

**Ms Karen Woods
Office of the Complaints Convener
c/o Unit 180, Fareham Reach
166 Fareham Road
Gosport
Hants
PO13 0FH**

Comp/007/2002

26 February 2003

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mr A Pickering
Acting Chief Executive
Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust
Unit 180, Fareham Reach
166 Fareham Road
Gosport
Hants
PO13 0FH

Dear Mr Pickering

Request for Independent Review Code A

I am writing to inform you that Code A has requested that consideration be given to convening an independent review panel to investigate his complaint against you. For your information I enclose a copy of Code A letter of request. A copy of this letter is also being sent to Mrs Jan Peach, Service Manager of Gosport War Memorial Hospital, and Mrs Anne Haste, Manager of Sultan Ward.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain to you what will happen and review the sequence of events which you may anticipate.

As the Convener of complaints for the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, it is my role to review the information regarding the circumstances which led to Code A complaint and to respond with a decision regarding the establishment of an Independent Review Panel. If there seem to be sufficient indications that an Independent Review Panel would be productive, and could assist in the resolution of the complaint, then you will be informed and a panel arranged. Although a careful and considered review of the appropriateness of an Independent Review will occur, I would like to point out that whilst Code A has a right to request an Independent Review Panel, it is not the same as a right to proceed automatically to the Independent Review Stage.

In addition to myself, a lay representative (a member of the public who is unconnected with the Primary Care Trust and has been selected by the NHS Executive) will also review the information surrounding the complaint and recommend on the appropriateness of convening a panel. Lay representatives have received training in their role. This lay representative will also be appointed to be the chairman of the panel, should it be decided that this is the appropriate next step.

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Should an Independent Review Panel seem to be the appropriate way forward, the issues which the panel will investigate (the terms of reference) will be set out clearly and included in my response regarding the establishing of a panel. There may also be issues which will not be reviewed, and these will also be identified. Only those issues included in the terms of reference can be considered by the panel. The panel cannot consider legal or disciplinary matters.

If it appears that **Code A**'s complaint has been properly investigated and that he has received an adequate response and a full and appropriate explanation, and that there are not further practical actions an independent panel could provide, then such a panel will not be established. Regardless of the outcome, you will be kept informed. Should Mr **Code A** remain dissatisfied, he has the right to contact the Health Service Ombudsman.

Should a panel be convened, it will consist of a minimum of the independent lay chairman, the convener and a third lay panel member, also appointed by the NHS Executive. If there are clinical elements to the complaint, there will also be two clinical assessors, who will be consultant clinicians practising outside this Primary Care Trust area, who will advise the panel.

If a panel is established, a report will be given to you, and a copy sent to each person named in the complaint, all the persons interviewed by the panel, any clinical assessors involved in your case, and the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Primary Care Trust.

I hope that this information will assist you to understand the process.

Yours sincerely

Ms Karen Woods
Complaints Convener