



AUCKLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD

Communications

Ph: 09 630 9952

ADHB Media Release

October 31, 2010

Starship Processes Robust and Independent

Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) strongly supports Starship Hospital's processes for handling potential child abuse cases.

In response to newspaper coverage of a recent case, Mrs Kay Hyman, ADHB General Manager Clinical Services, Women's and Children's Health, said:

"It would be inappropriate to discuss the specific details of a particular case.

"However, ADHB has a robust clinical process for the handling of potential child abuse cases. ADHB practice is consistent with international standards.

"This includes clinicians making a thorough and independent assessment of patient condition, causes of injury and diagnoses.

"Clinicians undertake a clinical work-up in good faith and with an open mind and it is important to be transparent with families when the possibility of non-accidental injury is identified.

"Where there is suspected non-accidental injury of children, our Specialist Care and Protection Team is consulted.

"Any potential diagnosis of non-accidental injury is subject to extensive multi-disciplinary consultation and review.

"These assessments are not made lightly and are delivered at the end of a robust process.

"While particular clinicians gave evidence in this case, the opinion they expressed was supported by the view of the wider clinical team.

"It would be highly inappropriate and unfair to identify the individual clinicians who gave evidence.

“When faced with contradictory expert evidence, the judge is required to determine how much weight is to be placed on that evidence and whether there is any reasonable doubt as to whether the elements of the offence are established.

“We stand by our clinical work-up on this case and I stress again, our view was not formed without a comprehensive process of independent expert advice and review.”

ENDS

**For further information please contact Matt Rogers, External Communications
Specialist 021 804 122**