



**Alexander
Harris**
solicitors

FIRST CLASS POST

Mrs Lesley Richards

Code A

Our ref: RF/CLA/31243/1/9516

Your ref:

Please ask for: ANN ALEXANDER

Direct dial: **Code A**

18 February 2003

Dear Lesley

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Please find enclosed, a press release sent to us by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority yesterday afternoon. This was released to us following its release to the media.

We understand that concerns were raised when this was put into the public domain before being disseminated to the families. We have been in contact with the police and the Health Authority, asking them to consider the feelings of the families before releasing information such as this to the press.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Code A

**ANN ALEXANDER
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Code A

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Media Information

Reference: 2003/003

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1200 NOON ON MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY

Update on Gosport War Memorial Hospital

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority has received advice from Hampshire Constabulary that the continuation of NHS investigations into inpatient care and treatment in the past at Gosport War Memorial Hospital could potentially compromise the ongoing police investigation.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority, along with the East Hampshire Primary Care Trust and Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, has carefully considered the implications of this advice. It has therefore been agreed that NHS investigations will be put on hold pending the completion of the police investigation. Given the indefinite suspension of the NHS investigations, Ian Piper and Tony Horne will resume their normal duties as Chief Executives of the Primary Care Trusts.

The NHS will continue to support the police with their ongoing investigation.

The Strategic Health Authority and local Primary Care Trusts are committed to ensuring the quality and safety of local NHS services. It is therefore important to note that whilst the CHI investigation, published last year, expressed concerns about inpatient services in the past it concluded that policies and procedures are in place to ensure safe standards of care at the hospital.

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Notes for Editors: Contact Information

- This press statement has been issued jointly by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority, Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust and East Hampshire Primary Care Trust.
- Press enquiries should be directed to a **Press Officer** at the **Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority** on Code A