

Doctor described as 'excellent GP'

Former colleague praises Dr Jane Barton for work at Gosport hospital

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THE doctor at the centre of elderly deaths at a hospital was always 'careful and considerate to patients', a hearing was told.

Former colleague and midwife, Susan McConnell, told the General Medical Council yesterday that Dr Jane Barton was an 'excellent GP'.

She spoke out during week eight of the hearing into Dr Barton's care of 12 patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

'Her care was always for the benefit of the patient,' she told the five-strong panel.

'She was careful and considerate to the patients.

'She involved colleagues like myself with them and always acted in the best interests of her patients.'

Her views were backed by occupational therapist Patrick Carroll, who worked with Dr Barton when she was

GMC HEARING



IN CHARGE Dr Barton

THE General Medical Council hearing into Dr Jane Barton's fitness to practise comes after an inquest jury at Portsmouth Coroner's Court in April heard that the deaths of five patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital were 'more than minimally' contributed to by their medication.

In three cases they found the use of painkillers was inappropriate. But they also ruled the medication was administered for therapeutic

reasons in all five cases and that drugs did not contribute to a further five deaths. Dr Barton was in charge of the day-to-day running of Dryad and Daedalus wards at the hospital until July 2000.

In total, 92 deaths there were subject to three inquiries by Hampshire Police and a probe by the Crown Prosecution Service - which decided no charges would be brought.

clinical assistant at the Bury Road hospital.

Mr Carroll told the hearing in London: 'I think the level of involvement she had with the patients was extremely high and was certainly different to other GPs I have worked with.'

Asked by defence counsel Alan Jenkins about the standard of care on the Dryad and Daedalus wards run by Dr Barton, he replied: 'From my perspective there was never

any concern that the standard of care was anything other than good or excellent.'

Dr Barton's conduct is being examined in relation to the care, treatment and subsequent deaths of Geoffrey Packman - known as Mick; Ruby Lake, 84; Robert Wilson, 74; Elsie, Devine, 88; Leslie Pittock, 82; Arthur Cunningham, 79 - known as Brian; Enid Spurgeon, 92; Alice Wilkie; Jean Stevens,

73, Eva Page; Elsie Lavender, 83, and Gladys Richards, 91.

All 12 patients died on Dryad and Daedalus wards between 1995 and 1999.

Dr Barton has admitted inadequate note-keeping, that dose ranges she prescribed to some patients were too wide, and could have led to them being given excessive doses.

She denies serious professional misconduct.

(Proceeding)