

**RESTRICTED**

Form MG11(T)

Page 1 of 4

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

(CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3) (a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981, r.70)

Statement of: GELL, PAMELA

Age if under 18: OVER 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: DEPUTY MANAGER NURSING HOME

This statement (consisting of 5 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signed: Code A

Date: 25/07/2005

I am Pamela GELL and I live at an address known to Hampshire Police.

Between 1968 and 1972 I was a student nurse at St Mary's Hospital Portsmouth where I did general training and qualified as a registered general nurse, my nursing and midwifery number is 6811532E.

Between 1972 and 1973 I was a staff nurse at the Renal Unit at St Mary's Hospital Portsmouth where I worked with patients in chronic and renal failure.

Between October 1976 and September 1981 I was the Matron at Thalassa Nursing Home Western Way Alverstoke Gosport. My responsibilities included the general management of the home, recruitment of staff and selling bed space. I also developed a working relationship with the Area Health Authority and local Environmental Health Authority in order to promote care practices and procedures in accordance with RGN training and local recognised standards.

Between September 1981 and June 1985 I was the Matron of Bury Lodge Nursing Home 77 Bury Road Gosport, for Thalassa Nursing Homes Ltd. This particular property was vacant and as Matron I negotiated with the health authority at inspection level to achieve a 19 bed registered home catering mainly for the chronic sick and elderly mentally infirm.

This post coincided with the purchase of Langdale Rest Home, which at that time was registered for 17 residents and my role at Bury Lodge extended to maintaining occupancy levels at all three homes for the group.

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2004(1)

Signature Witnessed by: Code A

**RESTRICTED**

Continuation of Statement of: GELL, PAMELA

Form MG11(T)(CONT)  
Page 2 of 4

Between June 1985 and April 2001 I was the Nursing Director to Thalassa Nursing Homes Ltd. There was an increasing bed capacity at all three homes to 90 beds and there was compliance with the 1984 and 1989 Nursing Home Act. My responsibilities included maintaining the smooth running of all three homes by liaising with all three matrons, to maintain a good reputation with all local services and building relationships with the local community and potential client group.

Between April 2001 and March 2003 I was employed as a staff nurse at Thalassa Nursing Homes. My aim was to work together with the managers and RGN colleagues to promote the home's philosophy. To gain fresh experience in care practices and assist in the formulation of care plans and the writing of policies and procedures in order to comply with New Care Standards Regulations. To help promote the best standards in care and health and safety for our clients and care staff. To communicate with clients and their relatives to ensure their needs were met.

Between 2003 to present I am the Deputy Manager (Matron) at Langdale Nursing Home. My responsibilities are to ensure the efficient and profitable running of the home, at all time ensuring that the care and facilities provided by the home meet the standards set by the employer and comply with the contractual and registration requirements of all relevant authorities i.e. Health Authorities and Social Service Authorities. In achieving this objective I have total responsibility and accountability to management for all residents within the Home in addition to all members of staff.

I have been asked to detail my involvement in the care and treatment of Arthur Brian CUNNINGHAM. Mr CUNNINGHAM was a patient at Thalassa Nursing Home in 1998; I produce a copy of his patient notes from that establishment (Exhibit reference DW/PG/1). From memory and referral to those notes, I can state the following. In August 1998 Brian CUNNINGHAM was a patient at Mulberry C Ward, now Collingwood Ward at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. He became suitable for discharge and a vacancy at a Nursing Home was sought. At the time I was Director of Nursing at Thalassa Lodge Nursing Home and I went to

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**RESTRICTED**

Continuation of Statement of: GELL, PAMELA

Form MG11(T)(CONT)

Page 3 of 4

see him to assess his suitability. I became aware that he had both psychiatric and nursing problems. I believe his nursing needs outweighed his psychiatric needs. He was a 78 yr old with Parkinson's and blood sugar problems. He was not on insulin. He appeared uncooperative and displayed difficult behaviour. He was settled on the ward. I remember him as quietly spoken taking a long time to speak. I connected that to his Parkinson's disease.

We agreed to take him to Thalassa Nursing Home and on admission on 28th August 1998 it was noticed that he had a large red sacral area with Granuflex on it. At the time of the pre-assessment, it was my understanding that he did not have any pressure sores, however I was on Collingwood Ward the day that Brian was admitted to Thalassa, and I recall having a conversation with a nurse who informed me that Brian had been on the floor all of the previous night. This probably exacerbated the likelihood of Brian developing a pressure sore, something we all try to avoid. He was subsequently nursed on a Quattro mattress at Thalassa. These mattresses are extremely expensive but the best for persons with pressure sores.

On the whole staff at Thalassa coped well with Brian and he was not perceived to be a management problem. His Parkinson's drugs were administered 6 times a day.

John ALLEN, the Community Psychiatric Nurse saw Brian at Thalassa and decided that he was quite settled and no changes were required with his psychiatric treatment.

Brian's sacral sore was a worrying factor and continued to be treated and dressed accordingly. He attended the Dolphin Day Hospital on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1998 where he had a swab taken from the wound. He was also prescribed 200mgs Metronidazole, 1 tablet three times a day. This is used to treat fungal infections.

On 21<sup>st</sup> September 1998, Brian attended the Dolphin Day Hospital as previously arranged and was admitted to Dryad Ward as a result. I can recall that on that day he appeared to be unwell. This may have been because of the Metronidazole which can cause nausea and flu like symptoms as a side effect. He had his chin on his chest and was not as bright as he had been; he may have had a possible chest infection, or indeed the start of one.

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**RESTRICTED**

Continuation of Statement of: GELL, PAMELA

Form MG11(T)(CONT)  
Page 4 of 4

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1998 we received a telephone call from Dryad Ward at the GWMH to inform us that Brian's condition was quite poorly.

On 28<sup>th</sup> September we received a further call from Dryad Ward to inform us that Brian had died at the weekend.

I know that Thalassa Nursing Home was investigated by the Nursing Home Inspectorate now the CSI (Jackie TARRANT) as a result of Brian CUNNINGHAM's demise. Everything was deemed however to be in order.

Signed: Code A  
2004(1)

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