

Monday, October 11, 2010

Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry announces pre-Christmas hearing date

The Public Inquiry into the occurrence of *Clostridium difficile* (*C. diff*) infection at the Vale of Leven Hospital has announced a pre-Christmas hearing.

The Inquiry, chaired by Lord MacLean, today announced that the next phase of hearings will take place the week commencing Monday December 6 in Maryhill Community Central Halls. The hearing is expected to last the full week, finishing on Friday 10 December.

Julie-Anne Jamieson, Secretary to the Inquiry, said: "After the hearings were re-scheduled at the end of last month, we are now pleased to be able to confirm that a short hearing will take place before Christmas.

"During the week of 6 December, the Inquiry will hear further evidence from patients and relatives, as well as from Dr Kevin Woods, Director-General Health and Chief Executive NHS Scotland.

"We will be publishing details of the names and order of witnesses on our website in the coming weeks."

She added: "The hearing dates for early 2011 have still to be finalised but we will make an announcement as soon as they are known."

During the periods 1 December 2007 and 1 June 2008 approximately 55 patients contracted *C. diff* at the Vale of Leven Hospital.

In April last year, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon, announced that a Public Inquiry would be held to examine the cause of the outbreak.

The Inquiry is considering how the patients contracted *C. diff* and the deaths associated with the outbreak.

While focusing on incidents at the Vale of Leven Hospital, Lord MacLean is able to refer to other cases of *C. diff* infection within and beyond Scotland in order to help inform recommendations.

The Inquiry, in accordance with the Inquiries Act 2005, is inquisitorial in nature and not adversarial, nor does it have any power to determine civil or criminal liability.

Information regarding the Inquiry is available on the Inquiry website at www.valeoflevenhospitalinquiry.org and daily transcripts will be available throughout the hearing in December.

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Issued on behalf of the Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry by The BIG Partnership.

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