

Steve Barnes (Royal College of Nursing, regional office Winchester: 28/11/01

- * Members at GWM are becoming frustrated and tired because of frequency of investigations into original incidents; see CHI investigation as yet one more of the same
- * There is also considerable anxiety about change of management/structure next April; staff happy with current senior management - very worried about the prospect of new people coming in who will not be as sympathetic#
- * Steve has been in RCN for 20 years as an officer, in charge of trusts in Portsmouth area for 13 years
- * Very pleased with GWM: 'The trust has positively tried to embrace partnership working with the RCN and other unions'
- * Betty Woodlands has key RCN role at GWM (well trusted and respected) so Steve not often involved but the two keep in regular contact; see their role as supporting staff and 'picking up the pieces' at the end of the process.
- * He would have more serious concerns if Chi investigating Portsmouth Hospitals Trust where RCN has huge concerns about poor management
- * GWM has a good record in supporting staff at senior management level; not so sure about behaviour of middle managers. 'Why pick on such a good trust to investigate?'
- * 99/2000; major problems in care of the elderly at Queen Alexandra Hospital which received much media coverage; incident concerning elderly lady whose family complained should not be in the ward at the QA, her son bullied and harassed nursing staff; big investigation ensued which concluded that she had been appropriately placed there
- * discussions between unions and trust board; several managers moved out....GWM lost two of its best managers (Bill Hooper and Barbara Robinson) who were shifted to the QA; meanwhile some of the worst middle managers at the QA, who were involved in the incidents giving rise to the crisis at the QA, were moved to GWM; particularly concerned about Jan Peach
- * in hindsight, thinks that some of the problems at GWM might have been averted or minimised if there hadn't been so much attention on Queen Alexandra, particularly in 2000 ; concerned that health authority, in particular 'took its eye off the ball, concentrating all attention on the QA and not paying enough attention to GWM
- * treatment of elderly a very sensitive issue locally, particularly at QA following 2000 incident : 'nursing staff feel that they weren't and aren't being supported by management but being made scapegoats'
- * major crisis in local health economy about numbers of community beds; fewer available in last few years because of more frequent closure of nursing homes; RCN dealing with quite a lot of redundancies in independent sector
- * 5 years ago nursing homes were a booming business; now many are closing because of rising costs and greater pressure from inspectorate which is imposing tougher standards. 'maybe it is forcing some of the cowboys out of the business which is a good thing but it also means that there are fewer places for older people to go to'