health Improvement, at 10.30am on 14 January 2011, in Room 3E.02 of St Andrews House, to discuss my concerns about Lomond Ward and Stratheden Hospital. In particular the risks to female patients and the fact that nurses weren't keeping an eye on what was going on.

You were the head of Scottish Government's mental health division at the time and therefore must have had responsibility for doing something to improve the situation. NHS Fife MH leads said you visited Fife regularly. Basil Haddad, not long back from Iraq, didn't know what the initials ECT meant. And he was to lead mental health improvements in Scotland although he didn't seem to be there for long. I suppose the learning curve was too steep? For it's not just about targets and being trained at Harvard business school. Some of us have over 40yrs experience in mental health matters, at the sharp edge.

I told you in 2010 about a St Andrews student, a young woman from Russia, who had been brought into Lomond Ward by the police and was in a vulnerable state. Taking her clothes off and nurses drawing attention to this. I could see she was in her underwear and so could the male patients walking by in the ward. I told you that male nurses were behaving inappropriately towards female patients. That was the summer of 2010 when there was a "spate" of suicides in Dundee and I remember this was a particular focus of yours.

Well since that time there have been **suicides in Fife**, one of them Audrey Evans, a St Andrews mother and grandmother, patient of Lomond Ward, Stratheden, at the same time as my son Daniel, in March 2012. Within 4 days of her discharge from Stratheden Hospital Mrs Evans went missing and her body was washed up nearly 2 weeks later on a Northumbria beach:
<http://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/missing-st-andrews-woman-s-body-is-washed-ashore-1-2246412>

I made a complaint in March 2012 about a male patient, criminal record and waiting again to go to court on an assault charge (I can name him), going down the corridor and into the female dorm, no nurses present, and then a female patient shouting out. Followed by Audrey Evans coming walking with her stick up the ward corridor. When I asked her if everything was OK she just looked at me, said nothing and walked on. I later reported this to a nurse when one finally appeared.

How many times do I have to tell these stories before Scottish Government's mental health division and Healthcare Improvement Scotland listen to what I and other patients and carers are saying? When can we speak out about abuses in Stratheden Hospital and not have our characters assassinated by heads of Scotland's mental health division? Or be banned from attending Scottish patient safety exchanges with international colleagues. Why should I be silenced when it's you and your colleagues who should be held to account?

Yesterday I had to call in an ambulance to my house because of experiencing palpitations, dehydration and faintness. I have high blood pressure and at times the medication doesn't work, especially if I am tired and stressed. Being an unpaid carer of two sons with mental disorder labels is stressful and so is being picked on by Scottish Government staff for trying to improve mental health matters. It's a disgrace that I should be blamed by you for trying to make Stratheden Hospital safe for patients, safe for my son and others.

Paul I want to make a **complaint** about Geoff Huggins attitude towards me and his bullying manner in the Email he sent me on Tuesday past. I am not, and should not be, one of his **targets**. Firing off criticisms to a mother and carer who is trying to do the best for her sons, picking up the pieces after dehumanising psychiatric treatment, flashbacks, anger and pain. I have had over 2 years of this treatment and enough is enough. What is Scottish Government going to do about it? Are you going to hold your management team accountable or can they do what they like, say what they like, to people like me who have to exist on £61/week carer allowance?

I am copying Scottish Government ministers in to this Email in the hope that someone will do something to protect me as a carer from verbal abuse from a highly paid government manager. Why should I have to suffer for poor management and leadership? I am exposing the abuses and failings in the system, backed up by news reporters from the Courier and Fife Herald. Why should we be doing your jobs for you? It's time for you to listen to what we are saying rather than silencing our voices.

I am hoping for justice and fair treatment,

Chrys

Chrys Muirhead
writer, activist and campaigner in mental health matters

m 07981 397570

"There will be justice ... when those who are not injured are as outraged as those who are"

Thucydides

Blogs

ChrysMuirheadWrites.blogspot.co.uk

StrathedenHospital.blogspot.co.uk

PharmaChronicles.blogspot.co.uk

Websites

ChrysM-Associates.co.uk

PeerSupportFife.org.uk

Annex B

From: Huggins G (Geoff)

Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 5:08 PM

To: Chrys Muirhead (chrismuirhead@gmail.com)

Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing; DG Health & Social Care; Colin McKay (Colin.McKay@mwscot.org.uk); Billy Watson, SAMH Chief Executive (SAMHChiefExecutive@samh.org.uk); 'Nigel Henderson'; 'Simon Bradstreet'; 'john.wilson4@nhs.net'; Coia Denise (HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT SCOTLAND) (denise.coia@nhs.net); Glassborow Ruth (HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT SCOTLAND - SD039) (ruth.glassborow@nhs.net); 'Fran Silvestri'; joyce.mouriki@nhs.net

Subject: Correspondence Regarding IIMHL and other Matters

Dear Chrys

I have been reading your recent correspondence with a number of my colleagues in this and other organisations.

In your correspondence with Scottish Government, NHS and voluntary sector staff you indicate a belief that it is part of our terms and conditions that we are obligated to accept to be spoken to in an abusive manner. It is not. If people disagree with you or question your behaviour you describe them as bullying and cite your personal experience of illness and your status as a carer as in some way justifying your behaviour. It is not a justification. If people do not accede to your demands for priority access you say they are not treating you with respect. People have consistently treated you with respect. We and others have regularly involved you in meetings and events related to mental health in Scotland, making every effort to accommodate you as a full participant. Where you have attended or participated your contribution focuses on your experience and that of your family. That is an entirely reasonable contribution to make, but you make it in a way that excludes or devalues the experience of others and which prevents other voices from being heard. Your tone is consistently belligerent and denigrating of others, including others with lived experience of the mental health system, whether as a patient or carer. You trivialise other's experience with the consequence that people tell us they do not want to speak up when you are present at events for fear of what you will say. That is neither desirable or acceptable. Where we involve others or work through representative organisations you describe them as collaborators and demean their actions. That is not acceptable and we will no longer tacitly tolerate it.

I have read the correspondence about the decision not to allocate you a place at the IIMHL match on patient safety. You had previously selected a different match which had a focus on lived experience and there was no suggestion that you would not have been welcome to attend that match. Ruth and others have set out the reasons

for refusing your application to join the session previously and I will not add to their explanation other than to say that I agree with their reasons given previous experience as set out above. As you were not attending the session on patient safety or one of the other matches you were not invited to the reception at the Castle. Had you attended the match on human rights which was also hosted in Edinburgh you would, of course, have been invited to the Castle with the members of Plus Perth.

We will continue to listen to and where appropriate investigate concerns that you raise with us. However, we will no longer give you special treatment or consideration to the detriment of other service users or carers. I would ask you to consider your behaviour and the impact it has on the health and wellbeing of others.

I am copying this correspondence to regular recipients of your correspondence including the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Alex Neill MSP, the Chief Executive of the NHS and Director General for Health and Social Care Paul Gray, Colin McKay at the MWC, Billy Watson at SAMH, Nigel Henderson and Simon Bradstreet at the Scottish Recovery Network, Joyce Mouriki at VOX, John Wilson at NHS Fife, Denise Coia and Ruth Glassborow at HIS and Fran Silvestri at IIMHL. I anticipate that you will want to share this correspondence on your blog and request that if you do so that you reproduce it in full.

Geoff Huggins

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