

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

## **Latest phase of Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry hearings re-arranged for January 2011**

The latest phase of the Public Inquiry, into the occurrence of *Clostridium difficile* (*C.diff*) infection at the Vale of Leven Hospital has been postponed until January 2011.

The Inquiry, chaired by Lord MacLean, was due to start on Monday December 6 and run for a week but it had to be re-arranged due to adverse weather conditions. Families and patients will now give evidence at Maryhill Community Central Halls from Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January until Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Julie-Anne Jamieson, Secretary to the Inquiry, said: "We were hoping to proceed before Christmas but as witnesses and other key people involved in the Inquiry were affected by recent adverse weather conditions, we have decided to postpone the hearings until January.

"There will be a short hearing from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January at which the Inquiry will hear further evidence from patients and relatives. Up to 10 witnesses will give evidence during this phase of the Inquiry, including some individuals who have recently come forward.

"The names and order of witnesses are available on our website and transcripts will be uploaded on a daily basis.

"We are planning to hear evidence from Dr Kevin Woods, former Director-General Health and Chief Executive NHS Scotland, later in 2011."

The Inquiry is investigating the circumstances contributing to the occurrence and rates of *C.diff* at the Vale of Leven Hospital, between December 1, 2007 and June 1, 2008. The Inquiry is specifically investigating the treatment of 60 patients including 39 deaths.

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

The next phase of oral evidence will resume in spring 2011 and will focus on evidence from hospital staff, health board management and representatives of other NHS bodies. The Inquiry will also hear evidence from a range of independent experts.

In April 2009 the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon, announced that a public inquiry would take place. A preliminary hearing was held in February 2010 and the first phase of the hearings took place in June 2010.

More.../

The Inquiry, in accordance with the Inquiries Act 2005, is inquisitorial in nature and is not adversarial. It does not have any power to determine civil or criminal liability.

Information regarding the Inquiry is available on the Inquiry website at [www.valeoflevenhospitalinquiry.org](http://www.valeoflevenhospitalinquiry.org).

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

**For more information contact:**

*Josie Saunders on 0141 333 9585 / 07881 816283 or e-mail [josie.saunders@bigpartnership.co.uk](mailto:josie.saunders@bigpartnership.co.uk)*

*Ross Barker on 0141 333 9585 / 07963 349762 or e-mail [Ross.Barker@bigpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Ross.Barker@bigpartnership.co.uk)*