

Portsmouth Health Care NHS Trust

Received

20 APR 2001

General Manager, Fareham / Gosport

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. P. Viggers, M.P.,
House of Commons,
LONDON.
SW1A 0AA

MM/YJM

19 April 2001

4378

Dear Mr. Viggers,

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Thank you for your letter of 17th April, 2001 regarding your correspondence with Mrs. Mackenzie, about the police investigation of the death of her mother, Mrs. Richards, at the hospital in 1998.

The Trust received a complaint about Mrs. Richards' care in August 1998. This was investigated at the time but no evidence of inappropriate care was found. The Trust has, of course, co-operated fully with the police since Mrs. Mackenzie took her concern to them. The police investigation is complete and a decision from the Crown Prosecution Service is awaited.

The fact of the police investigation in the case of Mrs. Richards was reported recently in The News, and this prompted another complainant, a Mr. Wilson, to contact them. The News ran a story based on his complaint early this month and this is, I think, the media coverage that prompted you to write.

In this second case, Mr. Wilson complained about the care his relative **Code A** received at the hospital prior to her death, also in 1998. The complaint was investigated internally but Mr. Wilson remained unhappy and referred his complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman. In his report, the Ombudsman concludes: "I have not found evidence of unsatisfactory medical or nursing care and I am satisfied that **Code A** was not given excessive doses of morphine. I do not uphold the complaint." The Ombudsman's investigation was, of course, completely independent of the Trust, and involved external medical and nursing advisers. (Note: the only criticism of the Trust made by the Ombudsman was for an error relating to the microfilming of some nursing records, e.g. fluid charts, but the majority of the patient's records were available and were adequate for the advisers to assess the adequacy of care.)

/continued - page 2

Mr. Wilson is unhappy with the Ombudsman's findings and has asked the police to investigate his complaint as another unlawful killing.

The News coverage also refers to three or four more people having approached them with similar concerns. However, the Trust has had no formal complaints from these "new" names and had not previously been aware of their concerns. We have made it clear that we are more than ready to meet with anyone who has concerns about the care of their relative in this hospital. However, to date none of the people mentioned have contacted us (either directly or via The News reporter).

In short, behind the media coverage there are only the two definite complaints to date: one since fully investigated by the police and awaiting a Crown Prosecution Service decision about whether there is a case to answer; the other the subject of an independent investigation concluding that the care given was appropriate.

I hope this gives you sufficient background on the situation, but please do not hesitate to contact me again if I can help further.

Yours sincerely,

Code A

Max Millett
Chief Executive

Silent copy to: Ms P. Humphris

Mrs. F. Cameron

Mr. W. Hooper

Dr. I. Reid

Dr. D. Jarrett

From: PETER VIGGERS, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Private Secretary 020- 7219 4091
Constituency Office 01705- 588400
Messages 020- 7219 3000

www.viggersmp.freemove.co.uk

17th April, 2001

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Viggers'.

I recently received letters from Mrs. Gillian Mackenzie of **Code A**
Code A who was seeking to obtain my involvement in an investigation of the
alleged unlawful killing of her mother while an in-patient in Gosport War Memorial Hospital.
I told Mrs. Mackenzie (who is not, of course, my constituent) that I did not propose to
become involved.

Subsequently I have seen coverage of the issue in the local newspaper and I would be grateful
if I could be briefed on the situation by an appropriate person.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Viggers'.

Code A

Mr. Max Millett,
Chief Executive,
Portsmouth HealthCare Trust,
St. James's Hospital,
PORTSMOUTH PO4 8LD.