

# The Romans had it right

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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



**RCSI HOSPITALS**  
OSPIDÉIL RCSI

Not this....



Nor this...



# Natural Justice

Tenets of natural justice: the rule against bias

‘Nemo judex in causa sua’

***No-one a judge in his own cause***

# Why is obstetrics a high octane area?

- Death of Savita Halappanavar
- Neary – The Lourdes Enquiry
- Portlaoise – Maternity Complaints Review
- Portiuncula – Walker Report (pending)

*...and Tanya McCabe, and organ retention, and symphysiotomy. And  
Morecambe Bay in the UK...*

# Acknowledging the problem

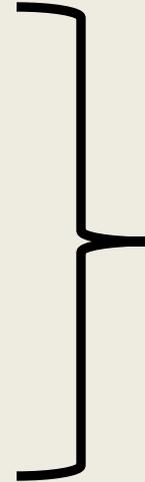
- Flory Report published 2015
- RCSI Hospitals Group recognised maternity services-specific issue
  - Executive Management & Quality & Safety Directorate
- Significant concerns raised by colleagues across Group maternity units

# A mandate for action

A study of clinical incident review processes

'An appropriate review structure requires clarity regarding:

- **The range and grading of incident requiring a review**
- **The form of review merited by the grade of incident**
- **The appropriate person(s) to undertake the review**
- **The resources required to undertake the review'**



**Who makes these decisions?**

# The tragedy of dead or damaged babies

***'When something goes wrong during labour at the end of a healthy pregnancy, and a baby dies or experiences a serious brain injury, what should be one of life's happiest events turns to devastating tragedy. As parents, we have to go through something for which we had no preparation. We are in a blur of distress and shock. We cannot believe this could happen to our baby, carried with care and love for nine months.... But it has.'***

From 'Each Baby Counts' 2015 Summary Report

# Obstetrics is different

...because the death or damage of babies  
*is terrible*

...and dead or damaged babies aren't characteristic of the practice of, for example, dermatology, or geriatrics, or general surgery

# The cost of obstetrics



Total transactional expenditure  
on maternity related claims

**€58 million in 2014**

**54% of all clinical  
claims costs** in 2014\*

*\*State Claims Agency 2015*

# What did the RCSI Hospitals Group do?

## **The SIMF: *Maternity Services-specific***

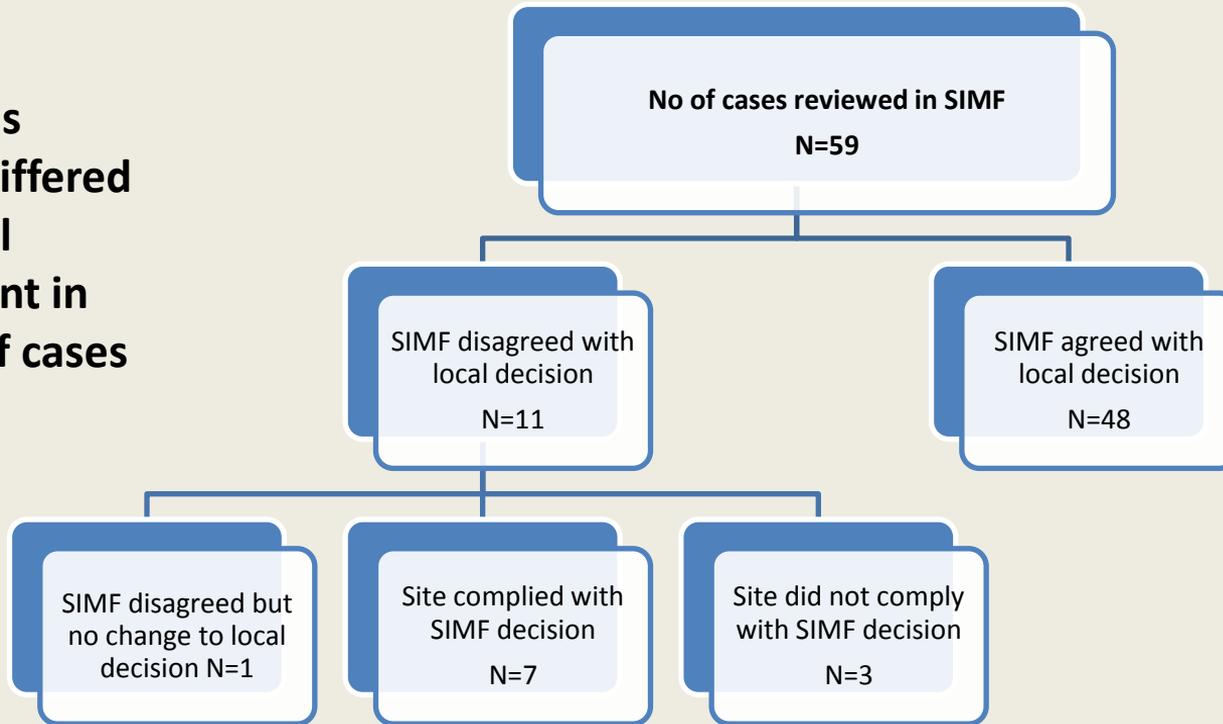
- Senior Incident Management Forum
- Quality assurance and clinical governance superstructure
- Implemented July 2016
- Governance and oversight of clinical incident reviews undertaken in Group's Maternity Units
- Membership comprises:
  - Clinical leads in O&G and Neonatology/Paediatrics from the Group's three maternity units
  - Directors of Midwifery from each of the maternity units
  - Risk managers from each of the units
  - RCSI Hospitals Group Quality & Safety Directorate and Clinical Directorate members

# Resistance to external governance

- How do we measure an institution's 'buy in'?
  - Attendance of key participants at meetings
  - Compliance with data sharing requirements
  - Acceptance of consensus opinion in respect of local incident review approach to serious incidents
  - Review recommendations sharing and implementation
  - Compliance with quality improvement initiatives

# Acceptance of consensus opinion

Consensus opinion differed from local assessment in 15-20% of cases



# The message

No individual unit can **objectively adjudicate**  
its own adverse outcomes

*Nemo iudex in causa sua*

Thank you to the Romans  
Thank you to the RCSI Hospitals Group  
Thank you – for listening!



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