

THE MID STAFFORDSHIRE  
NHS FOUNDATION TRUST  
PUBLIC INQUIRY

Chaired by Robert Francis QC

Mr Malcolm Alexander  
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25 April 2012

Dear Mr Alexander

**Update on Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry Final Report**

I am writing to let you know that Robert Francis QC has written to the Secretary of State for Health to update him on the progress of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry and the likely timetable for delivering his final report.

To ensure that the Inquiry operates as openly as possible, Mr Francis is keen to make this timetable publicly available, so that witnesses, core participants and those following the Inquiry are aware of its next steps. I therefore wanted to write to all those who have given oral evidence to the Inquiry or who have had their witness statement or provisional statement "read" into the Inquiry's record, to let you know what stage the Inquiry has reached and what will happen over the next few months.

**Update on progress so far**

As you will be aware, the Inquiry's hearings finished on Thursday 1 December 2011. Alongside the hearings the Inquiry held a series of seven seminars in October and November 2011 to consider the "forward-looking" part of its terms of reference and a report on those seminars is available on the Inquiry's website at [www.midstaffspublicinquiry.com](http://www.midstaffspublicinquiry.com). Between December 2011 and February 2012, the Chairman also carried out a series of seven visits to healthcare organisations, to see examples of good practice and put the evidence from the hearings into a broader NHS context. The Chairman is now writing his final report, drawing together his conclusions and recommendations.

**Warning Letters**

Once a near final draft of the final report is ready, the Inquiry will issue warning letters to any individuals or organisations likely to receive criticism in the report, setting out the substance of that criticism and providing them with an opportunity to respond.

Warning letters are confidential and they may not be disclosed either by the Inquiry team or by the recipient or their legal representative (if any), unless the confidentiality is waived by the Chairman or otherwise in accordance with the Rules. The Chairman currently expects that, if any such letters are necessary, they will be sent in July 2012. Recipients will be given a short period, probably of two weeks, to respond.

I must stress that all witnesses are being given this information at this stage, and this is not intended to be any indication that you personally will receive a warning letter. It has not yet been decided who, if anyone, should receive such a letter.

#### **Publication of the final report**

After considering any issues raised by the warning letters, and making the practical arrangements for finalising and printing the report, the Chairman expects to be able to deliver his report to the Secretary of State for Health when Parliament returns from its autumn recess on Monday 15 October 2012. The report will then be published and laid before Parliament. The date of publication is a matter for the Secretary of State for Health.

On publication, copies of the final report will be made available on the Inquiry's website and the Inquiry team plan to send copies to all those who have given oral evidence or had their statement "read" into the Inquiry's record.

#### **Next Steps**

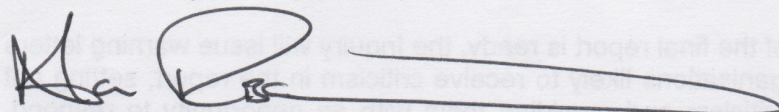
It is important that the Inquiry keeps up-to-date contact details for all those who have provided evidence. This is so that we can get in touch if we need more information or have any updates, ensure any correspondence (including warning letters where appropriate) is sent to the right place, and make sure you receive a copy of the final report.

If your contact details have changed since you gave evidence, please let us know. You can reach us by post at the address above, by e-mail at [info@midstaffsinquiry.co.uk](mailto:info@midstaffsinquiry.co.uk) or by telephone on 0207 972 5858. Please also do not hesitate to get in touch with the Inquiry team if you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the Inquiry process over the next few months.

It is important to say that it is always difficult to give an accurate timescale for any Inquiry's work – new evidence may arise at any time and the Chairman will need to consider responses to any potential criticisms carefully. However, we hope that by setting out the Inquiry's plans, this will make it as clear as possible for witnesses, core participants and those following the Inquiry what they can expect to happen and when in the next few months.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Robson', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Alan Robson**  
**Secretary to the Inquiry**