

MONAGEER INQUIRY

Report presented to:

Ms. Mary Harney T.D.

Minister for Health and Children

and

Mr. Dermot Ahern T.D.

Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

6th October, 2008

Foreword

The Inquiry Team wish to express their thanks to all the witnesses who attended the Inquiry. Given the nature of the investigation, the co-operation of the witnesses was particularly appreciated.

In particular, the Inquiry Team acknowledge that giving evidence was traumatic for the O'Brien and Dunne families who told us of the heartbreak of losing their loved ones in such tragic circumstances.

The Inquiry Team also accept that the Inquiry process was very difficult for members of both the Gardai and HSE staff whose work practices was carefully examined.

The Inquiry Team would like to thank the staff from the Department of Health and Children who assisted with the Inquiry. In particular, we would like to thank Ms. Lisa Walsh, our secretary and Ms. Maria Farrell who typed many drafts of the Report with endless patience and good humour.

I am delighted to say that the Inquiry Team were for the most part unanimous in their conclusions and recommendations in the Report. Where unanimous agreement was not reached, the majority decision prevailed.

Finally, I wish to offer my sincere gratitude to the other members of the Inquiry Team, Jim McHugh and Leonie Lunny, who possess vast experience and knowledge of the workings of both the Gardai and the Health Service respectively. Their hard work, commitment and dedication were invaluable in compiling this Report.



Kate Brosnan B.L.
Chairperson

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

- 1.1 On the 23rd April, 2007 Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne and their two daughters Lean and Shania aged four and three years respectively were found dead at their family home at 29 Moin Rua, Monageer, Co. Wexford. The tragedy caused enormous grief and concern both locally and nationally.
- 1.2 On the 5th June 2007 the Minister for Health & Children, Mr. Brian Lenihan T.D. set up a private, non statutory Inquiry into the deaths of the Dunne family.
- 1.3 A three member Inquiry Team was appointed. The team comprised of Leonie Lunny who retired from the position of Chief Executive of the Citizens Information Board in August 2008, Jim McHugh, retired Assistant Garda Commissioner and Kate Brosnan, Barrister, Chairperson.

Terms of Reference

1. To examine the circumstances leading to and surrounding the deaths of the Dunne family in Monageer, Co. Wexford.
2. To identify the services sought or required and contacts made by or in respect of the Dunne family from public and other relevant services.
3. To examine the way in which public and other relevant services:
 - (i) responded to any requests and contacts, or need for services,
 - (ii) discharged their functions,
 - (iii) co-operated with each other.
4. To reach conclusions as to the circumstances leading to the deaths of the Dunne Family and to make recommendations to the Minister for Health and Children and to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform as to how such an event may, as far as possible, be avoided in the future.
5. To deliver a report of the Inquiry to the Minister for Health and Children and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform within 3 months of the commencement of the Inquiry.

The Government subsequently granted a number of extensions of time terminating on 6th October, 2008.

Interpretation of the Terms of Reference:

- 2.1 The Inquiry Team decided that they would commence their investigations at the time of the birth of Lean on 6th May, 2002. The Inquiry Team felt it was necessary to examine whether opportunities existed at various earlier stages for public and other relevant services to identify the level of dysfunction within the family.
- 2.2 The Inquiry Team take the view that the Terms of Reference require them to examine the provision of public and other relevant services rather than the performance of any individual person involved in the provision of such services.
- 2.3 However services are provided by individuals or teams of them and it is inevitable that an analysis of service provision will involve consideration of its provision by individuals. The Inquiry Team has made every effort to maintain the anonymity of such persons – primarily by referring to them by codes.
- 2.4 However, in certain instances, because of context or because a specific role is particularly identifiable as performed by a particular person; and due to the necessity of making the report comprehensible, it is acknowledged that this effort may not always have been entirely successful. It is the view of the Inquiry Team that the identity of each person has been protected to the extent possible consistent with the fulfilment by the Inquiry of its terms of reference.
- 2.5 Consistent with its view that the focus of the terms of reference is on services rather than on the performance of individuals, and insofar as possible, the Inquiry Team has endeavoured not to attribute fault to or comment adversely on any individual.
- 2.6 However in order to comply with its terms of reference as to the provision of services, to record its views as to their provision in the present case, to reach conclusions as to the circumstances leading to

the deaths of the Dunne Family, to make recommendations as to how such an event may be avoided in the future and to make the report comprehensible in these respects, and only in such circumstances, the Inquiry has judged it necessary to record adverse comment in respect of certain individuals.

Procedure and Acknowledgements

- 3.1 The Inquiry commenced on the 7th January, 2008.
- 3.2 The team was provided with a copy of the Garda Investigation File concerning the sudden deaths of the Dunne Family containing the following:
 - (a) 198 witness statements.
 - (b) Hospital records.
 - (c) Social Welfare records.
 - (d) Social Service records.
 - (e) G.P. records.
 - (f) Financial records of the family.
 - (g) Internal Garda reports prepared by Assistant Commissioner Ml. J. McCarthy and by Superintendent Pat Mangan.
- 3.3 The Inquiry Team also had the benefit of an internal report prepared by Peter Kieran, Specialist, Children and Family Services of the Health Service Executive (HSE).
- 3.4 Garda Commissioner Fachtna Murphy appointed Superintendent Fergus Healy to liaise with the Inquiry Team.
- 3.5 In the week commencing 4th February, 2008 advertisements were placed in local newspapers in Wexford inviting anyone with relevant information relating to the tragic events at Monageer to come forward.
- 3.6 The Inquiry Team visited Monageer in February, 2008.

Witnesses:

- 3.7 The Inquiry being of a non statutory nature, attendance of witnesses was not compulsory. All witnesses were informed that they were entitled to be accompanied, should they so choose, by a friend or a representative. The Inquiry Team decided to call 55 witnesses. All the witnesses identified by the Inquiry (save one member of the public) attended the Inquiry.
- 3.8 Among the witnesses who attended the Inquiry were members of both Adrian and Ciara Dunne's families, neighbours, friends, members of An Garda Síochána and HSE personnel, employees from the Department of Education and a representative from the National Council for the Blind.
- 3.9 In complying with the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry Team was at all times sensitive to the fact that, while carrying out the Inquiry and drawing conclusions, it had the benefit of hindsight.
- 3.10 The Inquiry Team have not published all of the facts and circumstances which they learned during the Inquiry concerning Adrian and Ciara Dunne and their children out of sensitivity to those most affected by the tragic events that unfolded on the weekend of 20th - 23rd April, 2007 but have confined the facts published to those considered relevant to the Terms of Reference.
- 3.11 The interviewing of witnesses took place in an atmosphere as informal as possible. Union representatives accompanied some witnesses and two witnesses had legal representation. Most witnesses attended unaccompanied. The Inquiry Team did not have legal representation at the interviews.
- 3.12 At the commencement of the Inquiry all Gardai and Health Service Providers called to interview were informed by letter that if the Inquiry

Team were to make findings adverse to them that they would be afforded an opportunity to make submissions before the Report was delivered to the Minister for Health & Children and the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform.

- 3.13 Consequently, excerpts of a draft of the report were circulated to certain persons and their resulting submissions were considered by the Inquiry Team in finalizing this report. Those submissions – in redacted form to protect identities – are appended to this report, save in the cases of those who expressed a wish not to have their submissions so appended.
- 3.14 The Inquiry Team sought to elicit the sequence of events as they occurred leading to and surrounding the deaths of the Dunne family in order to allow the Inquiry Team to assess the input or lack of same by the various public and other services available to the family over the relevant period.
- 3.15 The Inquiry Team was told by a number of interviewees that there was a significant shortage of staff and resources in the health service. The Inquiry Team acknowledges that this may have been a factor in some instances in the delivery of services. However the Inquiry Team decided that the issues of staffing levels and other resources available to the various services were not within the remit of their Terms of Reference.
- 3.16 The Inquiry Team, having heard all the evidence, drew conclusions and made recommendations to the Minister for Health and Children and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform as to how such an event may, as far as possible, be avoided in the future and to identify weaknesses in the delivery of services.
- 3.17 The Inquiry was held in private at Joyce House, 8-11 Lombard Street East, Dublin 2.

Acknowledgements:

- 3.18 The Inquiry Team wish to acknowledge the tremendous foresight of the New Ross Funeral Director in reporting the incident when she did to the Gardai. The Inquiry Team would also like to pay tribute to the hard work and pastoral care of both the Clonroche Curate and the Monageer Parish Priest.
- 3.19 The Inquiry Team wish to thank all those who assisted with the investigation, in particular Garda Superintendents Pat Mangan and Fergus Healy and Mr. Peter Kieran, Specialist, Children and Family Services from the Health Service Executive. The Inquiry Team also wish to thank Dr. Helen Buckley, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College, who advised us on child protection issues.

Backgrounds of Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne (nee O'Brien)

Adrian Dunne:

- 4.1 Adrian Dunne was born to Mary and Hughie Dunne on the 7th January, 1978. He was the fifth child of a family of nine. He was reared in a rural local authority house in Co. Wexford. Both parents had visual impairment problems as had a number of siblings. The family were closely knit and were known to the Social Services.
- 4.2 Adrian Dunne was born with congenital cataracts. He underwent operations for cataracts when an infant and also at the age of seven. In his teens he developed glaucoma which rendered him blind. He also suffered a detached retina in 1998.
- 4.3 In 1986 he suffered from an epileptic type seizure. There was a strong history of epilepsy in his family. It appears from medical records that his epilepsy was well controlled.
- 4.4 In 1996 he was hospitalised for pneumonia.
- 4.5 In 1997 he was admitted to hospital for renal colic. A possibility of hydrocele was noted. In 1999 he was admitted to hospital for surgery for a bilateral hydrocele. There were minor surgical complications and he remained under medical review until mid 2003.
- 4.6 Adrian Dunne did not seek medical attention other than for minor ailments since that time.

Education:

- 4.7 Adrian Dunne went to Rathnure Primary School Co. Wexford. In 1991 he was assessed by a Clinical Psychologist of the Brothers of Charity services as functioning at the upper limits of mild mental handicap with a full scale I.Q. of 64 obtained in the Wisc-R. It was noted, however, that Adrian Dunne's visual problem had a significant effect on his performance. It was recorded that Adrian Dunne had no vision in his left eye and quite impaired vision in his right eye. Special schooling was recommended as a matter of priority. He attended our Lady of Fatima Special School in Wexford town where he sat the junior certificate examination in two subjects.
- 4.8 Adrian Dunne undertook a 6 month skills based training course at the National Council for the Blind Centre in Drumcondra, Dublin, followed by a two year skills based course at the County Wexford Community Workshop, New Ross, Co Wexford and subsequently studied a two year media access programme at the National Training and Developmental Institute, Kylemore Road, Ballyfermot, County Dublin.
- 4.9 Adrian Dunne undertook a FÁS media training course in Dublin and resided at Park House, Stillorgan.

Ciara O'Brien:

- 4.10 Up to their date of marriage on 31st December, 2005 the Inquiry Team have referred to Ciara by her maiden name i.e. Ciara O'Brien and thereafter by her marital name Ciara Dunne. Ciara O'Brien was born on the 8th October, 1980 in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. Ciara O'Brien was the second eldest child of four children. In 1982, Ciara O'Brien's father's work brought her family to Dublin. Ciara O'Brien attended school at Firhouse National School, Co. Dublin. Ciara O'Brien's family

moved back to Donegal in 1986 when Ciara O'Brien's father was transferred to Sligo.

- 4.11 In or around 1992, when in fifth class, Ciara O'Brien was assessed as being a slow learner. She attended a special needs school where she received one to one tuition. In or around 1994 she went to a special school in Belmont in Derry City which she attended for four years. She then attended Lifford National Training & Developmental Institute and FÁS Centre. She then enrolled at Park House, Stillorgan where she studied a Child Care Assistant Training Course.
- 4.12 Prior to her death, Ciara Dunne was not under the care of any medical professional other than for minor ailments and for injuries relating to a minor car accident in August, 2006.

Courtship of the parties:

- 4.13 In the summer of 2000, Adrian Dunne was introduced to Ciara O'Brien by a mutual friend who had known Adrian Dunne since he attended school in Wexford town. The relationship developed over time. Adrian Dunne went to visit Ciara O'Brien's family in Donegal on a number of occasions. Approximately a year after they met in 2001, Ciara O'Brien became pregnant with Lean. Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien moved to Co. Donegal.
- 4.14 Lean was born on the 6th May, 2002 in Hospital 1 (Donegal).
- 4.15 Lean was diagnosed shortly after her birth as having congenital cataracts and was hospitalised on many occasions in the first year of her life.
- 4.16 Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien lived at two addresses while they resided in Donegal. The first was rented accommodation in

Letterkenny. The second home at Bridgend, Letterkenny was provided by a relative of the O'Brien family at a low rent. The family stayed in Donegal until July, 2003.

4.17 In July, 2003 they moved to Wexford town where they resided in rented accommodation.

4.18 Shortly before Shania's birth on 17th November, 2003 the family moved to New Ross. Shania was born with congenital cataracts and underwent surgery for both eyes shortly after her birth. She was also hospitalised in early infancy for cataract operations. She had extensive checkups thereafter.

4.19 The family lived in New Ross until April, 2005 after which they moved back to Wexford town.

4.20 In the summer of 2005, Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien decided to marry. Originally they had planned a large wedding. However, their plans fell through and they had a quiet wedding on the 31st December, 2005. Adrian Dunne's mother was matron of honour and his father was best man at the wedding. The O'Brien family were not invited and only found out about the wedding by chance through a friend who heard a request for Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne on local radio.

4.21 Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien moved again from Wexford town to Bree, Co. Wexford in November, 2005.

4.22 Their final move was in July, 2006 when they moved to Monageer, Co. Wexford. This was the seventh home at which the family resided since Lean's birth.

Lifestyle:

- 4.23 The evidence of family, friends and neighbours appear to confirm that Adrian and Ciara Dunne were a very close couple and were devoted to their children.
- 4.24 Adrian and Ciara Dunne generally kept to themselves and they rarely socialised. They had limited contact with their wider families. They never went back to visit Ciara Dunne's family in Donegal after they moved to Wexford. Ciara Dunne's family visited Wexford approximately four times a year. On those occasions Ciara Dunne's family stayed in hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation. These visits were for short periods and weekends. The O'Briens' did not find Adrian Dunne welcoming. They felt that he was hostile towards them and actively discouraged Ciara Dunne making contact with her family. Their primary concern was to keep up contact with Ciara Dunne and their grandchildren.
- 4.25 The O'Briens' last visit to Wexford was in November, 2006. They continued to keep in contact with Ciara Dunne by telephone and text message. However, as the months went by, communication became more infrequent and the nature of the text messages received from Ciara Dunne's phone became extremely aggressive and upsetting to the O'Brien family. Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien suspected that these messages were sent by Adrian Dunne.
- 4.26 The Inquiry Team, having heard evidence from family, friends and neighbours have come to the conclusion that Adrian Dunne was a complex character, very much the dominant partner in the relationship and exerted a very strong influence over Ciara Dunne. It appears that he isolated her from her family. Ciara Dunne appeared to have very little communication outside the home on her own initiative. In addition, the family appears to have been unusually isolated from both wider family and friends.

- 4.27 The family's frequent moves contributed to the health services difficulties in identifying and meeting their needs. These difficulties were compounded by Adrian Dunne's deliberate provision of misleading information concerning medical appointments and incorrect telephone numbers to the health services.
- 4.28 All visits to the public health nurse and hospital visits were arranged by Adrian Dunne. Many of the arranged visits were cancelled, often on the basis that they had another appointment, when in fact no such appointment was in place. Adrian Dunne usually answered the door and the telephone.
- 4.29 No. 29 Moin Rua, Monageer, Co. Wexford was Adrian and Ciara Dunne's last home. It was a three-bedroom detached bungalow with a large garden. Witnesses confirmed that the house had no conventional cooker, kitchen chairs or table. The children's bedroom was painted in primary colours. Food was cooked on a George Foreman type cooker and a deep fat fryer. The couple regularly purchased takeaway foods.
- 4.30 The family purchased their first car by way of a loan in May, 2005. They liked to take trips in the family car and would drive significant distances to shop, go to the gym and the seaside. Ciara O'Brien had not passed her driving test and Adrian Dunne made enquiries about driving lessons for her. Ciara Dunne purchased her second car in April, 2006 and following a car accident in August 2006, purchased another new car.
- 4.31 The family enjoyed going to hurling and football matches together and liked to watch television. The children always appeared well dressed, well cared for and nourished.
- 4.32 They enjoyed holidays together. While residing in Donegal they went to Disneyworld in Florida. The funding for this holiday was provided by a loan from a family friend of the O'Briens'. While on holiday Adrian

Dunne and Ciara O'Brien had to obtain additional financial assistance from the O'Brien family to pay their hotel bill. They also had two holidays in Tramore which were organised by the National Council for the Blind. Witnesses told the Investigation Team that Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien had allegedly taken holidays in Disneyland, Paris and Germany but there was no evidence that such holidays, did in fact, take place.

- 4.33 Ciara Dunne joined the gym in March, 2006 in Gorey as she was anxious to lose weight. She went to the gym two or three times a week. Adrian Dunne and the two girls used to sit outside in the car while she was at the gym.
- 4.34 Adrian Dunne was a frequent user of the telephone and a constant sender of text messages both day and night. Many of the text messages exchanged between Adrian and Ciara Dunne were of a sexually explicit nature, some of which were sent in the early hours of the morning. At the date of their deaths the family had four mobile phones registered in their names and a landline which was no longer in service as it had been cut off. They changed their telephone numbers frequently and as a result, were sometimes hard to contact. At the time of their deaths the family had an outstanding Eircom telephone bill of €3,629.79.
- 4.35 The Inquiry Team believe that neither Adrian Dunne nor Ciara Dunne were ever employed. They were both in receipt of Social Welfare payments. Adrian Dunne was fully aware of the family's Social Welfare and other entitlements. From the early stages of their relationship they borrowed more than they could repay. Both were registered in Stubbs Gazette in August, 2005. They owed monies to a number of lending institutions, businesses and private individuals. Adrian Dunne had negotiated loans, not only with financial institutions, but also with friends and acquaintances.

4.36 At the time of their deaths, Adrian and Ciara Dunne's weekly income was approximately €740. This was made up from: blind pension, disability allowance, child dependant allowance, blind welfare allowance; domiciliary allowance, respite care grant, fuel allowance and child care benefit. They had debts in the region of €34,400 to banks and credit unions in Letterkenny, Buncrana and New Ross and also to businesses, utilities and individuals.

4.37 Witnesses told the Inquiry Team that Adrian and Ciara Dunne had allegedly had a number of winnings, including lottery winnings. The Inquiry Team did not have any evidence of these winnings.

The Dunne family's dealings with the Gardai before the tragedy:

4.38 The Inquiry Team established from Garda statements taken in November, 2005 that a member of An Garda Síochána met Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien at their rented home at Park, Bree, Co. Wexford. Adrian Dunne had made a formal complaint of receiving threatening phone calls to his mobile phone. Ciara O'Brien also made a statement. The Garda, during the course of taking statements, was shown text messages on Adrian Dunne's mobile phone. In Adrian Dunne's statement of complaint to the Gardai, he stated that he had been threatened and intimidated by a caller to the house regarding bad debts. The Gardai investigated the formal complaint relating to the receipt of threatening calls. The phone number of the threatening caller was unknown and never fully established.

4.39 On the 22nd February, 2006 Adrian Dunne informed the Gardai that no further calls or texts had been received. He was advised by the Gardai to contact them if there were further developments. No further complaints were made to the Gardai by Adrian Dunne or Ciara O'Brien in relation to the above matter.

- 4.40 The Gardai at Ferns Garda station were contacted by Adrian Dunne on approximately 4 to 5 occasions after the family moved to Monageer. The first of these calls was made in the middle of September, 2006 when Adrian Dunne complained that he was having trouble with one of his neighbours. The Gardai called to the neighbours and everything was sorted to everyone's satisfaction.
- 4.41 Garda statements also reveal that in September 2006, when the Dunnes were on holiday, someone put a hose through their letterbox and water was sprayed inside. During Halloween, 2006 a Garda Sergeant called to the Dunnes' home a couple of times as Adrian Dunne had reported youths banging at the door and throwing eggs at the door. In February 2007, Adrian Dunne reported youths hanging around his neighbour's house. His neighbours were on holiday at the time.
- 4.42 On each occasion that the Gardai called to the Dunne home investigating the above matters, they saw nothing out of the ordinary in the behaviour of the Dunne family.
- 4.43 There were no prosecutions taken relating to either threatening phone calls or annoyances caused at the Dunne family home in Monageer.
- 4.44 Mrs. Mary Dunne (Adrian Dunne's mother) and other family members gave evidence at the Inquiry that Adrian and Ciara Dunne were being pursued by moneylenders. The Gardai informed the Inquiry that they had no information in that regard.

Future Plans to move to Liverpool:

- 4.45 In the months leading up to their deaths, Adrian and Ciara Dunne discussed with family and some members of the public health services their intentions to move to live in Liverpool.

- 4.46 On 7th February 2007, Adrian Dunne made contact with the Manager, Irish Community Centre, Liverpool concerning a family move to Liverpool. Adrian Dunne indicated that he was planning a move to Liverpool with his family within the next six months. He said to her that he wanted a better life for his family and a better education for his children. He also made contact with an Information Advisor at the Centre, on 12th February, 2007. They discussed schools for the blind and Adrian Dunne was told to contact St. Vincent's School for the Blind in Liverpool.
- 4.47 On the 13th March 2007, Adrian Dunne contacted the Centre when he again spoke to the Information Advisor. On that occasion he was advised to contact Liverpool City Council in relation to obtaining housing and also to get in touch with the Social Services in Liverpool in respect of blind welfare benefits in the United Kingdom. In the same conversation Adrian Dunne expressed an interest in looking for work with the Merseyside Police Call Centre.
- 4.48 Adrian Dunne telephoned an Estate Agent with Whitegate Estate Agency in Liverpool on 23rd March, 2007. He enquired about the purchase of a bungalow in the Liverpool area. He indicated that his price range was between £130,000 and £300,000. She forwarded a brochure for a house valued at £275,000.
- 4.49 On the 18th April 2007, the Estate Agent contacted Adrian Dunne again as she had not heard from him. Adrian Dunne said that he had not received the brochure. Garda examination of the Dunne family home following the tragedy revealed that the brochure had in fact been received by Adrian Dunne.
- 4.50 The Inquiry Team believe that Adrian and Ciara Dunne may have considered moving to Liverpool in early 2007 as Adrian Dunne wanted to maintain the controlling role held within the family and avoid closer scrutiny by health and social services personnel now that they had

been allocated a local authority house in Monageer. The Inquiry Team believe that the family's mounting debt was also a factor.

The circumstances leading to and surrounding the deaths of
the Dunne family.

This chapter is based on a review of the Garda statements and exhibits, interviews held by the Inquiry Team and information gathered during the course of the Inquiry.

First telephone call made by Adrian Dunne to New Ross Funeral Undertakers enquiring about his family funeral arrangements:

- 5.1 On the 4th April, 2007 a male caller who did not identify himself rang a Funeral Undertaker in New Ross, Co. Wexford. The call was taken by a member of the family owned business.
- 5.2 The caller stated he had just buried his brother through suicide; his father died last year and that a second brother was killed in a car accident during the last year. He further stated that he was married with a couple of children and that he wanted to make his own funeral arrangements.
- 5.3 The caller expressed a desire to be buried in his own family grave and he asked if it was possible to get white coffins for adults. He also stated that his wife was very anxious to know if a child could be buried with each parent. During the course of this conversation a woman's voice could be heard in the background. The impression was created that some of the questions being asked were prompted by this woman.
- 5.4 The member of the undertaker business explained to him that where a family is involved they usually buy their own plot rather than going into

their parents' family grave, and this seemed to satisfy him. The employee also assured him that a child could be buried with each parent and confirmed that it was possible to have adult white coffins on request.

5.5 The caller stated that he was going to make a will that day and sought an explanation as to what "executors" meant. He also enquired if a will could be contested.

5.6 It was at this stage that the caller stated that he was blind. He expressed concern that his mother-in-law would take the children from him if his wife died before him and he emphasised that that was his greatest fear. He said that she did not like him.

5.7 The employee advised him to discuss all of his concerns with his solicitor. She did not ask the caller for his name and address nor did he volunteer them.

5.8 On conclusion of the conversation she related the story to other members of the family who were in the premises. Some days later she told her sister, the Funeral Director of the Undertaker's business about the incident.

Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne and their two children visit a solicitor in Enniscorthy:

5.9 On the morning of the 5th April 2007, Adrian and Ciara Dunne and their two children arrived at a solicitor's office in Enniscorthy by appointment for the purpose of making their wills.

5.10 The solicitor took instructions. The instructions were unremarkable in that if Adrian Dunne died first, his wife was to inherit from him and in

the event of their joint deaths, their children were to inherit. Ciara Dunne's will was similar and mirrored Adrian Dunne's.

- 5.11 The Clonroche Curate, Adrian Dunne's brother Sebastian Dunne and a female family friend from Limerick were appointed executors of both wills. The female family friend from Limerick was also appointed guardian of the children.
- 5.12 During the course of the consultation, Adrian Dunne mentioned that one of the reasons they decided that they would like to make a will was because there had been a suicide in his family. They stipulated that they did not wish for either of their families to take care of their children in the event of their deaths as they did not have a good relationship with them.
- 5.13 The Dunnes presented as a very happy, contented family. The children sang the Liverpool anthem "*You Will Never Walk Alone*". At intervals one girl sat on each of their parents' laps. The solicitor was of the opinion that the couple were able to express themselves in a coherent way.
- 5.14 On the 10th April, 2007 Adrian Dunne rang the solicitor's office to see if the wills were ready for signature.
- 5.15 An appointment was made for the Dunnes to call to the Enniscorthy office on Friday the 13th April, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. This appointment was not kept. A second appointment was made for the Dunnes to attend at the Ferns office on Tuesday the 17th April, 2007. On that day Adrian Dunne rang the Ferns office stating that there had been a traffic accident and he rearranged the appointment for Wednesday the 18th April, 2007 at 12:00 noon. The Dunnes failed to keep that appointment and no cancellation was made.

5.16 On Friday the 20th April, 2007 Adrian Dunne telephoned the solicitor's secretary seeking an appointment for that afternoon. The solicitor was in the Ferns office and she instructed her secretary to ring Adrian Dunne and inform him that if he called to the Enniscorthy office her colleague would deal with the matter. Her secretary could not contact Adrian Dunne on his phone but left a message for him on his voicemail. He never got back to her. The wills were never executed by Adrian and Ciara Dunne.

5.17 During the course of one of the telephone calls concerning appointments, Adrian Dunne stated that they had obtained the Clonroche Curate's agreement to act as executor of their wills.

Canada Life Insurance Policy:

5.18 On the 1st November, 2004 Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien took out a joint life policy with Canada Life. There was €250,000 Life Cover on each of them and the premium was €50.00 per month. The policy lapsed on two occasions and the last payment was made on the 15th March, 2006.

5.19 During the first week of April 2007, Adrian Dunne contacted the Waterford office of Canada Life expressing an interest in having the policy reinstated. The Financial Advisor with Canada Life arranged to meet Adrian Dunne on the 12th April, 2007 but Adrian Dunne cancelled the meeting and consequently the life policy was not renewed.

Interest shown by Adrian and Ciara Dunne in the purchase of 'Dora' Dolls and a Liverpool football teddy:

5.20 The Manageress of Euro Discount Store, North Main Street, Wexford was not interviewed by the Inquiry Team but made a statement to the

Garda Team on the 18th May, 2007. She recognised the Dunne family from photographs shown on television news. She recognised them as being regular customers in her shop but she did not know them by name.

5.21 About four weeks prior to the tragedy the Dunne family visited the shop. Ciara Dunne asked for a Liverpool teddy. The Manageress said that they did not stock them and they asked if she stocked anything relating to Liverpool Football Club. She informed them in the negative and referred them to a Lifestyle Sports shop in the town. The mother said they were looking for something to put in a child's coffin. The father said in a jocular manner that they were Liverpool supporters.

5.22 A Proprietor of a retail outlet in New Ross was interviewed by the Gardai on the 9th May, 2007 and he made a statement to them. He was not interviewed by the Inquiry Team. He had known Adrian Dunne since 2005 and Ciara Dunne and the two children were also known to him and were regular customers of his shop. In his statement he informed the Gardai that the week after James Dunne died by suicide; Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne and the two children called to his shop. Adrian Dunne ordered two 'Dora' dolls for the girls. He did not pay for them and he was due to call the following week to collect them. The dolls were never collected.

Second telephone call made by Adrian Dunne to the New Ross Funeral Undertaker:

5.23 On Wednesday the 18th April 2007, the Funeral Director of the New Ross Undertakers received a telephone call from a male caller who declined to provide his name. He enquired if he could get an adult white coffin if he died and when she told him that he could, he asked if his wife could also get one when she died. The Funeral Director informed him that she could.

- 5.24 He asked questions about making pre-planned funeral arrangements for his children. It was at that stage that the Funeral Director started to explain to him about the Golden Charter Funeral Plan which is a U.K. based company.
- 5.25 He asked her a number of questions relating to the 'Plan' which she was unable to answer. She then provided him with the name of the Golden Charter representative in Ireland and also with her mobile telephone number. She suggested that he should ring her.
- 5.26 He also made enquiries about graves and the Funeral Director asked him if he had a family plot. He said that he had and that his father and brother and a second brother who had committed suicide a couple of months ago were buried in that grave. He asked if he and his wife could be buried in that grave and the Funeral Director informed him that he would require the written permission of his mother. He said that it was a six plot grave and they calculated that there were already three bodies in it and that another two would make five leaving room for his mother.
- 5.27 The Funeral Director stated that she found the conversation a bit unusual, particularly the pre-planning of funeral arrangements for his two children, upon which he was insistent. According to the Funeral Director, people who use the Golden Charter Plan are usually elderly and have no family support around them. She never experienced a situation where it was sought to have children included in such a 'Plan'.
- 5.28 The Funeral Director again asked the caller for his name and he said it did not matter that there was no need to tell her at that stage.
- 5.29 Immediately on ending their conversation the Funeral Director rang the Golden Charter representative and alerted her to the likelihood that this

person would be ringing her and requested her to get his name and address if she could.

Adrian Dunne calls the Golden Charter representative in Terenure, Dublin:

5.30 Golden Charter is a U.K. based company. The Golden Charter representative was their sole representative in Ireland. She dealt with funeral directors around Ireland, offering pre paid funeral planning and occasionally she dealt with clients directly.

5.31 On the evening of the 18th April 2007, she received a telephone call from the Funeral Director who was well known to her in a professional basis. The Funeral Director provided her with brief details of the conversation she had with her anonymous caller relating to a funeral plan and that he had gone into some specifics as to his requirements. She told her that she had given him her number and asked if she would mind having a chat with him. She readily agreed and expected that this person would call her the following day or perhaps the day after.

5.32 The Golden Charter representative received a call a few moments later.

5.33 She asked the caller for his name and he said that it was Adrian and she thought that he said that he was from Mullinavat near Ferns. He wanted to know all about Golden Charter and what it entailed. He enquired if the arrangements had to be made through a funeral director or through the Golden Charter representative. He identified by name his funeral director. When the Golden Charter representative suggested to him that there were funeral directors much closer to him than New Ross, he responded by stating that the Funeral Director had been recommended to him by the local priest. He said that they had a family bereavement recently and they were unhappy with the manner

in which the local undertaker carried out his functions. He said that they had two little daughters.

5.34 He then commenced asking specific questions relating to funeral arrangements, for example:

- Could he be buried in a Liverpool jersey?
- Could they have adult size white coffins?
- Could the children be buried in their favourite clothes and Liverpool jerseys; and
- Could a child be buried with each of their parents?

5.35 The Golden Charter representative then said to him that in the normal course of events children would outlive their parents and asked why he should be worrying about such matters. In response he said that friends of theirs were on holidays the year before in Spain and that they were all killed in a car accident. (Note: This was just one of eight references that the Inquiry Team are aware of made by Adrian and Ciara Dunne to different people concerning various incidents where a family of six persons were killed in a car accident either in Spain or Wicklow since Christmas 2006). He asked if he needed to go to a solicitor to ensure that the arrangements were carried out in accordance with his wishes. The Golden Charter representative confirmed to him that this was not necessary as he could have it all included in his 'Plan' drawn up by the Funeral Director and that he could nominate a third person to be provided with a copy and in response he said what about a priest? The Golden Charter representative responded in the affirmative and said that if the priest was transferred to another parish a copy could be left in the Parochial House.

5.36 Adrian Dunne then enquired what his next step was and she told him to go back to the Funeral Director. He then discussed family graves. She

advised him to discuss the issue of graves with the Funeral Director as they were not normally included in the 'Plan'. He asked what the funeral 'Plan' would cost and she advised him that the Funeral Director would provide him with that information. She told him that he could pay in a lump sum or over a twelve month period. He then asked what would happen if he had not fully paid for it and something happened? The Golden Charter representative told him that any balance would have to be paid out of his estate.

- 5.37 The Golden Charter representative then rang the Funeral Director and told her about the call she had received from a man who had identified himself as Adrian from Mullinavat near Ferns. Neither of the women were aware of any area near Ferns known as Mullinavat. The Golden Charter representative requested the Funeral Director to keep her informed of any further contact she might have from this man who had identified himself as Adrian.

The Funeral Director telephones Garda A and informs him of nature of telephone calls received from a man who had identified himself as Adrian:

- 5.38 Between 8:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on the 18th April, 2007 the Funeral Director rang Garda A on his mobile phone. He was well known to her in a professional capacity. She related to him in general terms details of the telephone conversations she and the Golden Charter representative had with the person who had identified himself as Adrian and his enquiries about planning family funerals, including those of his children. The funeral director informed the Inquiry Team that she told Garda A that Adrian had informed the Golden Charter representative that he was from Mullinavat near Ferns.
- 5.39 The Funeral Director also informed the Inquiry Team that she had told Garda A that Adrian had said that his brother had recently committed suicide. They had a discussion about Mullinavat and concluded that

Adrian must have been referring to Mullinavat, New Ross. She stated that they then discussed suicides that had occurred in the New Ross area in recent times and remembered that there had been one in Clonroche but did not recall the person's name. The Funeral Director said that the reason she rang Garda A was because "*I just had a bad feeling*".

5.40 Garda A confirmed that he received a telephone call from the Funeral Director on his mobile phone at about 8:00 p.m. on the 18th April, 2007. He was off duty and at home at the time. He said that the Funeral Director informed him that she had received a strange phone call that day from a man enquiring about funerals and arrangements for funerals and a whole family dying. The caller had mentioned a recent bereavement in the family. However Garda A had no recollection of the Funeral Director mentioning suicide in the context of the caller's brother's death. He did state that mention was made of a car crash. Neither did he recall her saying that he had told the Golden Charter representative that his first name was Adrian or that he was from Mullinavat near Ferns. He did acknowledge that the Funeral Director had stated that the Golden Charter representative was a bit concerned as well.

5.41 At the end of their conversation Garda A stated that he was satisfied that neither he nor the Funeral Director knew or could identify the male caller. He was not aware at that time of James Dunne having committed suicide. The incident occurred in an adjoining Garda District about twenty-one miles away and he did not recall it being reported in the local paper. He suggested to the Funeral Director that if additional information came into her possession she should contact him immediately. Garda A did not discuss the matter with any of his superiors at that time.

Third telephone call made by Adrian Dunne to the New Ross Funeral Undertakers:

5.42 At about 11:30 a.m. on Thursday 19th April, 2007 a male caller rang the New Ross Funeral Undertakers and spoke to the Funeral Director's mother. He introduced himself as Adrian Dunne from Monageer. He informed her that he had already been speaking to the Funeral Director about Golden Charter Plans and that he wanted to make an appointment to see the Funeral Director. An appointment was made for 2:00 p.m. the following day, Friday 20th April, 2007.

5.43 The Funeral Director arrived at her office at 12 noon on 19th April, 2007 and was informed by her mother of the conversation she had with Adrian Dunne. She knew immediately that it was the same person that she and the Golden Charter representative had been speaking to on Wednesday 18th April, 2007.

Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne and their two children arrive at the New Ross Funeral Undertakers:

5.44 At 2:10 p.m. on Friday 20th April 2007, Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne and their daughters Lean and Shania arrived at the New Ross Funeral Undertakers having just left the Health Centre in New Ross. The Funeral Director had previously arranged that they would be taken in through the flower shop so that they would be captured on the CCTV system which was in operation in that portion of the premises.

5.45 As the Dunne family entered the flower shop, the Funeral Director could see them on the CCTV monitor. She recognised them immediately from a family photograph which was published in the New Ross Standard at the time of James Dunne's death by suicide. She took the four of them into her office and sat them down. She

introduced herself and asked what they wanted her to do. Adrian Dunne said that he wanted to make his funeral arrangements.

5.46 Adrian Dunne then commenced to give her instructions which she recorded. He said that he wanted a solid oak coffin in white adult size and to be dressed in the Liverpool football jersey, jeans and socks. When the Funeral Director asked him where he wanted to be waked, for example, in a funeral home, hospital etc., he turned to Ciara Dunne and asked her what she thought. She considered for a moment and said she wanted a funeral home for one night and that the coffins be closed.

5.47 Adrian Dunne asked if the children could be put into the same coffins as them and the Funeral Director replied that they could if they were under six years of age. He said that he wanted the songs "*You Will Never Walk Alone*" and "*Stairway to Heaven*" sung at the funeral mass. He then enquired about being buried in his parents' family grave and was informed that he would have to get his mother's written permission. He said he did not want his mother to know about it. He then turned to Ciara Dunne and asked her should they get their own plot and she agreed that they should. Ciara Dunne then said that only the four of them were ever to be buried in the plot. They also gave instructions about the type of headstone they wanted and that the Clonroche Curate was to say the funeral mass.

5.48 The Funeral Director asked Ciara Dunne what her wishes were and she said that she wanted the same as Adrian had described. The Funeral Director asked about arrangements for the children and Ciara Dunne said that when they died they wanted Lean to be buried with Adrian and that Shania be buried with her. She said they were to be dressed in 'Dora' jeans and tops and that the jeans were at home in the house. The Funeral Director pointed out to them that the children would grow up, go off and get married and have their own children and Ciara Dunne responded by saying that this would never happen. The

Funeral Director asked who would look after the children if they died before their children. Ciara Dunne replied that a friend from Limerick, as named in their will, would look after them.

5.49 There was a discussion about the Golden Charter Plan and the Funeral Director explained to them that they could pay it in instalments over a twelve month period or pay the full amount on completion of the 'Plan'. Ciara Dunne mentioned that they had a Canada Life Insurance Policy. After further discussion it was agreed that they would forget about the Golden Charter Plan as they had insurance cover.

5.50 The Funeral Director asked if they intended giving a copy of the completed 'Plan' to their respective families and they both responded that they did not. Adrian Dunne said that the Clonroche Curate was a personal family friend and that he would be in charge of their funerals when they died.

5.51 During the course of the meeting Ciara Dunne made reference to car accidents and suicide. Adrian Dunne expressed the view that many of the single vehicle car accidents were suicides. Ciara Dunne referred to an alleged incident where a family of six who were friends of theirs, were on holidays in Spain and they were killed in a car crash.

5.52 The Funeral Director enquired why they were engaging her rather than a local undertaker in the Monageer area. Adrian Dunne responded by saying that they had two different undertakers involved in the burial of his father and brother and that they were unhappy with their services. The Funeral Director was aware that the Undertaker who Adrian Dunne identified as having buried his father was incorrect.

5.53 During the course of the instructions they gave to the Funeral Director over a three quarters of an hour period, the Funeral Director said that Adrian and Ciara Dunne seemed completely relaxed and the children were beautifully dressed and very well behaved.

- 5.54 As the Funeral Director was recording their instructions, Ciara Dunne read what was being recorded and on more than one occasion corrected her, especially in relation to the spelling of the children's names. The couple were very specific in what they wanted included in the 'Plan'.
- 5.55 Nearing the conclusion of the meeting the Funeral Director went back over the list of their instructions and Adrian and Ciara Dunne indicated that they were happy with them. She then said that she would have their instructions typed up and that she would post them out to them. If they were happy with them they could make an appointment to call into her office to sign the forms. They agreed to do this. She also told them that she would have a copy prepared for the Clonroche Curate. They left her office at about 3:00 p.m.
- 5.56 The Funeral Director was concerned about the specific nature of the instructions she had received from Adrian and Ciara Dunne. She stated that *"What really kept fazing me through the whole thing was the kids, as they were adamant on getting the wishes of the kids through"*. She was conscious of them talking about the 'Dora' jeans being in the house and that in three to six months time the children would have grown out of them. She said *"Something kept telling me that it was going to happen soon"*.

Second phone call made by the Funeral Director to Garda A:

- 5.57 When the Dunnes had left, the Funeral Director decided to ring Garda A. She estimates the time to have been between 3:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. She informed him that the person that had called her on Wednesday had come to her office by appointment that afternoon and that he was accompanied by his wife and two daughters. She provided him with details of their identity and a resume of the funeral arrangements they had sought.

- 5.58 She told Garda A that the Dunnes said that they had made a will and that the Clonroche Curate had recommended that they should come to see her. She informed Garda A that they had apparently also been to a solicitor and this reassured her somewhat. She told him that they had given her permission to provide the Clonroche Curate with a copy of the funeral 'Plan'.
- 5.59 The Funeral Director informed the Inquiry Team that she did not provide Garda A with all the details of her meeting with the Dunnes and in particular she acknowledged that she did not tell him about the following comments made by the Dunnes; that Mrs. Mary Dunne was not to be informed about the funeral arrangements, that the 'Dora' jeans were in the house and that the reference to the children growing up and having their own children would never happen.
- 5.60 The Funeral Director was unable to recall if she had told Garda A about the CDs '*Stairway to Heaven*' and '*You Will Never Walk Alone*' being in the house. She said that their conversation was quite short. He asked her to drop a copy of the instructions she had received from the Dunnes into the Garda Station when she had them typed up. He also suggested that she ring the Clonroche Curate.

Garda A's account of his conversation with the Funeral Director:

- 5.61 Garda A confirmed that he received a phone call from the Funeral Director at about 3:30 p.m. on the 20th April, 2007 stating that the gentleman that had telephoned her the previous Wednesday had come to her office at 2:00 p.m. that day along with his wife and two children. Garda A was in the Garda Station when he received the call. The Funeral Director provided him with full details of Adrian and Ciara Dunne's names, address and dates of birth. She supplied him with additional information surrounding Adrian Dunne's brother's death by suicide.

- 5.62 He said that the Funeral Director read over her notes of the instructions given to her by Adrian and Ciara Dunne. Garda A said that he jotted down a few notes as they spoke which included the names of the Clonroche Curate, the Enniscorthy solicitors, James & Hugh Dunne and the instructions concerning the hymns and the plot.
- 5.63 Garda A said that he suggested that the Funeral Director ring the Clonroche Curate to make him aware of the arrangements because it appeared to him that the Clonroche Curate and the Dunne family were acquainted. He also indicated to the Funeral Director that the Clonroche Curate should feel free to ring him if he wished. Garda A said that he was aware that the Funeral Director had put them off on the day by saying that she would have the funeral plans ready for signing on Monday 23rd April, 2007.
- 5.64 Garda A confirmed that the Funeral Director did not inform him of the following comments made by Adrian and Ciara Dunne that Mrs. Mary Dunne was not to be informed about the funeral arrangements, that the 'Dora' jeans were in the house and that the reference to the children growing up and having their own children would never happen.

The Funeral Director telephones the Clonroche Curate:

- 5.65 Following her discussion with Garda A, the Funeral Director telephoned the Clonroche Curate. She did not succeed in speaking to him until he called her back at 5:30 p.m. that evening. She informed him that the Dunne family had made pre-arranged plans for their funerals. She gave him a general outline of those arrangements. She informed him that they had told her that he had agreed to be an executor of their wills.

- 5.66 The Clonroche Curate denied that the Dunnes had asked him to be an executor of their wills or that he had referred them to her for the purpose of making funeral arrangements. The Funeral Director then asked him what he thought they should do. She told him that she had been in touch with Garda A and she gave him the Officer's telephone number. The Clonroche Curate said that he would call to the Dunne family that night. He also indicated that he would telephone Garda A. The conversation was short and lasted only two to three minutes.
- 5.67 Adrian Dunne's parents and his siblings were known to the Clonroche Curate in his pastoral capacity since 2000. He officiated at the funeral masses of the late Hugh Dunne, Adrian Dunne's father, who died on 9th April, 2006 and also James Dunne, his brother, who died by suicide on 29th March, 2007. Adrian and Ciara Dunne were also known to him.
- 5.68 Adrian Dunne used to phone the Clonroche Curate periodically and discussed issues such as his eye problems and his brother's suicide with him.
- 5.69 Shortly after James Dunne's death, Adrian Dunne rang the Clonroche Curate saying that he had been listening to an American television programme which said that those who committed suicide went to hell.
- 5.70 The Clonroche Curate concluded that Adrian Dunne was mourning his brother's death. He told him that he would be slow to cast judgement on people who die by their own hand.
- 5.71 At interview, the Clonroche Curate confirmed that he had a conversation with the Funeral Director on the evening of Friday 20th April, 2007 relating to the visit by Adrian and Ciara Dunne to her office. He also stated that he endeavoured to contact Garda A that same evening by phoning New Ross Garda Station but was informed that the Officer was off duty and would not be back until the following day. The Clonroche Curate was concerned about the nature of the information

passed on to him by the Funeral Director and his main purpose in phoning Garda A was to discuss what course of action he might take. At interview the Clonroche Curate said that he felt a bit frustrated that he did not succeed in making contact with Garda A and felt that there was no other option for him but to contact the Dunnes himself.

- 5.72 The Garda investigation failed to identify the member at New Ross Garda Station that received the Clonroche Curate's telephone call. The member who was on duty at the time in the station had no recollection of receiving the call.

Third telephone call made by the Funeral Director to Garda A:

- 5.73 Shortly after speaking to the Clonroche Curate, the Funeral Director rang Garda A and confirmed that she had made contact with the Clonroche Curate and had acquainted him with the funeral arrangements made by the Dunnes.

- 5.74 Garda A states that he received the call from the Funeral Director confirming that she had made contact with the Clonroche Curate and that the priest had indicated that he would endeavour to make contact with him. He was out on duty when he received this call from the Funeral Director. Having completed his outdoor task he returned to the station and searched the computer PULSE system to see if he could find any information relating to the death of James Dunne. However, there was no entry on the system relating to the incident.

The Clonroche Curate visits the Dunne family home in Monageer:

- 5.75 Having failed to contact Garda A, the Clonroche Curate decided to drive the eighteen mile journey to visit Adrian and Ciara Dunne. He rang Adrian Dunne on his mobile phone stating that he was in the

Monageer area and that he was going to drop in to visit them. Adrian Dunne said that they were visiting the family grave in Boolavogue but that they would meet him at home.

- 5.76 The Clonroche Curate called to the Presbytery at Monageer to see if the Monageer Parish Priest would accompany him on his visit to the Dunes. However, when he knocked on the door he got no reply. He then travelled the short distance to 29 Moin Rua, Monageer, arriving at approximately 7:00 p.m. The Dunes had already arrived home from Boolavogue.
- 5.77 Adrian Dunne and the two girls came to the door and greeted him. The children seemed excited and he was invited inside and was taken into the sitting room where they chatted. Ciara Dunne came in and sat on Adrian Dunne's knee. Everyone seemed very happy. There was an air of excitement and everything appeared normal.
- 5.78 After about thirty minutes the Clonroche Curate broached the purpose of his visit. He said that he was concerned about information that had come to his attention relating to their visit to New Ross earlier that day and the making of funeral arrangements, particularly where two young children were involved. Ciara Dunne became quite indignant and irate and in a raised voice asked if he thought they were going to hurt the children or harm themselves in any way. She said she would not allow anyone to harm her children.
- 5.79 Adrian Dunne then responded in what the Clonroche Curate thought was a very plausible way. He said that Ciara Dunne did the driving and that the four of them usually travelled together. It was only proper that they should have their affairs in order and arrangements made in case anything happened to them such as a car accident. He further highlighted the importance of having a will made and enquired if the Clonroche Curate had done so. The Clonroche Curate said that he recoiled a little, feeling that perhaps he had over stepped the mark.

- 5.80 The Clonroche Curate then moved away from the subject of the visit to the Undertaker and enquired about their respective families. They indicated that they were estranged from their extended families and Adrian Dunne said that Ciara had been treated badly by her family. They said that they did not allow the children out to play with other children as they were too rough and that they themselves did not relate very well to their neighbours. They also informed the Clonroche Curate that they were planning to move on a permanent basis to Liverpool where there were better facilities for children with disabilities. The Clonroche Curate said at interview that he felt the family were suffering from a sense of isolation due to the circumstances in which they found themselves and that the plan to move to Liverpool seemed plausible.
- 5.81 Ciara Dunne then invited him to look around the house. He noticed that there was no table in the kitchen and, insofar as he could recall, there was no conventional cooker. There was some sort of a pressure cooker which Ciara Dunne said they used as their cooker. The Clonroche Curate said the kitchen looked frugal to him. Ciara Dunne also showed him the children's bedroom which he described as a typical children's bedroom.
- 5.82 Ciara Dunne made tea for the second time and during the course of conversation she asked the Clonroche Curate if he had been paid for coming out to visit them that evening. He informed her that there was no question of any payment. Adrian Dunne made a comment that he was an approachable kind of priest. Ciara Dunne made reference to the fact that they did not plan to have any more children due to the children's congenital eye conditions.
- 5.83 After about two hours the Clonroche Curate prepared to leave and they accompanied him to the door. The two children were seated on the wall, while other children played close by. The Clonroche Curate promised that he would contact them shortly and they said goodbye.

5.84 At interview, the Clonroche Curate said that on departure his concerns had dissipated and that he was somewhat relieved. Their story about a car accident seemed plausible and he was impressed by the intimacy of the family and how they connected with each other. He said "*I didn't see he (Adrian Dunne) would harm the family*". At interview, he said that he found it a source of comfort that the Gardai were involved with the Dunne family.

Adrian Dunne telephones the Clonroche Curate at his home:

5.85 Soon after the Clonroche Curate had arrived home he received a telephone call from Adrian Dunne. It was then about 10:30 p.m. Adrian Dunne enquired if he had arrived home safely. The Clonroche Curate assured him that he was fine. He could hear the children playing in the background. He told Adrian Dunne that he would contact him again shortly.

5.86 The following morning the Clonroche Curate tried to contact the Monageer Parish Priest by telephone but there was no response. He rang Adrian Dunne's number but the call was diverted to message minder. He also tried to contact Adrian Dunne by phone the following day, Sunday, but there was no response.

Garda A receives the Funeral Director's typed instructions as provided to her by the Dunes on 20th April, 2007:

5.87 At about 12 mid day on Saturday the 21st April, Garda A reported for duty at his station. He found the typed instructions which the Funeral Director had delivered to the station the previous evening. Having read the instructions he decided that he would ring his Superintendent and bring the matter to his attention. At interview, he said that he then felt more concerned than he had the previous evening, especially having

seen the references to the arrangements for the children. He said *"It's one thing over the phone and one thing to see it down in writing"*. He said that he did not have any concerns the previous evening that anything was going to happen to the children.

5.88 At about 12:15 p.m. Garda A phoned Garda Superintendent B who was off duty and at home. He read over the document to him that he had received from the New Ross Funeral Director. Garda Superintendent B informed him that he was going to ring Garda Superintendent C who had responsibility for the Monageer area where the Dunnes resided. Having concluded his conversation with Garda Superintendent B, Garda A rang the Clonroche Curate who informed him that he had visited the Dunne family at 29 Moin Rua, Monageer the previous evening. The Clonroche Curate said that he had spent two to three hours in their company and that he was not as concerned about them as he was prior to his visit as everything seemed to be all right.

5.89 Garda A then informed the Clonroche Curate that Garda Superintendent B was going to contact Garda Superintendent C, who had responsibility for the particular area and sought permission to have the latter ring him. The Clonroche Curate readily agreed to accept his call.

Garda Superintendent C receives call from Garda Superintendent B:

5.90 Saturday, 21st April 2007, Garda Superintendent C was off duty and at home. Between 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. he received a telephone call from Garda Superintendent B who informed him that he had a discussion with Garda A relating to the Dunne family and their visit to the funeral undertakers the previous day. Garda Superintendent B provided Garda Superintendent C with Garda A's mobile telephone number and he rang him. Garda A confirmed to him the visit by the Dunne family to the New Ross Undertakers on the previous day at 2:00

p.m. and that they had made funeral arrangements for the family including the children. He was also made aware that the Clonroche Curate had visited the Dunnes in their home in Monageer the previous evening.

Garda Superintendent C telephones the Clonroche Curate:

- 5.91 Garda Superintendent C immediately contacted the Clonroche Curate on his mobile phone and they discussed his visit to the Dunne family the previous evening. Garda Superintendent C stated to the Inquiry Team that the Clonroche Curate informed him that the visit lasted for about two hours. The Clonroche Curate outlined how Ciara Dunne had said that there was nothing out of the ordinary with people making funeral arrangements as the entire family could be killed in a car accident and that Ciara Dunne had said that they had no intention of doing anything untoward. Garda Superintendent C stated that the Clonroche Curate said the family were in good spirits and that he had no concerns when he was leaving.
- 5.92 During the course of his interview with the Inquiry Team, Garda Superintendent C was questioned closely as to the Clonroche Curate's description of his state of mind when leaving the Dunne family home. Garda Superintendent C was adamant that the Clonroche Curate had said to him that he had "no concerns" whereas the Clonroche Curate informed the inquiry when interviewed that "I went there with more concern than I had leaving". He said his concerns were somewhat dissipated and he was somewhat relieved.
- 5.93 Garda Superintendent C suggested to the Clonroche Curate that because of the good relationship between the Dunnes and the Clergy they should get the Monageer Parish Priest to visit the Dunne home during the weekend. The Clonroche Curate provided Garda Superintendent C with the Monageer Parish Priest's telephone number.

Garda Superintendent C immediately called both the Monageer Parish Priest's mobile and land line but got no reply. Later that evening Garda Superintendent C received a call from the Clonroche Curate confirming that he had made contact and that the Monageer Parish Priest had undertaken to visit the Dunne family home.

- 5.94 The Clonroche Curate confirmed receiving the call from Garda Superintendent C and also that the Monageer Parish Priest had agreed to visit the Dunne family.

Garda Superintendent C makes contact with Garda Sergeant D, Ferns Garda Station:

- 5.95 Having concluded his conversation with the Clonroche Curate, Garda Superintendent C rang Garda Sergeant D at his home and enquired if the Dunne family was known to him. Garda Sergeant D confirmed that they were and that he had called to their home on about four occasions in response to complaints received from them relating to annoyance being caused by other children in the area. Garda Sergeant D indicated that there appeared to be nothing untoward about the family. Garda Superintendent C outlined to Garda Sergeant D the nature of the Dunne family's visit to the Undertakers the previous evening and emphasised the references made by them to fatal traffic accidents involving families.
- 5.96 Garda Superintendent C instructed Garda Sergeant D to arrange for Garda E who was working from 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. that evening to carry out a patrol of Moin Rua estate and to check that the Dunnes' car was there and that everything was in order. There was no instruction issued to knock on the door or speak to the family.
- 5.97 Garda E came on duty at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday the 21st April, 2007. Garda Sergeant D contacted him by phone at the station and relayed

the instructions he had received from Garda Superintendent C. At 12:30 a.m. Garda E drove around Moin Rua estate and stopped for a moment outside the Dunnes' home. He noticed the lights in the house were off, the car was in the driveway and everything seemed normal to him. On the following day he worked from 8:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. At about 12:30 a.m. on Monday 23rd April, 2007 he carried out a further patrol of Moin Rua estate and found things the same as they were the previous morning. The house was in darkness, the car was parked in the driveway and everything seemed quiet.

Garda Superintendent C telephones the Child Care Manager:

5.98. At about 1:00 p.m. on Saturday 21st April, 2007 Garda Superintendent C telephoned the Child Care Manager and left a message on his mobile phone requesting him to call back. The Child Care Manager returned the call after a short time. When they spoke, Garda Superintendent C briefed him on the circumstances surrounding the visit by the Dunnes to the funeral undertakers the previous evening. He also informed the Child Care Manager that Adrian Dunne was blind and enquired if the family was known to the Social Services. The Child Care Manager had some knowledge of the 'blind' Dunnes but did not have any specific knowledge of Adrian and Ciara Dunne. He informed Garda Superintendent C that he would contact Social Worker 1W whom he felt might be able to update him on the Dunne family and that he would call him back.

The Child Care Manager telephones Social Worker 1W:

5.99 The Child Care Manager succeeded in making telephone contact with Social Worker 1W, who is a long-term Social Worker in the Enniscorthy area. He briefed her on the details of the conversation he had had with Garda Superintendent C in relation to the visit by Adrian and Ciara

Dunne to the funeral undertakers, which they both agreed were bizarre. She confirmed to him that she knew the family and had some dealings with the Dunne family including Adrian Dunne, in her professional capacity. She advised that she had not had any contact with Adrian Dunne for about ten years and concluded that, because of his impaired vision, he was likely to be the same Adrian Dunne to whom the Child Care Manager referred.

5.100 Social Worker 1W stated that she was aware of James Dunne's death by suicide and that she had mentioned it to the Child Care Manager during the course of their conversation. The Child Care Manager was unsure whether or not Garda Superintendent C mentioned James Dunne's suicide to him. However, Garda Superintendent C was aware of the suicide as Garda A had informed him about it earlier that day.

5.101 Social Worker 1W suggested to him that he should contact her Team Leader (Social Worker Team Leader 1W), to ascertain whether or not any of her colleagues were dealing with the Dunne family, subject of his enquiry. The Child Care Manager advised that he did attempt to telephone SWTL 1W but his phone was turned off and he left a message for him. Subsequently, SWTL 1W informed the Child Care Manager that he had not received any message. SWTL 1W advised the Inquiry Team by letter dated the 11th April, 2008 that his official mobile phone was turned off during the weekend of the 20th - 22nd April as he was off duty. He advised that when he turned on his phone on Monday the 23rd April, 2007 he found no evidence of a missed call or a voice message. The Garda investigation disclosed, through Eircom, that the Child Care Manager did call SWTL 1W's mobile at 1:43 p.m. on the 21st April, 2007.

The Child Care Manager telephones Garda Superintendent C:

5.102 The Child Care Manager rang Garda Superintendent C at 2:10 p.m. on 21st April, 2007 and informed him that SW 1W had confirmed to him that Adrian Dunne was one of the 'blind' Dunne family, that the extended Dunne family was known to their services over the years, but insofar as he was aware, there had been no recent contact with the family.

5.103 The Child Care Manager informed the Inquiry Team that he advised Garda Superintendent C of the absence of an 'out of hours' service in the Wexford area. He also drew his attention to Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991. Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991 provides that:

"12.(1) Where a member of the Garda Síochána has reasonable grounds for believing that -

- (a) there is an immediate and serious risk to the health or welfare of a child, and*
- (b) it would not be sufficient for the protection of the child from such immediate and serious risk to await the making of an application for an emergency care order by a health board under section 13, the member, accompanied by such other persons as may be necessary, may, without warrant, enter (if need be by force) any house or other place (including any building or part of a building, tent, caravan or other temporary or moveable structure, vehicle, vessel, aircraft or hovercraft) and remove the child to safety.*

12.(2) The provisions of subsection (1) are without prejudice to any other powers exercisable by a member of the Garda Síochána.

12.(3) Where a child is removed by a member of the Garda Síochána in accordance with subsection (1), the child shall as soon as

possible be delivered up to the custody of the health board for the area in which the child is for the time being."

Further, he reminded him of the Caredoc services which were available in an emergency. The Child Care Manager was under the impression from Garda Superintendent C that he was not going to exercise his powers under Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991. Garda Superintendent C informed the Child Care Manager that a priest, known to the Dunne family, had visited them the previous night and that the family had made little of their visit to the Undertakers. However, the Child Care Manager did say that he had anticipated that the Gardai would call to the family home.

5.104 During the course of his interview with the Inquiry, the Child Care Manager stated that, had there been an 'out of hours' service available, Social Workers, based on the information that was then available, would have intervened by calling to the Dunne family home. The Child Care Manager acknowledged that Social Workers, because of their training, are better equipped than the Gardai to carry out such assessments. He emphasised the need for such an 'out of hours' service to be provided. He was asked if any consideration had been given to meeting with Garda Superintendent C on that afternoon with a view to discussing the best strategy to deal with the matter. He advised that, had it been suggested, he would have co-operated.

5.105 Garda Superintendent C stated to the Inquiry Team that the Child Care Manager informed him during their second telephone conversation at 2:10 p.m. on the same day that he would organise for SW 1W to call and liaise with the Dunne family. Garda Superintendent C stated at interview that the Child Care Manager did not say that this visit would take place on the following Monday and that he presumed that SW 1W was going to liaise with the family that afternoon. Garda Superintendent C had been advised by the Child Care Manager that

there was no 'out of hours' service available and this had been discussed during this conversation.

5.106 The Child Care Manager and SW 1W emphatically denied in their evidence to the Inquiry that there was any reference to, or undertaking given, that there would be any intervention made by HSE officials before Monday morning. During the course of her interview with the Inquiry Team, SW 1W stated her position very clearly in relation to the absence of an 'out of hours' service when she said "*it is just not procedure. You don't go and that's it.*"

5.107 Garda Superintendent C advised the Inquiry that, during the course of this telephone call with the Child Care Manager he informed him that he did not have any proof that the children were at risk and consequently would not be invoking Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991.

5.108 At interview, Garda Superintendent C was asked if he saw any role for the Gardai in the matter. In reply, he said, "*none whatsoever*". If he had seen a role for the Gardai he would have invoked Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991. He also informed the Inquiry Team, based on what the Child Care Manager had told him, he presumed SW 1W was going to liaise with the family that day and that the social work service would look after the matter themselves. Having regard to the circumstances he was faced with at the time and the information that was available to him, he did not see any necessity to send Gardai to the house. He said he wanted to keep it as humane as possible and sending Gardai around to the house may not have helped the situation.

5.109 During Garda Superintendent C's interview with the Inquiry Team it was put to him that in order to carry out a risk assessment, would it have been desirable to have had one or more Gardai call to the house and seek an explanation from them as to why they visited the Funeral Undertakers the previous Friday evening where they made funeral

arrangements for themselves and their children. In response, he said *"I did not see that as a role for us. We are not qualified to carry out risk assessments of people if they had mental problems or any other problems"*.

5.110 He further stated even if he or any member of An Garda Síochána had called to the Dunne household and they happened to be still alive and had they used *"gombeen policing methods"* to gain entry, they would be neither trained nor qualified to carry out a physical or mental assessment of the family.

5.111 Garda Superintendent C stated that he also presumed that the HSE officials were then involved with the family. He said at interview that he had no concerns about the family following his discussions with the Clonroche Curate, the Child Care Manager and Garda Sergeant D. He said that he asked Garda E to check on the Dunne family home by driving past the house, but did not ask him to call to the house as this might only have exacerbated any situation that existed.

5.112 Garda Superintendent C also stated that people make funeral arrangements which include children every day of the week. When asked if he had considered contacting the extended Dunne family over the course of the weekend to inform them of the bizarre situation, he responded by stating that he did not know the Dunne family and that Adrian Dunne and his wife were two adults.

5.113 Garda Superintendent C was asked at interview if he had been aware of the specific funeral instructions and the comments made to the Funeral Director by Adrian and Ciara Dunne would he have acted differently. He said *"It wouldn't, no, because I didn't know this was going to happen"*. He reiterated that he had no evidence that the children were at immediate or serious risk and thus had no reason to invoke Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991. When asked at interview if, with the benefit of hindsight, if he would have done things

differently, Garda Superintendent C said that he would not, given the information that he had on that day.

The Monageer Parish Priest made two unsuccessful visits to the Dunne family home on Saturday 21st and Monday 23rd April, 2007:

5.114 The Monageer Parish Priest's only involvement with the Dunne family was a visit to their home when they first moved to the parish.

5.115 The Monageer Parish Priest stated at interview that on Saturday morning the 21st April, 2007 he received a telephone call from the Clonroche Curate. The Clonroche Curate briefed him on the circumstances surrounding the Dunne family's visit to the Undertakers the previous afternoon and also his own visit to the Dunes' home the previous evening. The Clonroche Curate conveyed his concern to the Monageer Parish Priest and at the Clonroche Curate's behest he agreed to make a visit to their home. Between 11:00 a.m. and noon on Saturday he called to the Dunne household. He knocked on the door but got no reply. He noted that the family car was in the driveway, the blinds were down and everything was quiet. He said that he did not in any way feel alarmed and left.

5.116 On the following Monday morning, between 11:00 a.m. and mid day, the Monageer Parish Priest made a return visit to the Dunne family home. Again, he got no response. The car was in the same position in the driveway and the blinds remained down. However, he did note that there were containers of milk on the doorstep. This was of concern to the Monageer Parish Priest and on his return to the Presbytery he rang the Clonroche Curate and advised him of the above details.

E-mail sent by the Child Care Manager to Social Worker Team Leader 1W on Monday 23rd April 2007 at 08.16 a.m.:

5.117 The Child Care Manager advised SWTL 1W on Monday 23rd April, 2007 by e-mail at 8:16 a.m. of the urgent contact made by Garda Superintendent C on Saturday afternoon in relation to the circumstances surrounding the Dunne Family's visit to the Undertakers on the previous Friday and the bizarre details of same. Further, he confirmed that he had spoken to SW 1W and that she had confirmed his own recollection of the Dunne family. He stated that he had left a message on SWTL 1W's work mobile telephone and that he had advised Garda Superintendent C of the absence of an 'out of hours' Social Worker service and that the Gardai should make a judgment call if necessary with GP/Caredoc and avail of Section 12 (Child Care Act) if necessary. He provided him with Garda Superintendent C's telephone number.

Garda Superintendent C telephones Social Worker 1W and Social Worker Team Leader 1W on Monday morning, 23rd April, 2007:

5.118 Between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. on Monday the 23rd April 2007, Garda Superintendent C telephoned SW 1W. At interview he informed the Inquiry Team that there was no reference in this conversation to what she or any other HSE official may have done by way of intervention over the course of the weekend in relation to the Dunne family.

5.119 Social Worker 1W acknowledged that she received this telephone call from Garda Superintendent C and that she had suggested that he contact SWTL 1W. She confirmed that there was no reference made by Garda Superintendent C as to what action may have been taken by her at the weekend in terms of intervention with the Dunne family and further, that she would have been extremely surprised if there had been.

- 5.120 During the course of Garda Superintendent C's meeting with the Inquiry Team, he was asked whether he had contacted SW 1W, the Monageer Parish Priest or Garda E in order to establish if there had been any developments during the course of the weekend. He replied that he did not see any necessity to do so. He assumed once he had heard nothing from them that everything was alright, because he had no evidence to suggest that the children were at risk.
- 5.121 When Garda Superintendent C telephoned SWTL 1W, he had already read the e-mail he had received from the Child Care Manager earlier that morning. He confirmed to Garda Superintendent C that he was aware of the situation and that he intended having an assessment carried out that day. SWTL 1W immediately contacted SW 2W, an Intake Social Worker and informed her of the content of the e-mail. He requested her to do a background check on the Dunne family and advised her that they would do a joint visit to the family home later that morning.
- 5.122 At about 12:00 mid day on Monday, 23rd April, 2007 a member of An Garda Síochána at the request of Garda Superintendent C called to the family home of Maureen (nee Dunne) and Tommy Purcell in New Ross to ascertain if they were aware of Adrian and Ciara Dunne's visit to the undertakers on the previous Friday and of Adrian Dunne's general mood at the time. Neither Maureen nor Tommy Purcell were aware of the visit to the undertakers. They also stated that insofar as they were aware Adrian Dunne's mood seemed to be fine.
- 5.123 On his return to Enniscorthy Garda Station the member of An Garda Síochána informed Garda Superintendent C of the outcome of his meeting with the Purcells.
- 5.124 A statement from the visiting Garda has been made available to the Inquiry Team.

The Funeral Director receives a telephone call from the Clonroche Curate on Monday the 23rd April, 2007:

5.125 At approximately 11:00 a.m. on Monday the 23rd April, 2007 the Funeral Director received a telephone call from the Clonroche Curate. He informed her of his visit to the Dunne family home on Friday evening. He advised her that he was still worried. He told her that he had failed to make telephone contact with Adrian Dunne on Saturday and Sunday. In addition he also informed her of the Monageer Parish Priest's two unsuccessful visits to the house. The Funeral Director stated that she became extremely concerned and suggested that the Clonroche Curate *"go and check the house, I am telling you there is something wrong"*.

The Clonroche Curate telephones Garda Superintendent C on Monday afternoon, the 23rd April, 2007 triooering the Gardai going to 29 Moin Rua, Monageer

5.126 At about 12:55 p.m. on Monday the 23rd April 2007, the Clonroche Curate telephoned Garda Superintendent C. He informed him of his colleague, the Monageer Parish Priest's visits to the Dunne family home on Saturday and Monday morning and the lack of response on both occasions. Further he referred to the details relating to the Dunne's car, the blinds were drawn and the milk was on the doorstep. Shortly afterwards Garda Superintendent C telephoned Garda Sergeant F who was on duty and attached to Enniscorthy station.

Attendance at the scene of the traedy:

5.127 Garda Sergeant F and two Gardai called to the Dunne family home on that afternoon at approximately 1:30 p.m. They noted the details as already set out above. There was no response at either front or back

door. One of the Gardai, on looking through the letterbox in the front door, saw the body of a male person hanging in the hallway.

5.128 The Gardai forcibly entered the house and found Adrian Dunne hanging from a ligature fastened to a roof rafter. He was dressed in a Glasgow Celtic football jersey and jeans.

5.129 The body of Ciara Dunne was found on the floor of the living room with a ligature fastened around her neck. She was dressed in a brown jumper and blue jeans.

5.130 The bodies of the two children, Lean and Shania, were lying in a toe to toe position on the settee covered by a duvet. Both children were dressed in pyjamas and each child held a "Dora the Explorer" soft doll.

5.131 Garda Sergeant F immediately provided for the preservation of the scene and telephoned Garda Superintendent C and briefed him on his findings.

5.132 Garda Superintendent C, on receipt of the above information, requested the assistance of the Garda Technical Bureau team and the services of the State Pathologist. He also notified the Garda Press Office and the Regional Assistant Commissioner's Office.

5.133 At approximately 2:00 p.m. SWTL 1W and SW 2W arrived at the scene and they were informed by Garda Sergeant F of the unfolding tragedy.

5.134 Garda Superintendent C arrived at the scene at 2:20 p.m. and having reviewed the situation, he declared it a crime scene as provided for under Section 5 of the Criminal Justice Act, 2006.

5.135 At 3:11 p.m. GP 1W from Ferns, Co. Wexford, in response to a Garda request, attended at the Dunne family home. He examined the four bodies and officially pronounced them dead.

5.136 GP 1W performed a temperature measurement with the use of a tympanic thermometer. In all four cases the reading registered as "low". However, GP 1W was unable to give a definitive estimation as to the time of deaths of the four deceased.

5.137 At 4:10 p.m. the Clonroche Curate and the Monageer Parish Priest arrived at the scene and gave the last rites.

5.138 At 7:13 p.m. a team of Gardai arrived from the Garda Technical Bureau which included Ballistics, Fingerprints, Photography and Mapping Sections.

5.139 At approximately 7:40 p.m. the Deputy State Pathologist arrived at the scene. He examined the four bodies in situ.

5.140 He found that the bodies of the two adults, Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne were cold to the touch and fully rigid when he examined them at around 7:45 p.m.

5.141 The bodies of the two children, Lean and Shania, were cold to the touch and rigor mortis, though present, was declining.

5.142 At 10:00 p.m. the bodies of the four deceased were removed under Garda escort to the Mortuary at Hospital 2 (Wexford) for the purpose of having a post mortem examination carried out.

5.143 On the morning of the 24th April, 2007 at the Mortuary, Hospital 2, Garda Sergeant F identified the bodies of the four deceased to the Deputy State Pathologist. Mr. Sebastian Dunne, brother of Adrian Dunne later identified the four bodies to Garda Sergeant F.

Post Mortem Examinations:

5.144 The post mortem examination of all four bodies was carried out by the Deputy State Pathologist, at Hospital 2 on the 24th April, 2007. His findings are summarised as follows:

(I) *Adrian Dunne:*

"Cause of death was due to hanging. There were no features to indicate any assault or restraint.

A low level of alcohol (45 mg %) was detected in blood. Drugs were not detected."

(II) *Ciara Dunne:*

"Cause of death was ligature strangulation. There were several areas of bruising under the scalp, consistent with relatively mild blunt trauma. In addition, she had a black eye on the right side. Although these bruises were not associated with any intracranial injury, it is possible that they may have rendered her concussed. It is possible, therefore, that the ligature was applied to her after she was concussed. There was no evidence of her having struggled to free the ligature and in particular, her finger nails, which were neatly manicured, were all intact.

Alcohol and drugs were not detected in the blood."

(III) *Lean Dunne:*

"Cause of death was asphyxia due to smothering. There was no obvious evidence of any injury.

Alcohol and drugs were not detected in the blood."

(IV) *Shania Dunne:*

"Cause of death was asphyxia due to smothering. This child's body displayed post mortem lividity in both an anterior and posterior distribution. This would indicate that the child had been face down for several hours after death before being

*turned onto her back. There were two minor bruises on the scalp but no other evidence of trauma.
Alcohol and drugs were not detected in the blood."*

Forensic Examination of the dwelling house at 29 Moin Rua, Monageer:

- 5.145 A full forensic examination of the Dunne family home was carried out by personnel from the Garda Technical Bureau. All exterior doors and windows were found to be intact with the exception of the right lower panel of the back door which was forced in by the Gardai.
- 5.146 The interior and the exterior of the house were photographed by a Detective Garda from the Photographic Section. He provided the Inquiry Team with an album of photographs taken by him and a DVD disc which included the entire photographic material generated by him at the scene.
- 5.147 Two Detective Gardai from Garda Ballistics Section carried out an examination of the scene. They took possession of a large number of exhibits which included a pink Nokia mobile phone found in the attic and a silver Nokia mobile phone found in the hallway. Both of these phones had their SIM cards removed and were broken in half. The damaged SIM cards lay close by. The phones and the damaged SIM cards were handed over to the Detective Garda from the Fingerprint Section, for examination.
- 5.148 On the 24th April 2007, the Detective Garda from the Fingerprint Section attended at the Mortuary, Hospital 2 and took a set of Finger and Palm prints and Plantar prints of each of the four bodies of the Dunne family.
- 5.149 On the 3rd May, 2007 the Garda from the Fingerprint Section received the pink Nokia mobile phone and on the 4th May he received the silver

Nokia mobile phone. He examined both phones for latent finger and palm prints, one mark developed on the pink mobile phone and two marks developed on the silver mobile phone.

5.150 The Garda from the Fingerprint Section analysed and compared those marks against the finger, palm and plantar prints of the deceased Dunne family. Resulting from this comparison, he was satisfied beyond all doubt that the mark developed on the pink mobile phone was made by Ciara Dunne and one of the two marks developed on the silver mobile phone was made by Adrian Dunne. The second mark found on this phone did not contain sufficient ridge characteristics to individualize it. On the 1st June, 2007 these mobile phones were handed to a Forensic Scientist at the Forensic Science Laboratory, Department of Justice for further analysis.

Analysis of two mobile phones taken from the residence of 29 Moin Rua, Monageer by the Forensic Scientist:

5.151 The Forensic Scientist received the following items from the Fingerprint Section.

- (i) a silver Nokia mobile phone, model number N70 and a broken Meteor SIM card packed in a self sealed plastic bag labelled *"mobile phone found in hallway" 29 Moin Rua, 25/4/07;*
- (ii) a pink and white Nokia mobile phone model number 6101 and a broken Meteor SIM card packed in a self sealed plastic bag labelled *"found on floor of attic".*

5.152 The mobile phones were received in a powered off position with their batteries and SIM cards separate. The purpose of his examination was to extract the call text history and any other data from the two mobile phone handsets.

5.153 Both SIM cards had been deliberately broken in two across the copper interface and consequently no analysis could be carried out on them. The Forensic Scientist believed that the person who broke the cards was forensically aware and that this was done with a view to destroying data stored in the SIM cards. Consequently this restricted the amount of data stored on the phones which was available to the Inquiry Team for their perusal. In his professional experience such action is extremely rare.

5.154 The Forensic Scientist analysed the contents, as far as possible, of each phone by using a piece of forensically validated software. This exercise created an output file of calls; texts, phone numbers, photographs or videos. Much of the material stored was of little evidential value. However, a significant number of the text messages stored on the pink Nokia phone were sexually explicit in nature and tone. Many of these text messages were exchanged between Adrian and Ciara Dunne during the early hours of the morning.

5.155 There were no text messages found by the software on the silver Nokia phone. The Forensic Scientist stated that the software in itself depends entirely on the model of the phone and *"sometimes you get 100% success and sometimes you don't"*. He then did a manual analysis in order to establish if there was anything on the phone that the software did not pick up and he found that it contained four text messages, three of which were in the *"sent box"* and one in the *"outbox"*. In addition it showed one dialled number.

5.156 The message in the *"outbox"* was dated 21.4.'07 at 10:17 a.m. The telephone number for which the message was intended was recorded as 058 1029103. The message read as follows: *"Please ring father r from Wexford and tel him Ciara and Aidran are so very sorry. We nott going to Liverpool. Instad we pick heaven Please for give"*.

5.157 The Forensic Scientist stated that this message was actually sent but that, in his opinion, it did not reach its intended destination as it remained in the "outbox". Insofar as the sender was concerned the message was sent and once the send button was pressed it could not be unsent.

5.158 During the course of the Garda investigation an employee with Beat 102/103, Ardkeen, Waterford was interviewed and her statement was made available to the Inquiry Team. The designated recipient for the above message was mobile phone number 085 1029103 which is registered to Meteor, Kingswood Estate, Tallaght, Dublin 22. This phone is outsourced to Beat 102/103 Radio Station. The employee with Beat 102/103 stated that she was the CEO of this radio station and confirmed that a search of the text message records carried out by her for the 20th and 21st April, 2007 did not contain any messages from the mobile phone number in question, i.e. the silver mobile phone which contained a message dated 21.4.'07 at 10:17 a.m.

5.159 The dialled number discovered from the manual analysis carried out by the Forensic Scientist revealed that at 9:27 a.m. on the 21st April, 2007 a call was made from the silver nokia phone to a chat line number. The analysis also revealed that at 9:31 a.m. the credit balance on the phone was checked.

Last Contacts with the Dunne Family:

5.160 The Inquiry Team believe that the last person to have been in the company of the Dunne family was the Clonroche Curate when he visited their home on Friday evening the 20th April, 2007 leaving at approximately 9:30 p.m. Shortly after he arrived home he received a telephone call from Adrian Dunne enquiring if he had arrived home safely.

- 5.161 The Clonroche Curate tried to contact Adrian Dunne on his mobile phone on Saturday the 21st April and Sunday the 22nd April but he got no reply.
- 5.162 Adrian Dunne's mother told the Inquiry Team that she rang Adrian Dunne once on Sunday, 22nd April and twice on Monday, 23rd April but got no reply.
- 5.163 The Inquiry Team interviewed a number of neighbours of the Dunne family in Monageer. During the course of these interviews, the Inquiry Team tried to establish the last sightings of the Dunne family. While two of the interviewees believed that they saw one or more members of the family on Saturday 21st April, 2007 the Inquiry Team having carefully considered all of the evidence believe that these sightings were probably erroneous.

Likely time of Deaths:

- 5.164 The Deputy State Pathologist and GP 1W could not estimate a definitive time of death.
- 5.165 The Deputy State Pathologist informed the Inquiry by way of letter that there exists, at present, no reliable scientific method for estimating the time interval after death. He said that the general state of the bodies of the Dunne family would permit only a very crude and unreliable estimate of the time interval after death.
- 5.166 Based on his examination of the bodies at 7:45 p.m. on 23rd April, 2007 he estimated that Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne were dead for a period between approximately 12 to 36 hours and that their daughters Lean and Shania were dead for 36 hours or more.

5.167 The Deputy State Pathologist concluded by stating that the time estimates provided by him are unreliable but, at present, no reliable scientific method exists for their refinement.

5.168 The Inquiry Team cannot say with certainty the likely times of death of the Dunne family. On the one hand, the Deputy State Pathologist estimated that Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne died some time between 7:45 a.m. on Sunday 22nd April, 2007 and 7:45 a.m. on Monday 23rd April, 2007 and that the children died sometime before 7:45 a.m. on Sunday 22nd April, 2007. However, on the other hand, the last known action of the adult Dunnes was a 'suicide' text message sent on Adrian Dunne's mobile telephone on Saturday 21st April at 10:17 a.m.

5.169 Having carefully considered all the evidence available to the Inquiry Team, we believe on balance that Ciara Dunne and both children were killed before the "suicide" text message was sent on Saturday 21st April at 10:17 a.m. to the Radio Station Beat 102/103 and that Adrian Dunne killed himself shortly afterwards by hanging.

Accounts of fatal traffic accidents involving a family of six people related by Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne:

5.170 During the course of the Inquiry it came to light through many sources that Adrian and Ciara Dunne had told several of their family, friends and acquaintances, including the Funeral Director and the Golden Charter representative that a family of six who were friends of theirs had been killed in a car accident. The location of this accident varied and at times involved a Garda and his family.

5.171 The Garda investigation did not establish that any such alleged accidents took place. The Inquiry Team believe that such stories were

the first signs that Adrian and Ciara Dunne were planning to end their lives.

5.172 As a result of the references made by Adrian and Ciara Dunne to fatal traffic accidents, including suicide which were reported to the Gardai, the Inquiry Team believe that attention by the Gardai was focused on the possibility that the Dunne family might be involved in a fatal car accident. This would explain why the concerns of the Gardai were relieved by the presence of the Dunne family car which was parked outside their home on the weekend of the tragedy.

Association between the Dunne family and a female friend from Limerick:

5.173 The female family friend from Limerick is the same person who was appointed executor of the wills of Adrian and Ciara Dunne and named as guardian of their children in the instructions taken by the solicitor. At interview the friend from Limerick said that her consent to be executor of the wills or Guardian of the children was not sought by the Dunes.

5.174 She first met the Dunes in Hospital 3 in 2005 and a close friendship developed between them.

5.175 In November 2006, Adrian Dunne contacted her. He asked her to book a flight to Frankfurt for his mother Mary, daughters Lean and Shania and himself for the New Year. He indicated that Ciara Dunne did not want to go. The cost of the flight came to €289 and was booked by her using a friend's credit card.

5.176 In December 2006, the friend from Limerick gave Adrian Dunne details of her Laser card as he said that he had problems in paying his Sky Television account which was in the region of €75.00. On receiving her bank statement, she discovered that several unauthorised withdrawals

had been made from her account. The total amount involved was €1,669.00.

5.177 When she challenged Adrian Dunne on the unauthorised withdrawals he blamed Sky Television for the errors. He promised to refund her fully. They exchanged text messages over the following few months mainly relating to the payment of the debt. Around the end of March, 2007 she received a text from Adrian Dunne requesting her to ring him. When she rang him he told her that his brother James had committed suicide. Later that day Adrian Dunne rang back to say that another brother had just been killed in a traffic accident (the Inquiry Team note this was not true). Some days later Adrian Dunne texted her at 2:00 a.m. stating that his mother had had a stroke and had died (the Inquiry Team note this was also not true).

5.178 At interview the friend from Limerick informed the Inquiry Team that there had been an arrangement to meet on Friday the 20th April, 2007 for the purpose of paying the debt. However, Adrian Dunne cancelled the appointment on the basis that he had to be in a solicitor's office in Cork for the reading of James's will (the Inquiry Team notes that no such event took place). He offered to meet her on Saturday the 21st April but that did not suit her.

5.179 The last contact the friend from Limerick had with Adrian Dunne was on Friday the 20th April, 2007 at about 8:40 p.m. when a number of text messages were exchanged relating to the payment of the debt. The money owed by Adrian Dunne was never paid.

Disappointment expressed by members of the O'Brien and Dunne Families at not being informed by the Gardai of the tragedy in a timely fashion:

5.180 Members of the O'Brien and Dunne families met with the Inquiry Team and expressed their concerns that in some instances news of the

tragedy came to them through the news media rather than from the Garda Síochána.

- 5.181 Mrs. Marian O'Brien informed the Inquiry Team that she was very disappointed about the way she found out about the tragedy. At about 4:00 p.m. on Monday the 23rd April 2007, Marian O'Brien was in a friend's house when she saw on the teletext that a young family had been found dead in a house in Enniscorthy. She said that her *"heart stopped"* and she immediately rang Ciara Dunne's mobile number but got no reply. This information on the teletext was updated showing the location as Monageer. She then rang Ferns Garda Station but got no response. She also rang Enniscorthy Garda Station but the Garda to whom she spoke was unable to provide her with information as to the identity of those that died. The Garda in question said that she would ring her back.
- 5.182 Mr. P. J. O'Brien was at work when his wife telephoned him. She told him what she had seen on the teletext. Mrs. O'Brien then rang a Garda Inspector who was a family friend, stationed at Baltinglass Garda Station, Co. Wicklow. He was not aware of the incident but he promised to make enquiries and call her back. Mrs. O'Brien stated that the Inspector called her back ten minutes later and confirmed her worst fears.
- 5.183 Mr. O'Brien immediately left his office to meet his wife. On his journey he received a call on his mobile phone from the inspector who confirmed the deaths of Adrian and Ciara Dunne and their two daughters Lean and Shania. According to Mr. O'Brien the news of the tragedy was broadcast on television in addition to teletext and it was also on their local Radio Station.
- 5.184 Mr. O'Brien referred to the *"mess"* made of the notification; he said *"How as parents we weren't informed of it it's a horrible way to find*

out that your daughter is dead. We have been dealt an awful blow here".

5.185 Mr. O'Brien was very strident in his criticism of the media and recommended that there should be a black-out on all media reporting of such incidents for a number of hours until such time as the Gardai had notified families of victims.

5.186 On the other hand Mr. O'Brien was laudatory in his praise of the Gardai in Wexford and Donegal during the days surrounding the funerals in terms of the assistance they provided to him and his family at that very difficult time.

5.187 On the afternoon of Monday the 23rd April 2007, Mrs. Mary Dunne and her son Cornelius were in the Lochrann Centre (a Centre operated by the National Council for the Blind) in Wexford. At about 3:05 p.m. Mrs. Dunne received a telephone call from her daughter Bridget who informed her of the tragedy. Her son Cornelius received the news of the tragedy by telephone call from his best friend's brother who lived at the rear of Adrian and Ciara Dunne's house. A Community Resource Worker at the NCBI drove Mrs. Dunne and Cornelius to 29 Moin. Rua, Monageer. They arrived at 3:45 p.m.

5.188 On Monday evening the 23rd April, 2007 Garda A called to the home of Maureen Purcell (nee Dunne), sister of Adrian Dunne, at 19 Mary Street, New Ross to inform her of the tragedy.

5.189 Laurence Dunne, brother of Adrian Dunne, said that he received the news of the tragedy from his sister Bridget and on his way to Monageer he heard it being reported on the Radio.

5.190 In her statement to the Gardai, Bridget Breen (nee Dunne) said she became aware of the tragedy from family members but did not identify which family members told her or at what time.

Time at which Monageer Traedy was first reported on Radio One, 2FM and Aertel on 23rd April, 2007:

5.191 The Monageer tragedy was first reported on RTE One and 2FM at 3:00 p.m. on the 23rd of April, 2007.

5.192 The news item "*Four bodies found in Co. Wexford home*" was first posted on Aertel at 15:28:42 on the 23rd April, 2007.

Appointment of Garda Liaison Officers to the O'Brien and Dunne families:

5.193 Garda Superintendent C held a meeting at the crime scene with the officers present shortly after the doctor and priests departed at approximately 4:15 p.m. He appointed a Sergeant to liaise with the O'Brien family and another Sergeant to liaise with the Dunne family.

5.194 Garda Superintendent C informed the Inquiry that he was contacted by phone at the scene by an Inspector from Baltinglass Garda Station, Co. Wicklow who may have informed him that Mrs. O'Brien had been in touch with him. He said that the Inspector had been in touch with him from early on and he had said that he was a family friend. Garda Superintendent C said that he did not know how the O'Brien family became aware of the tragedy.

5.195 Garda Superintendent C was asked at interview how the Dunes were told about the tragedy and in reply said that as far as he could recall, somebody told him at the scene that Mrs. Dunne had arrived at the scene.

5.196 The Inquiry Team believe that it is imperative that Garda officers at scenes of crime where murder is suspected act swiftly and decisively in informing next of kin. It is recognised that the scene at the Dunne family home was a traumatic experience for the Gardai involved.

However, steps should have been taken to inform the families of the victims as expeditiously as possible.

5.197 The Inquiry Team acknowledge that the manner in which the O'Brien and Dunne families heard of the deaths of Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne, Lean and Shania added significantly to the overall trauma suffered by them. The Inquiry Team acknowledge that this may have been an isolated oversight on the part of the Garda Síochána.

A chronology of the Services sought and provided to the
Dunne family

This Chapter is based on a review of the Health Service Executive (HSE) records, Garda statements, Garda exhibits and interviews held with staff from the HSE and other organisations which provided services to the Dunne family between 2002 and 2007. The majority of health and social services personnel that were interviewed were based in Wexford.

2002

May, 2002:

- 6.1 Lean Dunne was born on the 6th May, 2002 in Hospital 1 (Donegal). She was discharged home to 10 Orchard Court, High Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. This was the first of seven addresses at which Lean was to reside with her parents.
- 6.2 Lean was born with congenital cataracts. She was breastfed by her mother, a fact which appeared to impress a number of the professionals who provided services to her. The discharge note from hospital dated 9th May, 2002 notes *"verbal report: mother has? Minor learning disability but coping well to be seen by (Consultant Ophthalmologist) as partner almost blind."*
- 6.3 In May, Public Health Nurse (PHN) 1D visited the family at their home on four occasions. Notes of the first examination of Lean on the 10th

May, 2002 noted parental congenital cataracts, paternal epilepsy and that mother and father had both attended speech therapy. PHN 1D visited again on the 15th and 16th May. On her visit of the 21st May, there was no reply when she called to the house.

- 6.4 North West Doc. Service was used twice by the family in May and on the second occasion they were advised to take Lean to Hospital 1 where she was admitted. A letter issued to GP Donegal from an Senior House Officer (SHO) states that the admission was for *"twenty-four hour history of being off form, not feeding and associated pyrexia."* It states that she was referred to a Consultant Ophthalmologist. She was to be reviewed in six weeks.

June/July, 2002:

- 6.5 Lean was seen by PHN 1D on the 7th June, 2002 and the notes state her weight was up by twelve ounces and that she was *"feeding well"*. She was admitted to Hospital 3 (Dublin) on the 11th June and was an in-patient there until the 23rd June. She had bi-lateral cataract operations. She attended Hospital 3 on the 27th June as an out-patient.
- 6.6 In July, 2002 Lean attended twice in the first week of July as an out-patient in Hospital 3. PHN 1D saw her on one occasion and the record states *"all well"*. A Domiciliary Care Payment was approved by an Assistant Medical Officer who noted *"both parents on disability benefit, her father due to visual impairment and her mother on account of having a learning disability."*
- 6.7 Lean was reviewed in July in Hospital 1 and a Registrar to the Consultant Paediatrician 1D, in a letter to GP Donegal noted *"her examination today is entirely normal though she does not like her eyes been examined, keeping them closed."* This letter notes she was being

reviewed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3 and had been told that she will get 60% - 70% of her sight back.

August/September/October, 2002:

- 6.8 Lean was admitted to Hospital 3 on the 30th July, 2002 and discharged on the 6th August, 2002. She was seen again on the 13th August and admitted overnight on the 20th August.
- 6.9 PHN 1D saw Lean by appointment at her clinic on the 5th September, 2002. She noted that both parents attended and informed her that they would be moving house shortly. Lean had another admission to Hospital 3 that month for a period of 16 days.
- 6.10 In the first week of October, 2002 a message was received by PHN 1D that the family had moved to a new address and the records were transferred. During this month Lean had two admissions to Hospital 3, one for a period of 6 days and the other at the end of the month for a period of 2 days. On the 16th October, the PHN records were received by PHN 2D.

November/December, 2002:

- 6.11 The family made a trip to Disneyworld, Florida in November. A month after receiving the records, PHN 2D telephoned the family. She did not get a reply and left a message to make contact. In December, PHN 2D telephoned on three consecutive days before Christmas and received no reply. Lean had spent a substantial period in Hospital 3 from the 3rd to 19th December, 2002 and again attended on the 23rd December as an in-patient.

Summary 2002:

6.12 Lean's first 7 months of life included one admission to Hospital 1 and eight admissions to Hospital 3 and four out-patients attendances. From the records received there appears to have been no formal communication between Hospital 3 and either the HSE in Donegal or Hospital 1. Both the HSE in Donegal and Hospital 1 appeared to have relied on the parents reports in respect of Lean's eye condition.

2003

January/February, 2003:

6.13 During this two month period, Lean attended Hospital 3 in January, 2003 for one day as an in-patient and once in February for an out-patient appointment. February, 2003 was the first time that PHN 2D met Lean and her parents. She had spoken to Adrian Dunne in January who said Lean was attending Hospital 3. An appointment in January for developmental examination by PHN 2D was cancelled by Adrian Dunne.

6.14 PHN 2D met the family in Fahan Health Centre and carried out a developmental examination in the first week in February, 2003. Prior to this she had received a telephone call from an National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI) worker to say that there was a failed attendance for three meetings with Lean.

6.15 PHN 2D at interview stated that she did a comprehensive assessment of Lean including public health nursing guidelines and the social circumstances of the family. She stated that her comprehensive

assessment took in "nursing observations in the sense of milestones of development, head circumference, length, weight and all of these were per standards of the green card" She stated that "in the community we take a holistic approach in the sense we take in the family resources." She had concerns in respect of the developmental milestones and that Lean was a little underweight. While reassuring the family she asked them to visit the GP. She was also concerned about motor development.

- 6.16 The next day she visited again. During interview she told the Inquiry Team "I followed the Child Care Guidelines of 1991 - - - I had been informed by NCBI that they had failed to attend three Early Intervention Team meetings". She discussed the situation with the GP and forwarded a letter to him.
- 6.17 On Friday 7th February, 2003 she made a further telephone call to encourage the family to see the GP. She telephoned the GP surgery later to see if the family had made contact. She spoke to the GP and to her Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing. She also spoke to the PHN 1D who reported "no concerns".
- 6.18 On the same day, PHN 2D tried to contact the Paediatric Social Worker. She wanted to know if the social services knew the family. In addition to this she telephoned the family to offer public health nursing over the weekend but there was no reply.
- 6.19 She called a Social Worker for Special Needs. This social worker did not know the family. PHN 2D on questioning during interview said she formed an impression that Ciara O'Brien at times was finding it hard to grasp basic concepts, e.g. feeding, nappy change but took into account that she was a first time mother.
- 6.20 In mid February, 2003 a number of telephone calls were made by PHN 2D to social workers to establish if the family was known to them.

Three different social workers are named in the notes and were contacted and it was finally established on the 25th February that the family was not known to any of the social workers. A Counsellor for Special Needs was also contacted by PHN 2D. In the event, the family did not request any support services.

- 6.21 A home visit was again made to the family on the 21st February, 2003 and no concerns were reported. At the end of February, Lean attended Hospital 1 and a referral for audiology services was recommended. The notes also record that Lean did not attend a developmental clinic as she was due to attend the paediatric clinic on the same day.

March/April, 2003

- 6.22 PHN 2D made a home visit in the first week in March, 2003 and notes that Lean is feeding well. She informed the family that Lean was to be referred to the Early Intervention Team by the out-patient department, Hospital 1 and she also gets consent for audiology referral. On this visit she notes a small sore on the buttocks area and advises the family of hygiene. She also notes that this is to be reviewed with the GP. Later in the month she updates the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing of the situation.
- 6.23 In April 2003, Lean had an overnight admission to Hospital 3 in the latter part of the month. In addition PHN 2D made a home visit and made a relatively lengthy note on that visit. This visit was at the request of the parents and she records, "*Discussed support from Counsellor for Special Needs - not requesting same.*" She advised them about attendance for the developmental clinic appointment. The note said "*reported that family moving to Dublin, Wicklow?*" The GP was informed of the weight gain.

6.24 Lean attended the Early Intervention Team clinic on the 30th April, 2003. Present at this meeting were a Community Paediatrician, a Paediatric Registrar, a Physiotherapist, an Occupational Therapist, a Counsellor for Special Needs and a Dietician. A Registrar to Consultant Paediatrician 2D writes to GP Donegal on the 23rd May, 2003 and states that *"presently she presents with gross developmental delay, which her parents attribute to the long time she spent in hospital. On assessment today she cannot sit without support, she does reach out and she does transfer. She appears to hear well and does have some degree of vision."*

6.25 The plan set out by the EIT was that Lean was *"to be seen by the physiotherapist who has shown her parents some exercises. Referral to speech therapy. To be seen by the occupational therapist. The Public Health Nurse will contact O.T. to see if any special toys can be arranged for her and also any possible benefits that she could receive."* The parents informed the Early Intervention Team that they might be moving house shortly and that they would notify them when it happened. The note states that she would be reviewed in the clinic in four months time.

May/June/July, 2003:

6.26 In the third week of May, 2003 an appointment for a developmental examination for Lean was cancelled as the family said they were planning to go on holiday to Wexford. There was another failed appointment for a developmental examination in Fahan Health Centre in the first week of July, 2003. PHN 2D telephoned to see if the Dunnes had attended for an audiology appointment on the 19th June. They had not attended and she requested that another appointment be made for Lean. A Counsellor for Special Needs contacted PHN 2D requesting clarity about whether her services and Social Work Services were required by the Dunnes.

- 6.27 PHN 2D visited on the 10th, 11th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 21st and 23rd July, 2003 but did not gain access. On the 11th July, PHN 2D telephoned the GP to discuss the family. He reported that they were still living in the area and that Ciara O'Brien was 10 to 11 weeks pregnant. After the failed visits later in July, PHN 2D wrote to the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing on 23rd July. The letter expressed concern about the pattern of failed appointments, noting that the family had not attended the developmental examination on 27th February, 2003 because it clashed with an out-patient appointment at Hospital 1 and the other appointments for 21st May and 3rd July, 2003 for developmental examinations had failed, as had the appointment for audiology on the 19th July.
- 6.28 After failing to gain access on the 23rd July, 2003 PHN 2D telephoned the GP practice and was informed that the family had moved to Wexford and was given their home address and she looked for PHN 1W. On the same day she telephoned the Wexford Health Centre. In addition she spoke with Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien and advised them to make contact with the Public Health Nursing Service in Wexford for the developmental appointment and hearing test that was outstanding. She also advised them that the public health nursing notes would be transferred to Wexford.
- 6.29 Over the 24th and 25th July 2003, PHN 2D spoke to her colleague in Wexford. She sent letters to the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing Services and the Early Intervention Team. She also sent the family records for transfer to Wexford. The following day she spoke with PHN 1W and briefed her on the history of the family. She spoke to the occupational therapist in Donegal who advised her that there was no involvement due to the move to Wexford.
- 6.30 The Inquiry Team noted that while Lean was seen by the Early Intervention Team in Donegal and a 'Plan' was put in place, few of the elements of that 'Plan' had been put into action by the time the family

moved to Wexford. It is clear that certain actions were being taken e.g. the Senior Physiotherapist for Paediatrics had written a letter which is on file. A Counsellor for Special Needs had made a telephone call to PHN 2D to enquire were services required by the Dunnes. When the family did not attend Fahan Health Centre for the developmental examination, eight home visits were made to the family, despite every effort made by PHN 2D, no contact was made with the family during this period. PHN 2D established through GP Donegal that Ciara O'Brien was pregnant. On the 23rd July, 2003 PHN 2D established through GP Donegal that the family had moved to Wexford and was advised of their new address.

- 6.31 From the records provided it appears that the PHN 2D made every effort to ensure continuity of services for Lean. She stated in her interview with the Inquiry Team that the fact that she had a number of ineffective access calls and that there was an outstanding developmental examination which made her concerned. In her conversation with the GP, he had made a comment about Adrian Dunne's personality which she in turn passed on to PHN 1W. She wrote to the Registrar for Consultant Paediatrician 2D, to the GP and to the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing to inform them of the family's change of address.

Wexford:

- 6.32 Adrian Dunne, Ciara O'Brien and Lean moved to Wexford in July, 2003. Adrian Dunne made an application for rent supplement in Wexford. A Community Welfare Officer (CWO) made a home visit and noted that the house was in good condition. Rent supplement was paid to Adrian Dunne from the 14th July, 2003 and in addition a deposit of €500 euro was paid. The family moved to Wexford while Ciara O'Brien's parents were on holidays. They did not tell her parents or

any other member of the O'Brien family that they were moving nor did they provide their new address.

- 6.33 The first contact that was made with the Public Health Nursing Service in Wexford was initiated by Adrian Dunne. He telephoned PHN 1W in the last week in July and gave her their new address and arranged for a home visit later in the month.
- 6.34 Lean was seen at out-patients in Hospital 3 on 29th July, 2003.
- 6.35 PHN 1W made a home visit on the 31st July, 2003. The notes taken by PHN 1W on her visit are detailed and note that *"Ciara has mild learning disability but is not on database Adrian has a personality disorder."* It was noted that Lean was developmentally delayed and underweight and was seen by Consultant Paediatrician 2D in February, 2003 and that she was reviewed by the Early Intervention Team on the 30th April, 2003. It was also noted that Physiotherapy had commenced in Donegal but that Occupational Therapy (OT) had not commenced as the family had moved to Wexford. The notes also record audiology review outstanding and she also has congenital cataracts that Lean had had lens implants as a newborn baby and that she was under the care of a Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3.
- 6.36 At Interview with the Inquiry Team, PHN 1W set out the designated core visits that a public health nurse would be obliged to undertake in respect of children in her care, these include a 24 hour visit on discharge, visits at 4 to 6 weeks, 3 to 4 months, six months, between 18 and 24 months and between 3½ and 4 years.
- 6.37 She stated at interview *"If we visit a family and we make an assessment that they need more support in between those core visits we would return to them as we are needed or as we see fit".* She also stated *"If there is a Social Worker involved with the family you are going to be you know in contact with the family more regularly."*

6.38 A referral form dated 31st July, 2003 to the Early Intervention Team by PHN 1W marked urgent, mentioned Lean's congenital cataracts, her failure to attain milestones, the referral to audiology in Donegal and her failure to attend and that she was underweight. Ciara O'Brien was approximately twenty-four/forty weeks pregnant at that time.

August/September/October, 2003:

6.39 In August, 2003 Lean was discussed at an Early Intervention Team meeting. On the 21st August, PHN 1W called to the house and Adrian Dunne did not invite her in. She informed him that Lean had been discussed at an Early Intervention Team meeting and he said that they had not received any appointment to date. It was agreed that he would bring Lean to the Child Welfare Clinic in Clonard in the first week of September.

6.40 Lean attended the Child Welfare Clinic on the 4th September, 2003 and was weighed. On the 22nd September, 2003 PHN 1W notes on the file that she spoke to another public health nurse who agreed she would call Lean to a developmental clinic with an assistant medical officer on the 7th October, 2003 and that she would ensure that she was referred to a paediatrician. This special developmental clinic was cancelled since it was overbooked.

6.41 On the 7th October, 2003 PHN 1W spoke to Liaison Nurse (LN) 1W and she outlined that Lean had been discussed at the September Early Intervention Team meeting and would be on the list for the next special developmental clinic. She also confirmed that the physiotherapist had received a referral from the physiotherapist in Donegal. On 22nd October, 2003 a call was received from Adrian Dunne who stated that Ciara O'Brien wished to speak with the Public Health Nurse. At this point Ciara O'Brien was thirty-eight/forty weeks pregnant. On the following day a home visit was made and both Adrian Dunne and Ciara

O'Brien were present. It was noted that Lean was eighteen months old and not meeting developmental milestones. She was walking by furniture only. The note also says that she was to be re-referred to audiology and that she was for review in Hospital 3 regarding her eyes.

6.42 No reason was mentioned as to why Ciara O'Brien wished to speak to her and as Adrian Dunne remained in the room, PHN 1W said she did not have an opportunity to pursue this. *"I suppose if Adrian didn't volunteer to leave the room and she didn't bring up an issue, there wasn't a lot I could do about it"* was what PHN 1W said at interview.

6.43 The Dunne family were registered as patients with GP 2W's practice from 30th September, 2003 to 9th June, 2004.

6.44 The next contact that PHN 1W had was a message that Lean did not attend her appointment on the 29th October, 2003 for her audiology and she agreed to follow it up. On 14th November, 2003 PHN 1W made a home visit to weigh Lean and discuss the audiology appointment. On this visit the neighbours told her that the family had moved to New Ross. She followed up and checked the new address and left messages for Audiology about the new address and for the nurse with responsibility for disability and for physiotherapy. On 17th November, 2003 PHN 1W notes that the relevant issues had been relayed to PHN 2W on the telephone and that the notes had been sent to the Child Health Office (CHO). The Inquiry Team note that a procedure had been followed in this instance as set out by Director of Public Health Nursing at interview.

November/December, 2003:

6.45 In early November, 2003 the family moved to 19 Chamberlands, New Ross, Co. Wexford. An application for rent supplement was made by Ciara O'Brien and was paid from the 3rd November, 2003. An

application was also made for confinement costs and a payment of €120.00 was made on the 11th November.

- 6.46 Shania Dunne was born on the 17th November, 2003. On the 20th November, 2003 PHN 2W received two telephone calls, one from Hospital 2 and one from Adrian Dunne. The notes on her primary visit state there is a genetic history of heart conditions and Down Syndrome and that the father has congenital cataracts. She also notes that Ciara O'Brien has a mild learning disability and that Adrian Dunne is blind and that Lean has bi-lateral congenital cataracts. At interview PHN 2W said about Ciara O'Brien that she "*came across as soft, gently spoken, lovely mothering qualities, caring, caring and liked information and took it on board.*" The notes state that Shania is breast feeding on demand and that advice is given regarding diet and exercise and that Ciara O'Brien is encouraged to attend a support group. It is noted that Shania is to attend the Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3 in four weeks time.
- 6.47 On the 21st November, 2003 it is noted again by PHN 2W that Lean is not reaching developmental milestones and she is referred to Speech Therapy and is to attend the Child Welfare Clinic in three to four weeks time. It is also noted that she continues to attend the Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3.
- 6.48 An application for a Disabled Driver's Tax Concession was made by Adrian Dunne. There is a letter on file from the Senior Medical Officer dated 25th November, 2003 to Adrian Dunne stating that the assessment indicated that while he had a significant disability problem, it did not fulfil the criteria set out for the above benefit. The letter also outlined the appeals process.
- 6.49 Lean was an in-patient in Hospital 3 for a day in the first week in December, 2003. LN 1W states in her notes that "*she continued to attempt to make contact*". Further, she had been informed by PHN

1W of the family's new address. In the first week in December she received a call from Adrian Dunne and arranged to visit on the 15th December, 2003. Her visit was unsuccessful and she left a note requesting the family to make contact with her. Shania was an in-patient in Hospital 3 from the 9th to 22nd December, 2003.

- 6.50 On the 28th December, 2003 Lean attended the Child Welfare Clinic; her growth was measured and PHN 2W discussed her non attendance at the Audiology Clinic. PHN 2W recorded that Shania had cataracts removed and was not for eye implants. She also recorded that she was for review in eight weeks time. She completed the referral form for the Dunnes for speech and language therapy.
- 6.51 PHN 2W's notes do not indicate whether any attempts were made to contact the family between the 21st November, 2003 and 28th December, 2003. This is in contrast with the public health nursing services provided after Lean's birth. The Inquiry Team notes that this was a family with two children with severe visual impairment and there were issues about the older child's development.

Summary 2003:

- 6.52 There were two episodes which gave rise to serious concern regarding non attendance at appointments relating to developmental delay in Donegal – one in February, a later one in July. The transfer of file and notes from PHN 2D to PHN 1W were carried out with attention to detail. The first referral to the Early Intervention Team in Wexford after PHN 1W's visit is detailed and marks the referral as urgent. The file and notes are transferred by PHN 1W to PHN 2W and contact is made with LN 1W in respect of the change of address. By the end of the year, despite the birth of the second child, public health nursing records do not indicate a sense of particular concern in respect of this family.

2004

January/February, 2004:

6.53 In January, 2004 Shania was an in-patient in Hospital 3 for one day. The family made their first visit to a Medical Centre in New Ross and saw GP 3W. In the first week of February, PHN 2W made a home visit. The notes state that Shania continued to develop slowly; motor development at twelve/fifty-two weeks and mother continued to breast feed exclusively. In respect of Lean she stated that she was walking unaided. The notes state that advice was given to Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien in relation to Lean wearing her glasses and attending review appointments with the Consultant Ophthalmologist. In February there were four occasions on which the family attended Hospital 3 with one or either child.

March/April/May, 2004:

6.54 On 2nd March, 2004 Shania was brought to GP 3W suffering from mild gastroenteritis and Lean was weighed on the same visit. On 7th March, PHN 2W noted that Shania's developmental progress seemed delayed and vaccinations were discussed. Further, she noted that Shania was for review at the eye clinic at Hospital 3 two weeks later. In the first week in March, LN 1W wrote to the Dunes requesting that they contact her to make an appointment and she copied this letter to PHN 2W. Her last contact was a home visit on the 15th December, 2003 when she got no reply. On the 23rd March, both Shania and Lean attended as out-patients in the Hospital 3.

6.55 On the 21st April, 2004 Lean and Shania attended the Audiology Clinic and they were both found to have normal hearing. A review was

recommended for a December Audiology Clinic. Some days later a senior area medical officer approved payment of the Domiciliary Care Allowance in respect of Shania.

6.56

[REDACTED]

June/July, 2004:

6.57 Shania attended the Child Welfare Clinic on the 14th June, 2004. PHN 2W noted that surgery for implants was not planned and that Shania was wearing glasses. At interview with the consultant ophthalmologist, he explained that a decision had been reached with the family not to insert implants.

6.58 On the 22nd June, 2004 the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing wrote to the Senior Medical Officer (SMO) of the Early Intervention Team stating that PHN 2W had concerns about the children's delay in reaching developmental milestones and their vision problems. It would appear from the records that Lean had not been seen by any member of the Early Intervention Team notwithstanding an urgent referral on 31st July, 2003.

6.59 In the last week of July, 2004 both children attended Hospital 3 as out-patients for a day. LN 2W who had taken up duty in June, 2004 and PHN 2W made a joint home visit on the 30th July. LN 2W noted that Lean had twelve operations within her first year of life. She also noted that she appeared to be reaching developmental milestones for two years, that she was to see the public health nurse on Wednesday 4th August for developmental examination and that she was referred to speech and language therapy. It was noted that she was a bright little girl with lots of singular but clear vocabulary. Her hearing test was normal. LN 2W's completed report for the EIT meeting of 8th August, 2004 noted that Shania was due an area medical officer developmental examination but that there was no local service available at that time. She further noted that PHN 2W was to refer Shania for audiology and speech and language therapy. However they had both been assessed as normal for audiology in April, 2004 and according to PHN 2W's notes she had completed the referral for speech and language therapy on the 28th December, 2003.

August/September/October, 2004:

6.60 According to PHN 2W's files, on the 4th August, 8th September and 26th October, 2004 both Lean and Shania attended at the Child Health Centre. PHN 2W's notes state that Shania was wearing glasses and attaining developmental milestones and that she continued under the care of the consultant ophthalmologist. Both children were referred for speech therapy but the speech therapist said she had not received a history form from the parents to list the children for assessment.

6.61 By letter dated 11th October, 2004 both children were referred to Paediatrician 1W and Paediatrician 2W by LN 2W. On the 18th October, LN 2W had telephone contact with Adrian Dunne. Paediatrician 1W had written a letter that LN 2W referred to in a record of this date. Adrian Dunne gave his consent to LN 2W requesting that

records from the Early Intervention Team in Donegal be transferred to Wexford. LN 2W sent Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien the requisite consent forms for them to sign to enable the relevant records in Donegal to be released to Wexford.

6.62 At interview with the Inquiry Team, LN 2W was asked if the fact that Lean was involved with the Early Intervention Team in Donegal was relevant to the Early Intervention Team in Wexford. She replied *"I suppose I never got any information from Donegal. The information I would have had would have been based on the family and the history that they would have given me.... I asked them could I get access to that file and they said "yes" and then as per usual when you go on and contact they would say "no", we need a written consent to actually release it and I posted them out but it was never returned"*. She also stated at interview that *"every Early Intervention Team in the whole of Ireland is different. There isn't one uniform model of Early Intervention"*.

6.63 It was difficult to establish what communication system existed between the Early Intervention Team and the Public Health Nursing System. When LN 2W was asked how information from an Early Intervention Team meeting was conveyed to a public health nurse she replied, *"that's a good question. I think a lot of time it's actually from ourselves that we would ring if there were any issues outstanding. Generally, certainly in my experience I would liaise directly with the public health nurses myself"*.

6.64 In response to how the system works she said she would have a file on each child. She also understood that there was a central file which had the records of the Early Intervention Team meeting and *"as far as I understand a copy of those reports would go on to the central file"*.

6.65 PHN 2W's file for Shania has a note dated the 26th October, 2004 recording that she attended the developmental clinic, was referred to audiology and that she had an appointment for the Paediatrician.

Summary, 2004:

6.66 From an Early Intervention Team perspective it appears that LN 1W attempted to make contact with the Dunne family in December, 2003 and the next contact with that service was on the 30th July, 2004 which was a joint visit with LN 2W and PHN 2W. At the Early Intervention Team meeting on the 13th September, 2004 a referral was made by LN 2W to the Paediatric Department in Hospital 2 by letter dated 11th October. PHN 2W had a number of contacts with the family but it is difficult to establish how many of these are visits to the clinic and how many are home visits. In total there are eight contacts. One of these is a joint contact in July and is made with the specialist nurse. The last three visits in August, September and October relate to the family calling to the Health Centre.

2005

January/February/March/April, 2005:

6.67 The Dunes were offered their first appointment with Paediatrician 1W on the 9th January. They failed to attend this and the next four appointments. When LN 2W was questioned at interview, if this would have been a high number of failed appointments, she replied *"I suppose I couldn't comment as to whether it would be or it wouldn't be, but a lot of families are mobile and addresses, people move, letters get*

sent to wrong addresses, second appointment is offered, the next address is the wrong address and there isn't any feedback to say that, well, they've been offered the appointment, they haven't attended it." When she was asked, "the next time you hear about that would be when?" She said "Possibly when they reviewed again in Early Intervention which could be in two years time."

- 6.68 On the 4th February 2005, PHN 2W met with both children. This was the last time that PHN 2W saw the children at home. She recorded that Lean was reaching some developmental milestones and had made good progress and that Shania was attaining developmental milestones and that the parents had no concerns to report.
- 6.69 The children failed to attend out-patient appointments on 8th March, 2005 in Hospital 3.
- 6.70 In April, 2005 the family moved back to Wexford. PHN 2W's records state that Shania was reaching developmental milestones and that Lean was also attaining developmental milestones. She noted that Lean's glasses were broken and she spoke to the parents about the importance of having a second pair. She gave a supply of a preparation to treat head lice and information regarding same. In Shania's notes she recorded that the Speech Therapist awaited the return of the social history form. PHN 2W spoke to the parents regarding these forms and advised their return.

August/September, 2005:

- 6.71 Lean and Shania had out-patients appointments in Hospital 3 on the 30th August, 2005 which they failed to attend. On the 31st August and 7th September PHN 2W recorded two home visits. She did not gain access according to her interview with the Inquiry Team. The Inquiry Team note that the family had moved back to Wexford in April, 2005.

September/October, 2005:

6.72 In the first week of September, 2005 the family took a holiday in Pebble Beach, Tramore which was funded by the Wexford National Council for the Blind Committee. Adrian Dunne had contacted the Council in July and the Resource Worker met with them in August.

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October, 2005:

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6.104 The Inquiry Team is of the view that it is difficult to explain the disconnection between the systems of the Early Intervention Team and the Public Health Nursing services. There are a number of processes by which their address could have been verified and the non attendances followed up, such as medical card records and the supplementary allowance records. One starting point could have been the joint visit of 30th July, 2004 of PHN 2W and LN 2W.

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November/December, 2005:

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6.118 In November, 2005 the Dunne family moved from Wexford to Bree, Co. Wexford. On 16th November, 2005 Ciara O'Brien made an application for financial support to a Community Welfare Officer at Enniscorthy Health Centre and was awarded a weekly rent supplement from 14th November, 2005. An allowance of €106.90 was awarded. The application form that was completed by Ciara O'Brien provided her two previous addresses. According to the Social Welfare Allowance records a sum of €1,234.00 was paid to the landlord in Wexford for outstanding rent arrears. On 17th November, 2005 Adrian Dunne left a message on PHN 1W's answering service to say that the family was moving house. He left a mobile phone number.

6.119 [REDACTED]

6.120 On 22nd and 30th November 2005, PHN 1W telephoned the mobile number that had been left by Adrian Dunne on 17th November but failed to contact him. After the second telephone call she received a call informing her that Adrian Dunne did not own that phone. On the

30th November, 2005 both Lean and Shania attended Hospital 3 as in-patients for a day.

6.121 On 14th December 2005, SW 4W made a home visit to the Dunnes. This was her second meeting with the family. The first meeting was an office based interview on 14th October, 2005. At interview she said *"the purpose of the visit was, I suppose, was to meet with the family. I felt bad that I had not visited them at this point because I was on leave and because there was a hundred other things going on as well."*

6.122 SW 4W described the bungalow as warm and tidy. The Christmas decorations were up. She found Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien and the two girls to be happy and chatty. The children were playing with little cardboard letters on the floor and they were singing.

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Summary 2005:

6.127 The Dunne family moved back from New Ross to Wexford in April, 2005 and in November moved from Wexford to Bree. There were a number of failed appointments in Hospital 3 and four appointments were cancelled. One appointment only was attended. The family were offered three appointments by Paediatrician 1W who was attached to the Early Intervention Team. Difficulties in contacting and locating the family were ongoing, notwithstanding the fact that the family were on each occasion of their move in receipt of State benefits and had medical cards. The Public Health Nursing Service had four contacts with the children. LN 2W made contact with PHN 1W to check in her area for the Dunes and let her know their new address.

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2006

January/February/March, 2006:

- 6.128 On 4th January 2006, the Public Health Nursing Department tried to obtain the correct phone number for Adrian Dunne by checking all landline and mobile numbers that had been supplied by him. These numbers were all found to be incorrect. They checked with the Medical Card Section and were given the Dunnes new address at Bree, Enniscorthy.
- 6.129 On 4th January, 2006 LN 2W wrote to Paediatrician 1W informing him of the Dunnes' new address. She also notes in the letter that Adrian Dunne did not send back the consent form she sent to him in October, 2004. LN 2W was asked at interview if she had made attempts to pursue Adrian Dunne to obtain his consent to the release of information from the Early Intervention Team in Donegal. She replied that her failure to pursue the consent was an oversight and that as three years had passed the relevance of the information was questionable.
- 6.130 A copy of the letter of 4th January, 2006 of Paediatrician 1W was sent to PHN 3W by LN 2W and she was asked to make contact with the family. However, it transpired that the family were not in PHN 3W's area. LN 2W also advised PHN 1W of the Dunnes' new address.
- 6.131 PHN 4W was identified as the appropriate public health nurse and was contacted by LN 2W and provided with details of the Dunne family. PHN 4W undertook to revert to LN 2W when she had visited the family.
- 6.132 On 25th January 2006, GP 4W advised LN 3W that the Dunne children had now moved into her area and were registered with GP 4W's

practice. LN 3W passed this information on to LN 2W and on 27th February, 2006 LN 2W telephoned GP 4W with her contact details.

6.133 The Dunne family registered with the practice of GP 5W in March, 2006. This GP continued to be their family doctor until the time of their deaths.

6.134 By letter of 20th March, 2006 Paediatrician 1W wrote to GP 3W informing her that Lean and Shania had failed to attend an appointment with him in March and requested information of their whereabouts. He sent a copy of this letter to the Early Intervention Team, LN 2W and to the Public Health Nursing Department. Paediatrician 1W was not aware that the family had registered with another GP.

6.135 On 28th March, 2006 LN 2W gave PHN 4W the most recently ascertained contact numbers for Adrian Dunne as provided to her by Adrian Dunne's father on a home visit. On 29th March, 2006 PHN 4W telephoned PHN 2W to request the transfer of the Child Health Records. The family had moved out of PHN 2W's area eleven months previously.

April/May, 2006:

6.136 In the first week of April, 2006 both Lean and Shania attended Hospital 3 as out-patients. The Hospital 3, Social Worker wrote a letter to support the family's application for housing and stated that a medical report was being provided by the Consultant Ophthalmologist in support of the application.

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6.143 On 18th May, 2006 Adrian Dunne telephoned the Resource Worker, NCBI in connection with the family's possible house move and the Resource Worker wrote a letter to Wexford County Council in support of their application for housing giving details of the family's visual impairment.

6.144 On 25th May, 2006 both Lean and Shania had out-patients appointments in Hospital 3 which they failed to attend. They were

given out-patient appointments on 30th May, 2006 which they also failed to attend.

June/July/August, 2006:

6.145 On 1st June, 2006 an employee from the Child Health Office informed PHN 4W that Lean and Shania's child health records were with PHN 2W. On the 7th June, 2006 PHN 4W in a telephone call to PHN 2W advised that the family were in rented accommodation between Clonroche and Enniscorthy and that PHN 2W would retain the records as the family were awaiting transfer to Monageer.

6.146 On 12th June, 2006 Wexford County Council offered a two bedroom bungalow at 29 Moin Rua, Monageer to the Dunne family. On the 20th June, 2006 Ciara Dunne made an application to a CWO for financial support in respect of furniture and electrical items. A payment of €3,170 was approved and in mid July a further payment of €300.00 was approved in respect of curtains/blinds.

6.147 In July, 2006 Adrian Dunne contacted NCBI in respect of a holiday in Tramore. On 17th July, 2006 PHN 4W recorded on her notes that the Dunes had moved to 29 Moin Rua, Monageer. She informed PHN 2W, LN 2W and the Child Health Office of this and she established that the responsible Public Health Nurse was PHN 5W.

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September/October, 2006:

6.155 The Dunne family had a holiday in September at Pebble Beach in Tramore provided by the NCBI.

6.156 In the first week of October, 2006 the visiting teacher for the blind from the Department of Education received an e-mail stating that the visiting teacher's services were warranted for Lean. She made contact with the Dunnes and arranged to visit them in Monagear in the second week of October, 2006.

6.157 The visiting teacher for the blind informed the Inquiry Team that she made a home visit on 13th October, 2006. She said that Adrian and Ciara Dunne were anxious about a school for Lean. She told them that an ophthalmologist's eye report in respect of Lean was essential for the application for the provision of any services within a school and for the provision of subsequent services. During the visit Adrian Dunne telephoned Hospital 3 to request an eye report. She said that Adrian and Ciara Dunne told her that Lean had been registered blind in Donegal but they did not have a copy of the certificate. Adrian and Ciara Dunne discussed sending Lean and Shania to school at the same time but the visiting teacher was not enthusiastic about this and actively discouraged it in the interests of each of the children. She explained in detail the services that were available. She explained about the special needs assistance and resources. Adrian and Ciara Dunne mentioned to her their concerns about Lean and Shania being bullied at school.

6.158 On the 3rd week in October, 2006 Lean and Shania were in-patients for a day in Hospital 3.

November/December, 2006:

6.159 On the 14th November, 2006 Adrian, Ciara, Lean and Shania Dunne called to the health centre. PHN 2W weighed all four members of the Dunne family. On 27th November, 2006 the Resource Worker in NCBI drafted a letter for a disabled parking card application.

6.160 HSE Disability Records show a letter on file from Paediatrician 1W dated 28th November, 2006 but with no addressee. The letter contains the Dunne girls' names, ages and addresses at birth and contains the following sentence "*No response from (GP 3W) or Early Intervention Team offices or Grogan's Road Public Health Department regarding these children.*"

- 6.161 On 7th and 12th December, 2006 both Lean and Shania had out-patient appointments in Hospital 3 which they did not attend.
- 6.162 On 12th December, 2006 the Early Intervention Team held a meeting and the minutes of the meeting record that Lean and Shania's cases were discussed. The minutes record the following: *"Report submitted by Paediatrician for Shania. (LN 2W) to follow up re involvement with services. (LN 4W) to contact (PHN 2W) re. current address and ascertain if necessary to refer to (SW 6W), Social Work Department. (LN 4W) will liaise with (Paediatrician 1W) re. address. For review at EIT February, 2007."* In the Early Intervention Team's notes of the meeting of 12th December, 2006 concerning Shania, it is recorded that Paediatrician 1W expressed concerns regarding the failure of the Dunne family to access services.
- 6.163 On 14th December, 2006 LN 4W in the absence of LN 2W (who was on sick leave), telephoned PHN 5W in Manager regarding the Dunne family. Neither PHN 3W nor PHN 4W had had Lean's or Shania's child health records.
- 6.164 On 15th December, 2006 PHN 5W visited the Dunne home and spoke to Adrian Dunne. It was a doorstep visit. He informed her that they were bringing the children to Hospital 3 regularly and that they had another appointment the following week. PHN 5W asked if she could call again before Christmas and Adrian Dunne informed her that the family were about to go to Germany and would be away for a few months.
- 6.165 That afternoon PHN 5W telephoned PHN 2W to ask for information concerning the Dunne family and she recorded the details of what she was told. In the course of this conversation PHN 2W mentioned that she knew the family for three and a half years and had a very good relationship with them.

- 6.166 On 18th December, 2006 PHN 5W contacted PHN 2W to ask her to forward Lean and Shania's child health records. On the same day the visiting teacher for the blind also called on the family. One of the purposes of her visit was to pursue the eye reports. Adrian and Ciara Dunne did not have the eye reports but they said they expected them shortly and she arranged to meet them again after Christmas.
- 6.167 On 20th December, 2006 LN 4W noted on Shania's records that PHN 2W had advised that Shania was reaching weight and height milestones satisfactorily. She also noted that the family had moved permanently to Monageer and that she will forward the notes to the public health nurse.
- 6.168 On 21st December, 2006 LN 4W noted that she had spoken with Paediatrician 1W and had advised him of the family's new address and that PHN 5W was their new public health nurse. She also informed him that the children were being followed up by the Consultant Ophthalmologist.
- 6.169 On 21st December, 2006 the Community Welfare Officer in Enniscorthy received a fax from the Senior Social Worker in Hospital 3 stating *"the above two little girls will be in-patients in (Hospital 3) from 28th December to the 4th January as they require eye review under (Consultant Ophthalmologist). If you require any information I am available. This is in support of their claim for subsistence while in Dublin."*
- 6.170 The next day the Community Welfare Officer approved a payment of €250 to Adrian and Ciara Dunne to cover their expenses relating to their stay in Dublin with the children. Records received from Hospital 3 indicate that they did not have appointments or attend as in-patients from the 28th December, 2006 to 4th January, 2007.

Summary 2006:

6.171 In January, the Public Health Nursing Department was given the Dunnes new address in Bree by the Medical Card Section. The family registered with GP 4W but visited her only on one occasion. GP 4W made contact with the Public Health Nursing service. All appointments with Hospital 3 were failed except one in October, 2006 which was an overnight stay. In June, the family was allocated a local authority house in Monageer.

[REDACTED]

April the children attended at the Health Centre for a developmental examination by PHN 2W. Paediatrician 1W expressed concern to several service providers regarding the failure of the family to access his services. In December, LN 4W established the whereabouts of the family and PHN 5W who had responsibility for Monageer made a home visit but she did not have the children's health records. She telephoned PHN 2W to seek the return of the Public Health Nursing records.

2007

January/February/March, 2007:

6.172 In early January, 2007 Adrian Dunne contacted the National Council for the Blind to request tickets from the Irish Rugby Football Union for the next rugby international. At interview, the Community Resource

Worker with the National Council for the Blind said that Adrian Dunne frequently made requests for specific services.

6.173 On the 3rd January 2007, Paediatrician 1W wrote to the Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3 and the text of the letter is: *"I would be grateful if you could let us know how this family are getting on as far as you are concerned. In spite of the fact that they have been down in Wexford County for at least two years they have not been able to plug into the local services in that time. We would be grateful for information as to the degree of visual handicap that they have and as to whether they are properly linked up with any of the visual handicap services that you know of. The family have been quite mobile with various addresses in Wexford Town, Bree, New Ross and more recently near Ferns. If you have any further information about that we would also be grateful for your help."*

6.174 A meeting of the Early Intervention Team was held on 9th January, 2007 and the minutes of that meeting record that both Lean and Shania were discussed. The new address at 29 Moin Rua, Monageer is noted, as is the fact that the Public Health Nurse is involved and that they attend Hospital 3. It also records that a NCBI visiting teacher has been given the children's details and that LN 2W is to do a home visit and report back to the EIT and that they are for review by the EIT on 13th February, 2007.

6.175 Hospital 3 records show the children had out-patient appointments on 9th January, 2007 and that they did not attend.

6.176 The Early Intervention Team meeting of 13th February, 2007 minutes record that Lean and Shania were discussed and that the Liaison Nurse Counsellor was to report to the EIT meeting on the 13th March, 2007. It is also recorded that the NCBI visiting teacher visits both children.

- 6.177 A letter dated 22nd February, 2007 was received by Paediatrician 1W from the Consultant Ophthalmologist. The text of the letter is as follows: *"The Dunnes have kept in contact and have continued to attend me for follow up visits and from an eye aspect they have both been doing well but I am not familiar with any other follow up visits that they have with people other than myself but I will look into this and get back to you."* The Inquiry Team note that the children failed to attend a number of appointments at Hospital 3 in 2005 and 2006 and one appointment in January, 2007.
- 6.178 LN 2W records of 5th March, 2007 note that a review was requested for the EIT and that the telephone numbers given were incorrect. These notes further record that on that same day she spoke to PHN 2W who had received a message from Adrian Dunne regarding completing a form for a special school.
- 6.179 On 5th March, 2007 LN 2W received a call from Adrian Dunne who informed her that they were moving to Liverpool in the summer. According to her notes he said *"there are better opportunities for the girls for schooling. Are enrolling them in a School for the Blind, Westhurdia where they are only nine children/class and it specialises in teaching visually impaired children."* Her notes also record that Adrian Dunne reported that he had got a job in an emergency call centre and that the girls were going to see the Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3 the following day and were attending St. Joseph's School for the Blind, Cabra for 2 to 3 days assessment a week later. Her notes record that Adrian Dunne said that he was going to Liverpool the following week. He said that they had not attended the Paediatrician since 2004 and that they were willing to attend an appointment as they would need up to date information for Liverpool. Later that afternoon she received a message from Adrian Dunne regarding a paediatric appointment prior to moving to England and he requested that she ring him back. On the same day she sent an e-mail to Paediatrician 1W.

- 6.180 On 5th March, 2007 LN 2W spoke to the visiting teacher for the blind and established that the visiting teacher had not seen the family since December, 2006. LN 2W's notes record that the visiting teacher told her that she was unable to establish their level of vision as one child was copying the other. The notes record that she had tried to follow them up since January but the family were away and that she had planned to see them on 12th March, 2007. The visiting teacher also mentioned that she had asked Adrian Dunne to get an eye report for her. It was agreed that she would let LN 2W know the outcome of her visit to the family.
- 6.181 On 6th March, 2007 both children had appointments in Hospital 3 which they did not attend. On the same day LN 2W spoke to PHN 5W who reported that she had visited the house a few weeks previously. The Inquiry Team note that in fact it would appear this visit was in December. LN 2W's notes record that PHN 5W reported that Adrian Dunne was very hostile, that the children were not there and that PHN 5W had not received the records from the Child Health Office.
- 6.182 There is an entry made in LN 2W's notes on the 13th March, 2007 which says a home visit was planned for the 23rd March and it records that at the EIT meeting an update was given on verbal contact with Adrian Dunne. The notes also record that there was a planned review in June, 2007 with the EIT prior to the family leaving for England.
- 6.183 On the 13th March, 2007 LN 2W advised the Early Intervention Team of her planned visit to the family on the 23rd March, 2007. LN 2W's notes record a telephone call by LN 2W to PHN 5W on the 15th March, 2007.
- 6.184 On 14th or 15th March 2007, a driving instructor attached to the Irish Wheelchair Association and the Irish School of Motoring, specialising in instructing people with disabilities, called by appointment to the house in Monageer. The instructor had been contacted by Adrian Dunne

about driving lessons for Ciara Dunne who had previously failed her driving test.

6.185 The Garda file reveals that, in his statement to the Gardai, the Instructor said that Adrian Dunne explained that Ciara Dunne had failed her driving test badly and that the Tester had not taken into account her dyslexia disability. He said that Adrian Dunne made all the enquiries about Ciara Dunne's driving lessons and that Adrian Dunne said that he was keen to get the lessons underway because they were moving to Liverpool for a better life with more opportunities and he wanted Ciara Dunne to get her licence as soon as possible.

6.186 In his statement to the Gardai the Instructor stated that he explained that he needed a completed application form in Ciara Dunne's name and a medical certificate and he told her that he would complete the application for her.

6.187 In his statement to the Gardai, the Instructor said *"I noticed that the house was very untidy and dark with the blinds pulled which I found unusual even with two children. I did not see the children while I was in the house and there was no floor covering on the hallway"*.

6.188 The records from Hospital 3 show that the children did not attend for out-patients on 20th March, 2007. Hospital 3 records make no link between their non attendance and the letter dated 3rd January, 2007 from Paediatrician 1W.

6.189 LN 2W's records contain a very detailed report of her visit to the family in Monageer on 23rd March, 2007. LN 2W interviewed both children and the parents. She described the children as full of chat and lively and said that they performed several song and dance routines. Her notes contain a detailed description of their language skills and motor skills. Adrian Dunne said they wanted the children to attend a special school and this was why they were moving to Liverpool in August,

2007. More than five pages of handwritten notes are recorded in relation to this visit.

6.190 The record of the above visit also states that Adrian Dunne reported that the children had seen the Consultant Ophthalmologist the previous month for optic nerve assessment and that they would have results in two weeks time. Adrian and Ciara Dunne said that they had missed the appointment for Paediatrician 1W on 15th March, 2007 in Hospital 2. They said that they telephoned to cancel the appointment as they were in Dublin with the Consultant Ophthalmologist. The Inquiry Team notes that there is no record of such cancellation and the children were last seen in Hospital 3 in October, 2006. It is also recorded in LN 2W's notes that Adrian and Ciara Dunne were keen to arrange a paediatric appointment and that LN 2W sent an e-mail to Paediatrician 1W requesting another appointment.

6.191 The visiting teacher for the blind visited the Dunne family on 27th March, 2007 after meetings which had been arranged for January and February were cancelled. During the period she had received a number of text messages which said the family were in Limerick. She said at interview that the family were very excited about the proposed move to Liverpool in the summer. She told them she would contact them after Easter in any event. Adrian and Ciara Dunne said that they were going to bring the children to St. Joseph's School for the Blind, Cabra for assessment and the visiting teacher helped them fill in the relevant forms. She agreed to attend the assessment in St. Joseph's School for the Blind with the girls.

6.192 Lean and Shania failed to attend a developmental clinic appointment in Enniscorthy on 11th April, 2007. They also failed to attend an appointment with Paediatrician 1W on 12th April, 2007. On 13th April, 2007 Paediatrician 1W wrote to the Disability Co-ordinator with the Early Intervention Team informing her that Lean and Shania had not attended. He stated in his letter *'there was some talk they were*

moving back to England to attend a dedicated school there. Could you please discuss this at the next Early Intervention Team meeting to see have they changed address again?"

- 6.193 On 17th April, 2007 Adrian Dunne left a message for the Resource Officer in the National Council for the Blind. On the 18th April, 2007, the Resource Officer spoke to Adrian Dunne on the telephone. Adrian Dunne enquired about a summer holiday for the family. He enquired if they could go somewhere other than Pebble Beach in Tramore as they had been there on two previous holidays.
- 6.194 At interview PHN 2W related a conversation she had on 19th April, 2007 with PHN 5W where she had told PHN 5W that she would transfer the Dunne children's records to her the following week. PHN 2W said that she told PHN 5W that she had an appointment with the Dunne family the following day and would transfer the records to PHN 5W after the appointment.
- 6.195 On 20th April, 2007 the Dunne family attended the Health Centre in New Ross at 12.00 p.m. PHN 2W's records have similar notes on both Lean and Shania. Both notes record that the children were attaining developmental milestones, that the children were being reviewed by the Consultant Ophthalmologist every six months, that Adrian and Ciara Dunne discussed family planning, that Adrian and Ciara Dunne planned to relocate to Liverpool in August, 2007 and that the family were residing at 29 Moin Rua. A reference is also made to the visiting teacher for the blind calling monthly.
- 6.196 PHN 2W's notes on Lean's file dated 24th April, 2007 state *"omission from Apr. 20th consultation. (PHN 2W) advised parents that Lean and Shania for speech therapy referral for professional opinion in view of disability"*.

6.197 The Inquiry Team interviewed PHN 2W at length about the appointment of 20th April, 2007 with the Dunne family. PHN 2W said the appointment was made by Adrian Dunne. It was a year since her last contact with them. When questioned at interview regarding the gap of a year, she replied *"as far as I was concerned, their developmental progress from a Public Health Nurse's point of view, they were, you know within the guidelines."* When it was put to her that the children were part of the Early Intervention Team because there were concerns about their overall development and well being, she agreed and said *"they did have the disability with regard to their being visually impaired. They did have that condition. When they were younger, they were slow at gaining milestones."*

6.198 In describing the appointment of 20th April 2007, PHN 2W said she brought the family into the child health room and weighed and measured the children. She said that she noticed that both children were wearing glasses. She said that she sympathised with Adrian Dunne on the death of his brother. She said that Adrian Dunne said *"I'll never forget it, money matters or financial matters and a broken relationship"*. Adrian Dunne said that they had gone to Dublin and visited a school for people who were visually impaired. He told her that he had attended the local national school in Monageer. He informed her that they had plans to move to Liverpool.

6.199 PHN 2W told the Inquiry Team that Ciara Dunne told her that she had sourced a job in Liverpool in a crèche for children with special needs. PHN 2W left the family for a period of time to do a dressing on another patient. On her return she explained to the Dunes that she would no longer be dealing with them and that their records would be transferred to PHN 5W who was the Public Health Nurse for Monageer. The Dunes left the Health Centre at approximately 1:45 p.m.

6.200 The Inquiry Team asked PHN 2W if she had noticed anything unusual about the Dunne family during the appointment of 20th April, 2007. She

replied that she had not noticed anything unusual and that the interview was no different from the one held the previous year. She said there was no indication that anything was wrong. She said that both Adrian and Ciara Dunne spoke during the visit and that Ciara Dunne was happy with the children's development.

6.201 When questioned about the number of failed appointments in both Hospital 3 and with Paediatrician 1W, PHN 2W said that she was not aware that the family were failing to attend appointments.

6.202 At interview PHN 2W was also asked if Ciara Dunne's mother had contacted her. She said she had at least one telephone conversation with Ciara Dunne's mother. She told Mrs. O'Brien that she had no difficulty with access to the family.

6.203 When asked by the Inquiry Team, if taking into account Adrian Dunne's blindness, the children's sight impairment and Ciara Dunne's intellectual handicap, she would have referred the Dunne family to the social work department if she had known about the failed doctors appointments, PHN 2W replied that she would have referred the family to the Social Services.

6.204 LN 2W wrote to Paediatrician 1W by letter dated 23rd April, 2007. In her letter she confirmed that she made a home visit on the 23rd March and saw both children. She said that the parents told her that they had been unable to attend his appointment (Paediatrician 1W) as they were going to see the Consultant Ophthalmologist and were also going to St. Joseph's School for the Blind. She also noted in her letter to Paediatrician 1W that she had contacted the Consultant Ophthalmologist's secretary who had informed her that the children had not attended their previous seven appointments and that they were last seen in April, 2006. (The Inquiry Team note that they had attended in October, 2006).

6.205 LN 2W's notes dated 23rd April, 2007 indicate that she had left a message for the visiting teacher for the blind to contact her, that she left a message for PHN 5W to contact her and that she had spoken to the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing regarding the Dunnes poor attendance and discussed a plan to call a multi disciplinary meeting. This is a meeting as described by the Director of Public Health Nursing at interview where if there were concerns about a family but there was not a child protection issue *"we would call a professionals meeting and we would invite the people that were around that family looking after that family to the meetings."*

Overview 2002 to 2007:

Donegal:

6.206 A range of personnel from the HSE in Donegal including two public health nurses and one GP offered services to the Dunne family in respect of Lean. In addition other personnel from agencies, including Hospital 3 and the NCBI also offered services to the family.

6.207 Lean resided with her parents at two addresses in Donegal.

6.208 Shortly after birth she was referred to a Consultant Ophthalmologist in Hospital 3. She was also referred to the Early Intervention Team and was assessed as requiring services.

6.209 On two occasions in 2003, PHN 2D discussed her concerns about Lean's failure to attend appointments in respect of her developmental progress with her Line Manager.

6.210 The EIT carried out an assessment on Lean and set out a plan and started to implement some of the elements of this plan before the family moved to Wexford.

Wexford:

- 6.211 The family moved to Wexford in July, 2003. Between that date and the date of their deaths they resided at five different addresses in Co. Wexford. PHN 2D transferred the records and discussed with PHN 1W issues of concern in relation to the family.
- 6.212 A range of personnel from the HSE in Wexford including three public health nurses and one liaison nurse and at least four GP's had contact with this family over the next 3¾ years. In addition other agencies including Hospital 3 and the NCBI provided services to the family.
- 6.213 The one line of continuity of service with the children and their parents was Hospital 3.
- 6.214 In July 2003, PHN 1W visited the family and after this home visit she made a referral to the EIT in Wexford which was marked as urgent.
- 6.215 The family moved in November, 2003 to New Ross and PHN 2W became involved.
- 6.216 Shania was born on 17th November, 2003 and was also referred to Hospital 3.
- 6.217 The EIT system appears to operate differently in Wexford to Donegal. In Donegal this multi disciplinary team appears to meet the child and parents, carry out an assessment and draw up a plan of intervention. On the other hand in Wexford the EIT do not see the child and parents at an Early Intervention Team meeting, but meet as a group and review the children and record what actions are to happen.
- 6.218 Both Lean and Shania were reviewed regularly at the EIT meetings in Wexford. However, the only member of the Team to meet the family

was the Liaison Nurse, who visited them in April, 2004 and again in March, 2007.

6.219 Paediatrician 1W to whom the children were referred by the EIT repeatedly sent appointments to the children. The family failed to attend any of these appointments.

6.220 PHN 2W did not transfer the child health records to any of her three colleagues who had responsibility for the specific area in which the family resided between April, 2005 to the date of their deaths.

6.221 On each occasion when the family moved home they received financial assistance from the Community Welfare Officer in the area.

6.222

6.223

6.224

6.225

6.226 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.227 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.228 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.229 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.230 The different professionals within the HSE did not have access to the records of other professionals [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.231 Throughout Lean and Shania's lives, no one key professional was identified as the co-ordinator of services [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.232 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.233 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6.234 The family income at the time of death was approximately £740 per week. Adrian Dunne was well informed of the family's entitlements and applied for services on an ongoing basis.

CHAPTER 7

Summary and Conclusions

Summary:

- 7.1 The Inquiry Team decided that they would commence their investigations at the time of the birth of Lean on 6th May, 2002. The Inquiry Team felt it was necessary to examine whether opportunities existed at various earlier stages for public and other relevant services to identify the level of dysfunction within the family.
- 7.2 The Inquiry Team take the view that the Terms of Reference require them to examine the provision of public and other relevant services rather than the performance of any individual person involved in the provision of such services.
- 7.3 However services are provided by individuals or teams of them and it is inevitable that an analysis of service provision will involve consideration of its provision by individuals. The Inquiry Team has made every effort to maintain the anonymity of such persons – primarily by referring to them by codes.
- 7.4 However, in certain instances, because of context or because a specific role is particularly identifiable as performed by a particular person, and due to the necessity of making the report comprehensible, it is acknowledged that this effort may not always have been entirely successful. It is the view of the Inquiry Team that the identity of each person has been protected to the extent possible consistent with the fulfilment by the Inquiry of its terms of reference

7.5 Consistent with its view that the focus of the terms of reference is on services rather than on the performance of individuals, and insofar as possible, the Inquiry Team has endeavoured not to attribute fault to or comment adversely on any individual.

7.6

[REDACTED]

7.7 From the 6th May, 2002 to the time of their deaths, the Dunne family resided at seven different addresses; two in Donegal and five in Wexford.

7.8 Lean and Shania suffered from congenital cataracts and nystagmus. Adrian Dunne, their father, suffered from similar sight impairment and he was registered blind.

7.9 Lean was hospitalised on many occasions. During the first six months of her life, she was hospitalised on 7 occasions for a total period of 60 days. Shania had significantly less admissions to hospital.

7.10 The Inquiry Team noted, from the files provided to them, that Adrian Dunne had been psychologically assessed at age 13, which assessment (Wisc-R) recorded an IQ of 64. It was noted, however, that Adrian Dunne's visual problem had a significant effect on his performance. While there was no similar psychological assessment available to the Inquiry Team in relation to Ciara Dunne, she did attend Special Needs schools from 5th class upwards.

- 7.11 Adrian Dunne and Ciara O'Brien met in Dublin in the year 2000 having been introduced by a mutual friend. They married on 31st December, 2005.
- 7.12 Shortly after Lean's birth in Donegal she was identified as requiring the services of the Early Intervention Team (EIT) due to developmental delays. She was also referred to the EIT in Wexford on arrival. Shania was also referred to the EIT in Wexford within the 1st year of her life.
- 7.13 Adrian Dunne, Ciara Dunne and the two children spent most of their time together and were rarely seen apart. In the course of this Inquiry the profile of the Dunne family emerged as one of isolation, particularly from wider family and friends. In Monageer the children were rarely seen playing with any other children in their neighbourhood.
- 7.14 From the Inquiry Team's investigations, Adrian Dunne emerged as the dominant personality in the family. The information provided to the Inquiry Team revealed that he made all family arrangements, i.e. appointments and cancellations. He invariably answered the door; he controlled the purse strings of the family.
- 7.15 Insofar as could be established, neither Adrian Dunne nor Ciara Dunne was ever in full or part time employment. The family income comprised a range of state benefits. They had an annual net income of €38,400 approximately. The family were in substantial debt, relative to their income, at the time of their deaths.
- 7.16 Adrian Dunne frequently misinformed service providers by furnishing misleading information. This included information about appointments. He also tended to fabricate stories about family trips abroad and the deaths of an entire family in a car accident which the Inquiry Team know to be untrue. Ciara Dunne colluded with such stories on occasion.

7.17 The family's contact with the public health nursing service was complicated by the fact that on occasion they were not contactable at numbers provided. At the time of death the Gardai found four mobile phones in the family home and they also had a landline.

Conclusions:

7.18 Adrian Dunne died by hanging on the weekend of 20th – 23rd April, 2007. His wife Ciara Dunne died by ligature strangulation. Lean and Shania died by smothering. It was clear from the evidence before the Inquiry that Adrian Dunne and Ciara Dunne were planning the deaths of the family. The Inquiry Team are satisfied from the profile that emerged of Adrian Dunne that he was the driving force behind the planning and execution of the deaths of Ciara Dunne and their two children, Lean and Shania. The Inquiry Team concluded that there was no third party involvement.

7.19 The Inquiry Team did not discover any single definitive motive behind the deaths of the Dunne family. Instead, the Inquiry Team believe that several factors contributed to Adrian and Ciara Dunne's decision to end their lives and that of their children. Important factors were the death of Adrian Dunne's father on 9th April, 2006 and the recent death of his brother James by hanging on 29th March, 2007.

7.20 The following factors may also have contributed to the decision to end their lives: Adrian Dunne's controlling and dominant influence within the family; Ciara Dunne's docile, childlike nature making her very compliant and subservient to her husband's wishes; Adrian Dunne's ability in isolating Ciara Dunne from her family; their mounting debts; the option of a move to Liverpool no longer seeming feasible and the idealised notion of the family being together forever in heaven.

7.21 The time of death cannot be established with certainty, but, having considered all the evidence available, the Inquiry Team believe the most probable time of death of the two children and Ciara Dunne was on Saturday morning, the 21st April, 2007 before the "suicide" text message was sent at 10:17 a.m. and that Adrian Dunne died soon afterwards.

7.22 The Inquiry Team believe that even if the Gardai or Social Services had called to the Dunne family home during the course of the weekend, it is likely that the tragedy would not have been averted given Adrian and Ciara Dunne's capacity to provide a plausible explanation for their bizarre funeral plans as had happened with the Clonroche Curate.

7.23 The Inquiry Team are of the view [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] that the untimely deaths of the family could not have been anticipated by HSE personnel before the family's visit to the funeral home on the 20th April, 2007.

7.24 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

7.25 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

7.26 The Inquiry Team find that there was also an opportunity at that point to have the matter brought to the attention of the HSE Social Work Service as they were available up to 5:00 p.m. on Friday.

7.27 The Inquiry Team are of the view that no commitment was provided by the Child Care Manager to make any intervention prior to Monday morning the 23rd April, 2007. It is possible that Garda Superintendent C misinterpreted what was said. It has been noted that when Garda Superintendent C rang Social Worker 1W on the Monday morning, he did not raise the issue of whether or not she had liaised or made contact with the Dunne family during the course of the weekend.

7.28

[REDACTED]

7.29 The Gardai should have considered contacting Adrian Dunne's family to advise them of Adrian and Ciara Dunne's visit to the Undertakers on Friday and the concerns raised by such visit.

7.30

[REDACTED]

7.31

[REDACTED]

7.32 On Monday 23rd April, having discovered the bodies of the Dunne family, the Gardai should have taken immediate steps to notify the O'Brien and Dunne families of the tragic deaths.

7.33 The Inquiry Team acknowledge that a fundamental problem has been the State's failure to provide an "out of hours" Social Work Service to ensure a response to all serious child protection and welfare concerns.

7.34

[REDACTED]

7.35

[REDACTED]

7.36

[REDACTED]

7.37 The Inquiry Team acknowledge that the Dunne family's frequent moves from house to house in different areas in Wexford presented a challenge for the Public Health Nursing Services in establishing their whereabouts, but one obvious step which could have been taken by the Public Health Nursing Services to locate the family, was to contact the Medical Card Section.

- 7.38 At the time of death, Lean was almost 5 years old and Shania was 3½ years. They were both identified by the health services as having serious visual impairment and being developmentally delayed in their early years. Lean had been assessed by the EIT in Donegal. Despite the fact that in July, 2003 PHN 1W had made an urgent referral to the EIT in Wexford in respect of Lean, at the time of her death in April 2007, Lean had never been seen by any of the range of professionals who formed part of the EIT in Wexford except LN 2W. Similarly, Shania had not been seen by the EIT in Wexford except LN 2W.
- 7.39 During the Inquiry, many of the professionals interviewed indicated that the family did not present as one requiring "special" attention. However, having heard all the evidence, reviewed documents and health board files, the Inquiry Team found this difficult to understand.
- 7.40 The system of communication within the HSE in Wexford relating to the Dunne family appeared disjointed and contributed to the failure to identify the family as one in need of extra support from Health and Social Services.
- 7.41 The Inquiry Team note that on 3rd January, 2007 Paediatrician 1W wrote to the Consultant Ophthalmologist enquiring how this family were getting on and stated that in spite of the fact that they had been in Wexford for at least two years they had not been able to plug into local services in that time. On 22nd February, 2007 the Consultant Ophthalmologist wrote to Paediatrician 1W advising him that the Dunes had kept in contact and had continued to attend him for follow up visits and from an eye aspect both had been doing well. However, the letter did not contain any reference to the fact that the children had failed a number of appointments. This letter offered reassurance to the Early Intervention Team in Wexford.

7.42 [REDACTED]

7.43 [REDACTED]

7.44 [REDACTED]

7.45 [REDACTED]

7.46 [REDACTED]

7.47 While there were many services of the health board and other agencies working with the family, the Inquiry Team did not identify any one person/key worker who had access to all of the information.

7.48

[REDACTED]

CHAPTER 8

Recommendations

Out of hours Social Work Service:

- 8.1 The provision of a national out of hour's Social Work Service structured and resourced to ensure an appropriate response to all serious child protection and welfare concerns.

An Garda Síochána and the protection of children:

- 8.2 Where a member of An Garda Síochána receives a report and has reasonable grounds for believing there is an immediate and serious risk to the health and welfare of the child, he/she should take immediate action in order to ensure the safety of the child and where necessary invoke Section 12 of the Child Care Act, 1991.
- 8.3 Where a member of An Garda Síochána receives information concerning the safety and welfare of a child he/she should immediately bring the matter to the attention of their line manager.
- 8.4 Where a member of An Garda Síochána receives information concerning the safety and welfare of a child, such information should be brought to the attention of the HSE Social Work Service as soon as possible and in appropriate circumstances to members of the child's extended family.
- 8.5 Where a tragedy has occurred particularly in the case of a fatality, the senior Garda officer at the scene should ensure that, on discovery of

body/bodies the next of kin are identified and informed as soon as possible.

Early Identification of children at risk and vulnerable families:

- 8.6 As a universal service, the public health nursing service offered to children under five years of age is critical to the identification of children who are in need of intervention, in order to ensure that they develop to their full capacity and the avoidance of risk or harm. From the perspective of the Inquiry Team it is unclear whether the systems currently in place are sufficient to this task. It is recommended that a review of the systems currently in place be undertaken in order to ensure that a high standard of service is provided and that resources are directed at those children who are in greatest need.
- 8.7 Where a public health nurse identifies delayed developmental milestones, disability and any other issues of concern, a referral should be made in respect of the provision of appropriate family support services regardless as to whether those services currently exist or not. It is important that children are identified as requiring services as early as possible.
- 8.8 Where vulnerable families with young children move home, immediate steps should be taken by the public health nursing service to identify their new address. Failure to identify the new address of such families should be brought to the attention of their Line Manager.
- 8.9 The early identification of children with complex developmental needs is critical to the individual child's potential development. The role of the Early Intervention Team is central to this approach. The Inquiry Team in its review of this service discovered that there is a wide variation in the development and approach of early intervention teams throughout the country. The Inquiry Team recommends that this service which brings a

multi disciplinary team together and which is designed to intervene and provide services at the earliest possible date to children with complex developmental needs, should be standardised across the country.

8.10 A co-ordinator should be identified for each Early Intervention Team. This person should take responsibility for the collection and dissemination of all relevant information concerning the child/family and monitor and report on the delivery of the different professional services to the Early Intervention Team.

8.11 Protocols regarding the transfer of records when a family moves to a new address outside their area of responsibility should be strictly adhered to by public health nurses and other disciplines as necessary.

8.12 Accurate and contemporaneous records should always be kept by all health professionals including nurses, doctors and social workers. Such records should include all contacts, consultations and any actions taken, all of which should be dated and signed.

8.13 The Inquiry Team was fortunate to have been provided by the Health Service Executive with records from many people within the service who had contact with this family. Unfortunately, the different disciplines working with the family did not have similar access to each others records throughout the period of these children's lives. While the Inquiry Team recognise the multiple disciplines within the HSE, it also recognises the absolute importance of sharing information in respect of the protection of children. In order to ensure that correct information is shared with relevant people it is essential that at a minimum, an index is created of all children and families who are being provided with services by the different disciplines within the Health Service Executive.

8.14 When children are attending specialist medical services over a period of years, there should be a minimum of a yearly update provided to the

family's General Practitioner and to the local Director of Public Health Nursing by such specialists.

[REDACTED]

8.15 [REDACTED]

8.16 [REDACTED]

8.17 [REDACTED]

8.18 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8.19

[REDACTED]

8.20

[REDACTED]

8.21

[REDACTED]

Review of management structures:

8.22 The Health Service Executive should review its management structure in respect of child care manager post, social work staff, public health nursing staff and staff of the Early Intervention Team. Absolute clarity of these roles is required in order to ensure the highest level of professional practice. The head of each discipline should be responsible for the management and professional practice of their team and should undertake regular audits in this regard.

8.23 All professionals working with children in state agencies or agencies supported by the State should be absolutely clear about their individual responsibility for any duty of care owed to children or families to whom they are offering services. These responsibilities should be set out clearly in job descriptions and reviewed annually by their line manager as part of a performance review in accordance with accepted best practice.

Training:

8.24 Regular in-service training should be provided to all relevant staff including nurses, social workers, doctors and Gardai, such training should include child protection and mental health issues. Such training should also include encouraging the self assurance to question as appropriate the opinions/judgement of other professionals/more senior professionals.

8.25 Interdisciplinary training and interagency training should be provided on a regular basis.

Familicide:

8.26 The Inquiry Team did not examine the issue of familicide as it was not within their terms of reference. The Inquiry Team note the increased incidence of familicide both nationally and internationally and believe that this area needs to be carefully reviewed.

Signed: Kate Brosnan

Kate Brosnan

Jim McHugh



Jim McHugh

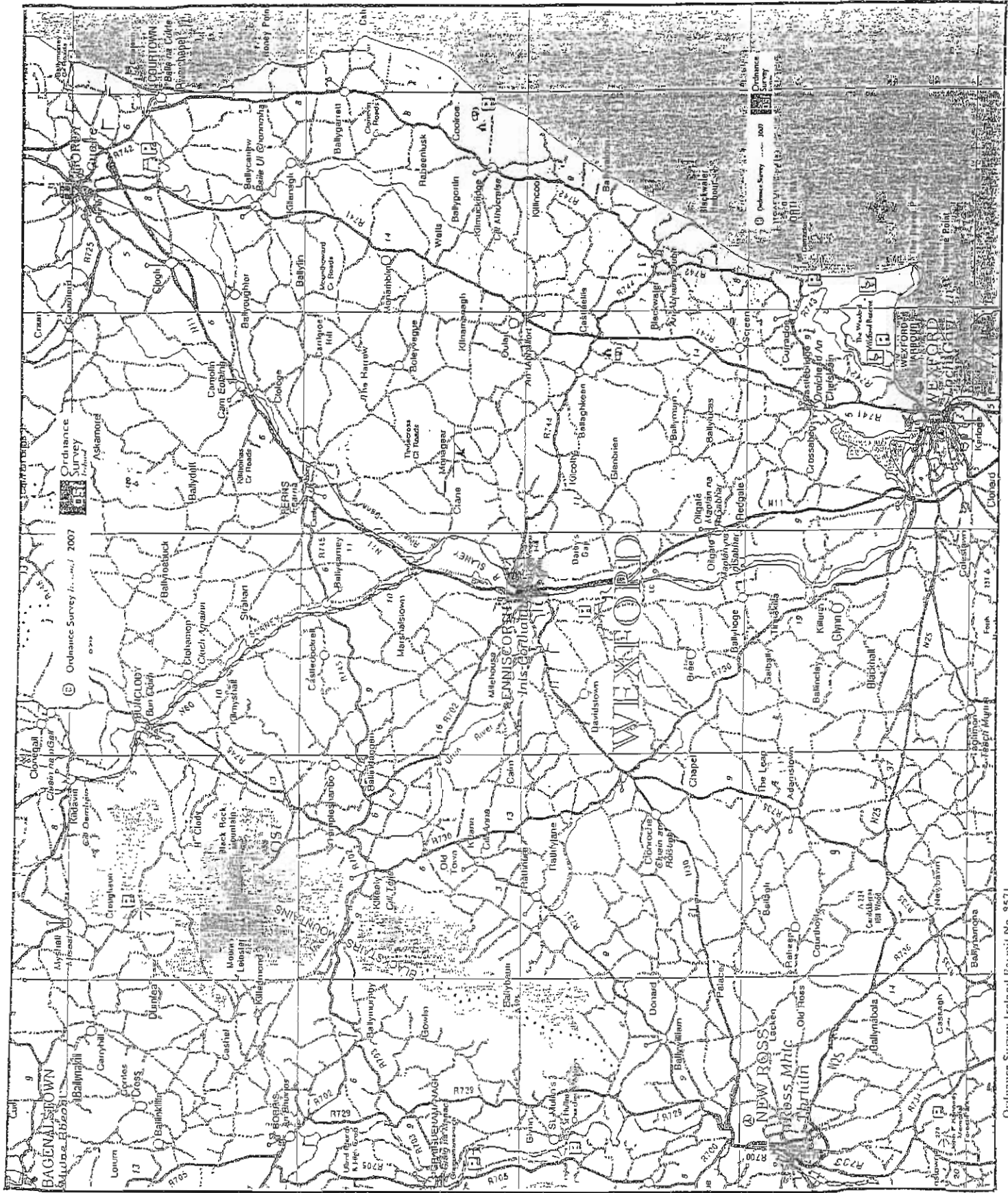
Leonie Lunny

Leonie Lunny

6th October, 2008

Abbreviations

SMO	Senior Medical Officer
CWO	Community Welfare Officer
CCC	Community Child Centre
EIT	Early Intervention Team
	
NCBI	National Council for the Blind, Ireland
GP	General Practitioner
PHN	Public Health Nurse
LN	Liaison Nurse
SW	Social Worker
SWTL	Social Worker Team Leader
D	Donegal
W	Wexford
Hospital 1	Donegal
Hospital 2	Wexford
Hospital 3	Dublin



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NB: Please note this chart only reflects the staff associated with the Dunne family – it does not reflect the full Organisation Chart for Wexford PCCC Services.

