

File

Letter to Mr Duggan
posted 1st class 9/12/02

Fareham and Gosport **NHS**

Primary Care Trust

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AP/MT

5 December 2002

Dear **Code A**

Thank you for meeting with me and some of the team on 16 August to discuss your ongoing concerns regarding the care of your father in Sultan Ward at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. Also present at the meeting were Mary Miles - your associate, Dr Grocock - your father's GP, Fiona Cameron - Operational Director for the Trust and Lead Nurse, and Ann Turner - Complaints Manager.

In summary, I believe your remaining concerns were:- The time taken to manage your complaint through the complaints process; the appropriateness of Sultan Ward at Gosport and Dr Grocock's decision to admit there and, most importantly, significant communication issues. These were specifically:- Staff attitude to relatives; staff ability to communicate effectively with relatives and staff communications with the general practitioner.

I would first like to re-iterate Ms Cameron's apology to you at the meeting, in relation to the length of time it has taken to process your complaint. Whilst there have been a number of specific reasons for the delay, the period in question is wholly unacceptable and I apologise unreservedly for that.

In relation to the appropriateness of your father's admission to Gosport, I believe Dr Grocock stood by his decision to do this and indicated that he felt it was also in keeping with your mother's preference. The communication issues were, I believe, your greatest concern and you were able to very powerfully give us an impression of how it felt for you to be visiting your father at Gosport War Memorial. Again, as Ms Cameron said in the meeting "documentation of your father's care fell well below the standard that we would expect" and as a consequence I can only conclude that the omissions which you perceived were in fact reality. There is no reasonable explanation for this and once again I apologise unreservedly.

Each complaint received by the organisation is subject to review, and the generation of an action plan to take account of learning points arising from complaints. I am enclosing a copy of the action plan associated with your complaint for your information.

You had written to the Trust on 7 November requesting independent review. At our meeting you expressed a desire for that letter to be passed on to the Complaints Convenor for the Trust, in order that the issues you had raised and the process of this complaint were registered and understood by the Trust Board.

I have passed your letter requesting independent review to our convenor, asking that no action is taken at this time. In addition, I have also asked one of the other non-executive directors of the Trust to review the complaint from its commencement, with a view to producing a report for the Trust Board early in the New Year. The reason for asking one of the other non-executives is that, should you wish to pursue the independent review panel route in the future, I would not want to have compromised the convenor at this stage.

Thank you very much for taking the time to meet with us on 27 November. Your story and your still obvious distress left a marked impression on us all. We will be endeavouring to use your experience to improve our systems and processes in relation to complaints handling and in the work being undertaken with nurses at Gosport War Memorial.

I hope you feel we have addressed your issues of concern. However, if you have any outstanding concerns or you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Alan Pickering
Chief Executive

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