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News
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Making a
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Forum
Recruitment
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NEWS RELEASE: GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - 22 September 02

Following the announcement of investigations into a number of deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, Alexander Harris Solicitors have been instructed by a number of families to litigate the circumstances surrounding their relatives' deaths. The families, now known as the Gosport War Memorial Hospital Action Group, have all raised serious concerns regarding the care that was afforded to thirteen relatives at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, Hampshire between 1990 and 2001.

Following a meeting with the families, Ann Alexander, the solicitor representing over 300 of the Shipman Inquiry and the solicitor now instructed to represent the interests of the Memorial Hospital Action Group said: "As a result of the information I have received from the families during the past few days, I believe the events which have occurred at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital give rise to serious cause for concern. Following Shipman's conviction Alan Mitchell, Secretary of State for Health said that he would do everything in his power to bring about a change in the way the NHS is run in order to prevent anything like this from happening again. Here we have another case where suspicions were raised and complaints made a considerable time ago yet it would appear that little effective action has taken place."

"It is of particular concern to learn that yet again serious questions must be raised about the standards of health care professionals, the failure of the General Medical Council to act and the failure of the Government to carry out a sufficiently thorough investigation. These are families who have also raised concerns with several administrative bodies including the Trust, the Health Authority, and Government over the last 5 years and yet it is only now that the authorities seem to be taking note of the situation."

"I am not at all surprised that these families are extremely frustrated by the apparent lack of action in this appalling situation. We have seen in the case of Harold Shipman how delays result in the most possible circumstances. Urgent change is required to prevent similar situations happening again and to restore and maintain confidence in the National Health Service."

NOTES:

The families have asked that **all** requests for further information should be made through Alexander Harris.

For further information please contact Emma Smith at Alexander Harris Solicitors, Ash Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 2DW. 0161 925 5555.

'A highly respected niche practice' Alexander Harris is ranked as one of the leading special negligence firms and amongst the leading firms specialising in personal injury (Chambers and Partners 2002). Alexander Harris also specialise in dental negligence, pharmaceutical product liability litigation, injury overseas, education, mental health and community care. With offices in London, West, London and the West Midlands and over 150 staff, Alexander Harris' latest news is available on the internet at www.alexanderharris.co.uk

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