

OPERATION ROCHESTER

BRIEFING NOTE

Following the conference of the 14th June I have consulted other SIO's who have used Professor LIVESLEY as an expert witness.

I was provided with the best background information by Essex Police who have used him in two cases.

1. Deaths in nursing homes

In general terms this case concerns deaths where residents have been subject to a regime where the quantities of fluid taken each day have exceeded substantially the recommended levels leading to death through heart failure.

Generally about 1.5 litres of fluid per day is adequate to support older people to an appropriate level. In this case residents were being given up to 6 litres per day. Some of this fluid had high concentrations of salt (i.e. oxo) which requires the body to work harder to manage the fluid intake.

Professor LIVESLEY took the view that in all the circumstances those responsible should have recognised the potential outcome of excessive fluid intake – i.e. the risk of heart failure.

Seven deaths are subject of proceedings with a number of staff charged with manslaughter by gross negligence.

2 .Deaths in Intensive care Unit

This case concerns up to 45 deaths in the ICU at Basildon hospital. One Doctor is alleged to have prescribed larger than appropriate quantities of morphine based drugs to patients who were to have medical support withdrawn. The outcome was the foreshortening of life of terminal patients.

The patients were a range of ages – but did include some geriatric cases.

This case is still under investigation.

Professor LIVESLEY provided an report that was unambiguous in its conclusions about the process.

Two other experts were used, a toxicologist and an ICU specialist, who also provided reports that were as unambiguous and worded as unequivocally as Professor LIVESLEY's.