

Hampshire **NHS**  
Primary Care Trust

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**Code A**

[www.hampshirepct.nhs.uk](http://www.hampshirepct.nhs.uk)

Ref: NSE04

19 May 2008

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Mr P Cook

**Code A**

Dear Mr Cook

Thank you for your letter dated 21 April 2008, regarding concerns about the care your father, Mr Norman George Cook, received when he was an inpatient at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital (GWMH). I would firstly like to offer you my sincere condolences on the recent loss of your father. I know this will be a very difficult time for your family and I am sorry that you felt he did not receive adequate treatment under our care.

Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) takes all complaints seriously and views them as an opportunity to review and improve our service. The concerns that you have raised have been investigated by Mark Roberts, Ward Manager, and have been shared with me. The investigation has involved discussions with the nursing staff involved in the transfer of Mr Cook as well as a review of his medical notes.

Mr Cook was admitted to Sultan Ward on 1 April 2008 with cancer of the oesophagus, querying a blocked stent; he was not eating or drinking, was constipated and requiring an increase in care.

I am advised that Mr Cook was referred to the Countess Mountbatten Hospice for ongoing terminal support, with the hope that he might improve enough to be discharged to either a nursing home or have an increased care package at home. It was felt that the specialist input from the palliative care team could offer symptom control, which may make discharge possible or at least improve Mr Cook's quality of life. Both the consultant and nurse from the palliative care team felt that his transfer to the Countess Mountbatten Hospice was appropriate.

I understand that Mr Cook was making some progress. His nausea and stomach pains had been controlled following an endoscopy and his treatment and medication were changed following discussions with the Consultant Gastroenterologist. Mr Cook was able to eat very small amounts, whereas previously he was not eating and had been on intravenous therapy.

I believe that Mr Cook had been stable until the evening of 17 April; Dr Tan reviewed him at 18:00 as he had developed sudden onset of pain. Mr Cook was treated with dexamethasone and 2.5mg diamorphine and he proceeded to have a comfortable night. I apologise that the ward staff did not contact you that evening to keep you informed of your father's condition. However, the ward staff have been spoken to and reminded of the importance of contacting relatives with any changes of condition.

On the morning of 18 April 2008, the Countess Mountbatten Hospice contacted the ward and asked if Mr Cook could be transferred urgently as they had a bed available, and transport was booked for midday. The staff nurse on duty that morning reported that Mr Cook requested to stay in bed, as he did not feel like getting up and, with minimal support, he managed to wash and dress himself and converse with staff and therefore assessed as being clinically fit to be transferred; this was also reflected in Mr Cook's notes. Mr Cook was given a 2.5mg dose of diamorphine at 09:40 that morning in order to keep him comfortable for the journey to the hospice, and you were then contacted to inform you of your father's transfer.

I understand your concerns and I would like to apologise for the stress and anxiety caused to you during such a difficult time. I am very grateful to you for bringing your concerns to my attention and I hope that you feel they have been addressed. However, if you feel you it would be helpful and you would like an opportunity to meet with the Matron, Toni Scammell, to discuss your concerns further, please contact her direct on **Code A** to arrange a suitable time and date. You may, of course, meet her with other members of your family if you wish.

You also have the right to ask the Healthcare Commission to review your case should you remain dissatisfied following any further investigation. This should be done within 6 months of the conclusion of local resolution. You can contact the Healthcare Commission on **0845 601 3012** or write to them at: **The Healthcare Commission, Complaints Team, Peter House, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5AX** or visit them at [www.healthcarecommission.org.uk](http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

**Code A**

Gareth Cruddace  
Chief Executive

26/04/2008 15:25

02392590360

GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL

PAGE 02/02

# Code A

4th April 2008  
21 April 2008

Colin Jones  
Support Service Manager  
War Memorial Hospital  
Bury Road  
Gosport  
Hants PO12 3PW

Dear

Re: Norman George Cook Code A Sultan Ward

My Father George Cook was under your care from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 16<sup>th</sup> April when he was moved to the Countess Mountbatten Centre.

I would like to know why I was not informed that my father George Cook had deteriorated to such an extent that when I went to greet him at the Countess Mountbatten Centre, he was on a stretcher and could no longer talk. This seemed to be because he was in extreme pain and all he could do was groan.

I know he was terminally ill, but when I left him on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April he was still talking and able to take himself to the bathroom. Had I been informed of his deterioration I would have come directly to the War Memorial on Friday morning and probably insisted that he was not transferred in that condition.

Did anyone check him before he left to make sure he could make the journey? I know it was agreed that he would go to the Countess Mountbatten, but surely if a patient goes critical it is in their best interests to remain where they are.

I believe the lack of care you gave him on Thursday had a direct bearing on the fact that he died on Saturday.

Yours faithfully,

# Code A

Peter Cook

**Code A**

**From:** Code A  
**Sent:** 20 May 2008 16:19  
**To:** Code A  
**Subject:** RE: Final Response - Mr C

**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Hi Code A

Sue Harriman has now passed over proof-reading to the Heads of Service so the response will not go routinely to her for approval; however, Sue has seen it and it has also been approved by Elizabeth Emms. I will fax through a copy of the letter now.

Regards

Code A

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**From:** Code A  
**Sent:** 19 May 2008 17:07  
**To:** Code A  
**Subject:** RE: Final Response - Mr C  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Thanks Code A

Can you please confirm that Sue Harriman has approved the letter?

Also, could I please have a copy of the incoming letter, so Gareth sees the full picture?

Thanks,

Code A  
 PA to Chair & Chief Executive  
 Hampshire PCT  
 Omega House  
 112 Southampton Road  
 Eastleigh  
 Hampshire SO50 5PB  
 Tel: Code A  
 Please note new office address

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**From:** Code A  
**Sent:** 19 May 2008 13:35  
**To:** Code A  
**Cc:** Harriman, Sue  
**Subject:** Final Response - Mr C  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

<< File: Final response v3.doc >>

Dear Annette

Please find attached the final response to the complaint received from Mr Cook regarding the care his father, Mr Norman Cook, received whilst he was an inpatient at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital. The response has been checked and approved by Elaine Williams.

Once signed and sent, please could you forward a copy to me for the complaint file.

Thank you.

Regards

**Code A**

Customer Services Officer  
Hampshire Primary Care Trust (Northern Area)  
Fleet Community Hospital  
Church Road  
Fleet  
GU51 4LZ

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Fax:

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**Code A**

**From:** Williams, Elaine  
**Sent:** 16 May 2008 13:20  
**To:** **Code A**  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** RE:

**Sensitivity:** Confidential

**Code A**

I am content with it now, thanks  
 Please forward with the letter of complaint to **Code A**

Regards  
*Elaine*

Elaine Williams  
**Legal Services Manager**  
 Hampshire Primary Care Trust Please note new contact details  
 HQ, Omega House  
 12 Southampton Road  
 Eastleigh, SO50 5PB

Tel: Direct Dial  
 Tel: **Code A** Office  
 Fax: (Safe Haven)  
 Tel: Blackberry  
 Email: **Code A**

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 Thank you for your co-operation.*

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**From:** **Code A**  
**Sent:** 16 May 2008 13:08  
**To:** Williams, Elaine  
**Cc:** Scammell, Toni (HPCT-SE)  
**Subject:**  
**Importance:** High  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

<< File: Final response v2.doc >>

Dear Elaine

Further to the changes made to the response to Mr Cook, I attach it again for your final approval.

I have seen Toni's comments regarding the circumstances of Mr Cook's transfer and tried to reflect this in the letter. I have deleted 'If there ... let me know' as I think this has been addressed in the paragraph above, which I have also slightly softened.

I hope this makes sense, but please let me know if you require further changes.

Regards

**Code A**

Customer Services Officer  
 Hampshire Primary Care Trust (Northern Area)  
 Fleet Community Hospital

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