



NEWSLETTER

The Institute of Professional Investigators AUTUMN 2021

IPI - AGM -1100 on Friday 19th November 2021

Due to the ongoing COVID complications this years AGM will be held via ZOOM. Details will be circulated nearer to the day.

WEBSITE - ARE YOU MISSING OUT?

All members are reminded to check their entries on the website to ensure contact details are up to date and that links to your websites are active.

ADOPTION & TRACING THE BIRTH FAMILY

Because of the emotional complexities around Tracing and Reunion, the UK Government allocated this task only to registered Adoption Support Agencies. Members should note that under the **Care Standards Act 2000**, it is unlawful for any agency or business or individual to offer an intermediary service, unless they have been registered as an Adoption Support Agency with Ofsted. Unregistered agencies have not been allowed to provide intermediary services since **December 29th, 2005**. *Full details are reproduced later in this newsletter.*

EPITATH - JAMES HARRISON-GRIFFITHS

I'm sure that most of us remember James ("H-G") Harrison-Griffiths who was our Principal from 2014 to 2017 and who died in tragic circumstances on his way home from delivering an IPI course on 4 May 2018.



After his untimely death, his wife Maureen took up the cudgels to get to the truth regarding what happened, and after three difficult years, compounded by the Covid pandemic, she has succeeded.

After he collapsed on the pavement only a short walk from his home, two paramedics arrived and treated him, including intubating him. It was only when a doctor arrived in the air ambulance that they realised the tube had gone into his stomach instead of down his airway.

NEWSLETTER

The Institute of Professional Investigators AUTUMN 2021

That was the start of a three-year investigation by his wife Maureen supported by their daughter Hannah, son-in-law Logan and numerous friends, including James's solicitor friend Sefton Kwasnik, who he worked with on many cases, which James would have been proud of. It included hundreds of emails, meetings and all the stress associated with the 'David and Goliath' fight against a massive organisation, but after three years it has resulted in the NHS acknowledging deficiencies in their training and making changes to ensure that such mistakes do not occur in the future.

It can be best summarised by a note from one of the most renowned professors on intubation in the UK, who sent the following message to Maureen:

*Dear Mrs. Harrison-Griffiths
Thank you for updating me. I hope this helps. To my mind your efforts have brought about a change for the better in ambulance practice which will resonate across the UK.*

So, on behalf of the Institute I would like to send our sincere thanks and appreciation to Maureen for all her efforts, which serve as an appropriate epitaph to James.

Richard Cumming
Principal

ADOPTION & TRACING THE BIRTH FAMILY

Before 1975 adoption was a closed Legal process that meant adopted adults (adoptees) would never be able to find their original name or the names of their birth parents or be in touch with them. However, the law changed in that year and was made retrospective giving adoptees the right to discover the details of their birth family. Anyone adopted before 1975 who wants access to their birth information must have Birth Records Counselling with a qualified and registered professional.

Both adoptees and birth family members can access Intermediary Services (Tracing and Reunion work) but unlike adopted people, birth relatives are

NEWSLETTER

The Institute of Professional Investigators AUTUMN 2021

NOT allowed by law to receive identifying information about adopted relatives without the adoptee's expressed permission. The adoptee has full access to information from the records at the time of their adoption. However, any new information discovered during the tracing process cannot be shared with the adoptee without the birth relatives expressed permission.

Because of the emotional complexities around Tracing and Reunion, the UK Government allocated this task only to registered Adoption Support Agencies. This is where Private Investigation Agencies can fall foul of the law. **Under the Care Standards Act 2000**, it is unlawful for any agency/business or individual to offer an intermediary service, unless they have been registered as an Adoption Support Agency with Ofsted. Unregistered agencies have not been allowed to provide intermediary services since **December 29th, 2005**.

The law acknowledges that this is a difficult process for all the people involved and Adoption Support Agencies are expected to provide counselling and support to all parties affected by this work.

It is important that adopted people and birth relatives understand the complexity of intermediary work and what this might mean especially in relation to their privacy and if they do not wish for contact. Therefore, it is essential that this work is only undertaken by Agencies and workers who have the appropriate qualifications and understanding. The emotional impact of tracing and reunion is huge, and workers need to be able to offer sensitive and informed support.

Adoption Support Agencies have access to The Adoption Contact Register, set-up in 1991 and held by the General Register Officer for England and Wales. This is where adults affected by Adoption can record whether they want to be contacted by birth relatives or adoptees, including expressing a 'no contact' wish. The Adoption Contact Register should be checked before any tracing work is done; and only Adoption Support Agencies, Adoptees and Birth relatives can access the Register. The Adoption Contact Register should be checked before any tracing work is done.

NEWSLETTER

The Institute of Professional Investigators AUTUMN 2021

A 'Veto' is a block, registered by an adopted adult, against any contact. Veto's cannot be placed on the Adoption Contact Register but are held by the agency which holds the adoptee's Adoption files, known as the Appropriate Adoption Agency (AAA); usually a Local Authority/council or Voluntary Adoption Agency. Again, only Adoption Support Agencies can access information about the AAA from the General Register Office, or the Court where the adoption took place. The AAA must be located and contacted before any tracing work to find an adopted person, to check if they have registered a veto.

Therefore, it is important for Private Investigators to direct any clients coming to them with an Adoption-related issue to an Adoption Support Agency.

Links to Agencies who are registered with and inspected by Ofsted.

<https://faithinfamilies.org/adoption-support/are-you-adopted/>

<https://www.fatherhudsons.org.uk/adults/support-after-adoption/8.htm>

<https://www.caritascare.org.uk/adoption/adopted-adults/>

<https://www.adoptionmatters.org/adoption-support/support-for-adopted-adults/>

<https://www.pac-uk.org/our-services/adopted-adults/>

IPI CONTACT NUMBER

01707 371144