

Mr and Mrs Ripley 21.11.01

Last May 2000 Mr Ripley was unable to walk - Mrs Ripley could not manage so arranged for him to go to Haslar. Was in high dependency bed but Haslar said could not spare bed for someone not acutely ill. Moved him to War Memorial Hospital. Developed Bursitis (inflammation of joints) after a few days in GWM. He was in considerable pain - asked for nurses to help - it took five of them to lift him.

One day nurses were unable to wake him as was Mrs Ripley. Mrs Ripley requested that a Doctor be sought immediately - not available but summoned - waited for 5 hours - told only 7 emergency doctors for whole of South. Breathing irregular and at one point appeared to stop. Mr Ripley's relatives told that Mr Ripley's condition 'very, very serious', "massive mid-brain stroke". Requested that he be sent to Haslan - Mr Ripley in dreadful pain throughout journey to Haslan.

Mrs Ripley rang the following morning to ask about his condition. Told he had not had stroke but an analgesic coma and severe dehydration. Stayed in Haslan for a couple of days - could not keep him there longer as needed the bed - said they would send him back to War Memorial.

Took him almost a year to recover. "He was on a drugs high - he was hallucinating". Doctors explained that had been morphine. Complained directly to Penny Humphries at Portsmouth Health Authority after three months received a qualified apology. Not offered an opportunity to meet with Doctor to discuss Mr Ripley's treatment. No nurse identified with responsibility for Mr Ripley's care. Mrs Ripley's impression was most were nursing auxiliaries. "I don't blame any of the doctors" - very few fully qualified nurses evident - Doctor would come around each evening to Sultan Ward (Mrs Ripley's GP).

GP recommended that Mr Ripley receive physiotherapy care, get up and move around. Four days wait for a physiotherapist - no treatment for bursitis on elbows and knees (except for an armrest) - physio not given for fear his swellings would burst with subsequent harm to him.

Given high dose of painkillers. No information around hospital about how patients should complain. Not offered an opportunity to discuss his case and concerns with a doctor.

Was not under the care a nurse with specific responsibility for him. According to Mrs R, most of the nurses who dealt with him were nursing auxiliaries - very few fully qualified nurses appeared to be on duty in ward

Never told about the independent review process although Penny H from Health Authority said she would put her complaint into NHS scheme. Concerned that Mr Ripley was given diamorphine which she felt was inappropriate because he had suffered form serious attack of osteo-arthritis. Mr and Mrs Ripley were unaware that help available from Community Health Council - as far as they are concerned there have been no improvements in care at War Memorial.

16:30 - patients weren't up and washed, they had not been fed. Gents toilets were said to be very dirty and unkempt.

'We were beside ourselves with worry' (in 4 hour wait for Doctor) 'I'm afraid I've lost all confidence in that hospital I wanted it brought to someone's attention that this must stop'.

Mrs R concerned about the fact that Mr R given diamorphine, given that he had had a serious attack of osteoarthritis and she understood that drugs like diamorphine shouldn't be administered