

Please note: The following is a summary of the investigator's interview with the interviewee. It is not a statement of the interviewee and has not been reviewed, or approved as accurate by the interviewee.

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NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Ms Gail Allegri, Jury Forewoman, Inquest into the Death of Lisa Shore

PLACE OF WORK: N/A

DATE INTERVIEWED: October 30, 2000

INTERVIEWED BY: C. Flear, CNO Investigator

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY: by telephone

Gail Allegri explained that she was the Jury Forewoman at the Inquest into the Death of Lisa Shore.

She recalled that Mary Douglas, Nurse Educator, was a member of the audience while nurses who worked at The Hospital for Sick Children (HSC) gave evidence at the Inquest. She noticed that Mary Douglas was overt in her body actions while other nurses, but particularly while Ruth Doerksen, RN, gave their evidence. Ms Douglas' head was in continual motion. It was either nodding up and down, or back and forth. She noted that Ms Douglas' actions were exaggerated. She used a big up and down or side to side shake of head.

While the nurses were giving their evidence, she was focusing on what the witnesses were saying. She noticed this Ms Douglas' behaviour and wondered what was going on. She decided to watch Ms Douglas' actions and listen to the testimony of the witnesses. She found that the witnesses did not answer the question until Ms Douglas had given her head nodding. There was often long pauses before Ms Douglas completed her head nodding and the witnesses gave their answers. This behaviour on the part of Ms Douglas was very overt and pronounced while Ruth Doerksen was giving her evidence. Ms Douglas appeared to be coaching the witnesses on the correct answer to be giving. She was very clear on what she thought the answer should be.

Anyone sitting near Ms Douglas in the audience could have seen her head nodding. Therefore, she had additional concerns that any witnesses who had not given evidence yet could be influenced on how to answer the questions based on Ms Douglas' head nodding.

When the proceedings next had a break, Ms Allegri spoke to some of the other jurors who also indicated that they had seen the head nodding too. She then spoke to the coroner's constable and asked if it was permissible for a member of the audience to be influencing the answers being given by a witness. When the proceedings continued after the break, the Coroner strongly cautioned the audience that there could be no coaching of witnesses. Ms Allegri was surprised that the Coroner did not wait to see if he also saw this behaviour before cautioning the audience.

After the audience was cautioned by the Coroner, the head nodding by Ms Douglas stopped immediately. After the caution, Ms Allegri observed that Ms Douglas would lean forward and almost put her head in her lap. She appeared to be doing this to prevent herself from appearing to be nodding anymore.