

IN THE BIRMINGHAM AND SOLIHULL CORONER'S COURT

HIS HONOUR RICHARD FOSTER

NOMINATED PURSUANT TO SCHEDULE 10 CJA 2009

**INQUESTS TOUCHING UPON THE DEATHS
OF PATIENTS OF MR IAN PATERSON FOR
TREATMENT OF BREAST CANCER**

STATEMENT BY HM CORONER REGARDING TIME-TABLE FOR INQUESTS

1. Before I begin to hear the evidence on the two Inquests which are being resumed today, I wish to make a short statement regarding the timetable for future hearings, as it has come to my attention that some next of kin have expressed concern about the progress of the Inquests.
2. When I began the hearings of the resumed Inquests on 7th October 2024, I said that the bereaved families will be at the heart of my investigations, and I have repeated this in subsequent rulings. Although it might sometimes appear that this is not the case I want to reassure the next of kin of each deceased that they remain the central focus of these Inquests. I will leave no stone unturned in order to answer the many unanswered questions which families understandably have.
3. What has emerged as the Inquests have progressed since last October is that there is a divergence of expert opinion regarding the treatment for breast cancer at the material times, and in particular the causal connection between different treatment options and the outcome. All the legal teams, including those for the legally represented families, agreed upon the importance of those generic issues being dealt with at the earliest opportunity.
4. Another concern which has been raised, particularly by the legal teams for next of kin, is the need for accurate time estimates and for fixed dates when each Inquest will be resumed.

5. It was for these reasons that I gave detailed directions on 11th February 2025 concerning the future conduct of the Inquests – those directions in full can be found on the investigation website.
6. Arising from those directions I will be receiving generic reports from the medical experts by the end of April 2025, and I will hear the generic expert evidence during the two weeks commencing 20th May 2025. In the meantime, no further Inquests are being resumed, although I am hearing any outstanding evidence on those which have been resumed since October.
7. Thereafter, so as from 2nd June 2025, I will be resuming all the outstanding Inquests sitting as full time as possible and completing the resumption of others on dates fixed with accurate time estimates, taking into account the availability of next of kin, witnesses and legal teams.
8. I will not be delivering conclusions separately at the conclusion of each Inquest, but rather at the conclusion of all the evidence, in particular because evidence on one Inquest can be equally relevant to others.
9. It is anticipated that the individual Inquests in what has been called Module One will continue until the Spring of 2026. Thereafter I will investigate the patient recall system followed by other systemic issues, and I will be considering Reports to Prevent Future Deaths. I make it clear that in setting the future timetable I am in no way prejudging the outcome of the individual Inquests.
10. I hope that this statement reassures next of kin that these Inquests will be proceeding as expeditiously as is consistent with a full, fair and fearless investigation.
11. A transcript of this statement will be placed on the investigation website.

HH RICHARD FOSTER

HM Coroner

26th March 2025