

Rt. Hon. Lord Goldsmith
Legal Secretary of the Law Offices
9 Buckingham Gate
LONDON
SW1

28th August 2002

Miss Emily Yeats

Code A

RE: Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Dear Sir

I am writing to you regarding my serious concerns relating to the death of my grandmother Mrs Alice Wilkie at the Gosport War Memorial hospital in August 1998. My Grandmother was admitted to the hospital for rehabilitation after suffering from a urinary tract infection but unfortunately died just a couple of weeks later.

In April 2001 after seeing some publicity surrounding events at the hospital my mother, Mrs Marilyn Jackson, contacted Hampshire Constabulary to request the alleged unlawful killing of my grandmother be investigated. At this time the Constabulary assured my mother that this matter would be investigated. After much waiting and uncertainty as to what was happening my mother received a letter from Superintendent John James advising that no further investigation into events at the hospital would be carried out. This was very surprising, as at this time the police had yet to come to take a statement and to my knowledge no other investigation had occurred into my grandmother's death. Superintendent James visited my mother, my sister and myself at home on Monday 25th February to explain his reasons for not continuing with an investigation. The reasons stated were "lack of police resources" and "an unwillingness to cause anxiety to other relatives who may not even be aware of a potential problem". At this time, James told us that there was "no question of murder as there was no monetary gain as in the Harold Shipman case". I found this comment wholly inappropriate to say the least and would like to point out that the first contact with the police by Mrs Gillian McKenzie actually took place before the publicity surrounding Harold Shipman. We were also advised during this meeting that my grandmother's case had been one of four cases selected to be subject to two expert medical opinions. James told us that these experts had raised serious concerns over the standard of care given at the hospital and at the level of drugs administered. Unfortunately, the police have continually denied us access to these reports.

As we were dissatisfied with James' reasons and our concerns regarding my grandmothers death had not been allayed a formal complaint was sent to Chief Constable Kernaghan on 12th April 2002. Chief Superintendent Clacher interviewed us on Tuesday 30th April and a statement regarding our complaint was taken.

Despite making a formal complaint and despite the publication of the Commission For Health Improvements (CHI) report on the hospital, which was extremely damning, I have now had a letter from Deputy Chief Constable Readhead stating that no new investigation will be taking place and Hampshire Police will "not be seeking additional evidence at this time". Instead the Deputy Chief Constable has proposed to bring in yet another new officer to collate all the relevant evidence and information and submit it to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to see if it will change their original decision. I have some serious concerns and reservations

about this proposed course of action. To my knowledge, other than the commissioning of an expert medical report, no other investigation has been carried out on my grandmother's case. I am still awaiting full statements to be taken from my family and for the staff involved to be interviewed. There are a number of other families who have never had anything done by the police in relation to the deaths of their families, and new families are coming forward with their concerns. All of these families, my own included, are individual cases and should be investigated as such, as they could hold vital evidence. Certainly the general principle for the code of Crown Prosecutors backs up this point as it states, "each case is unique and must be considered on its own facts and merits". I do not agree that the actions of Hampshire Constabulary should be guided by the original case that was sent to the CPS. My biggest concern, which arises out of this situation, is how can the CPS make an informed decision into these matters when the police have actually collated very little evidence? I believe this evidence is lacking as a direct result of the failure of the constabulary to commit to a full investigation. I feel very strongly that it is only right and in the public interest for all of the evidence to be collected before a submission to the CPS takes place. The police have put together a great deal of information but this cannot be used as evidence, and it is my understanding that the CPS can only act on evidence, not information. How can the Deputy Chief Constable let this situation develop in this way? I feel it is a very serious risk to take and cannot see how this situation can continue.

All I have asked from the Police is that a full investigation into the death of my grandmother, and the other patients who have contacted the force, be investigated. These are serious allegations which I feel should be treated as such. I am hoping that in your role as Attorney General you can ensure that a proper investigation be carried out so that the CPS can be properly informed and the correct (and safest) decision can be made in the interests of all the families and the public.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

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Miss Emily Yeats

Copies to: Sir David Calvert-Smith QC, Director of Public Prosecutions
Jonathon Farr, Crown Prosecution Service
Paul Close, Crown Prosecution Service
Right Honourable Tony Blair, Prime Minister
Right Honourable David Blunkett, Home Secretary
Right Honourable Alan Milburn, Health Secretary
Duncan Gere, Police Complaints Authority
Ian Duncan-Smith, MP
Chief Constable Kernaghan, Hampshire Constabulary