

News Release

Tuesday 7 May 2002

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT) is extremely concerned at the distress being caused to staff, patients and their relatives as a result of recent media coverage of the hospital. The Primary Care Trust has confidence in the dedicated staff who work at the hospital and the care they provide to their patients.

Therefore, the PCT has taken the decision to set out the current position in relation to a series of enquiries and investigations that have been undertaken relating to events in 1998 and advise the public of what action has been taken.

- One comprehensive investigation was undertaken by the police, which was reviewed by the Crown Prosecution Service who decided that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute.
- One formal complaint was referred to the Health Service Ombudsman but not upheld.
- One complaint was taken through the NHS Complaints procedure and an independent medical review was undertaken. The review criticised aspects of communication but endorsed the medical treatment which the patient received. This resulted in no further action being taken.
- Four preliminary enquiries, based upon independent reviews of patient notes were undertaken by the police, who decided not to conduct further investigations.

Mr Ian Piper, Chief Executive of Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT) said: "Despite the investigations and enquiries the PCT recognised that relatives of some patients still had concerns. At the end of 2001 the Commission for Health Improvement was invited to conduct a thorough, independent investigation at Gosport War Memorial Hospital to look at issues the complaints and investigations had raised, with the aim of reviewing current practice to ensure the hospital provided good quality patient care."

Mr Piper added: "The outcome of the investigation by the Commission for Health Improvement is not expected until the beginning of July 2002, but when published hopefully this will provide reassurance with regard to current standards of care at the hospital. However, the PCT is aware that the investigations and complaints have highlighted areas where lessons can be learnt and consequently over the past three years a number of aspects of medical and nursing practice have been enhanced to improve the quality of services provided to patients. These have included developing policies, enhancing staffing levels and undertaking training, with the aim of continuously improving the quality of care provided"

**the Media & Communications Service works locally for:
East Hampshire Primary Care Trust
Fareham & Gosport Primary Care Trust
Portsmouth City Primary Care Trust**

The Primary Care Trust takes all complaints seriously, tries to resolve issues as soon as they arise, and encourages anyone who is not happy with treatment they, or a member of their family, receive to contact the PCT or the hospital. All formal complaints are investigated and the findings shared with the complainant in a face to face meeting.

The feedback from patients about Gosport War Memorial Hospital is generally very positive, this is a well-loved hospital and we are fortunate to have highly dedicated and skilled staff working there.

If people have concerns about the care of patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, please contact either:

Fiona Cameron on 01329 229419 or Jan Peach, Service Manager at Gosport War Memorial Hospital on 023 9252 4611.

NOTES TO EDITOR:

1. The Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust was established on 1 April 2002 and is geographically coterminous with Fareham Borough Council and Gosport Borough Council, 21 GP practices with a population of around 187,000.
2. Media enquires should be made to Sue Galley, Communications Manager, Media & Communications Service, telephone 023 9283 5156.

**the Media & Communications Service works locally for:
East Hampshire Primary Care Trust
Fareham & Gosport Primary Care Trust
Portsmouth City Primary Care Trust**