

COPY

17th MAY 2002

Code A

Date: Friday 17th May 2002

Tel: Code A

Mr. Ian Piper
Chief Executive
Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust
Unit 180
Fareham Reach
166 Fareham Road
Gosport
PO13 OFH

Dear Mr. Piper and Mrs. Docherty,

RE: GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
INVESTIGATION OF DEATHS – DEATH OF MRS E.I.PAGE

I would like to thank you for enabling me to convey my concerns at our meeting today. I appreciated your initial comment in your letter of the 10th May, that we have an open and honest dialogue to clarify the issues of concern and I feel this was achieved. I would now like to take this opportunity to confirm in writing the points discussed.

I understand that you have the responsibility of ensuring that GWMH functions in a professional and safe manner, for the confidence of its local population. It was of concern to me that you have no control in other hospital (QAH or Southampton) where patients would be transferred. I also raised concern that you do not have control over all your staff; you mentioned some staff relating to Geriatrics. There is also the problem of doctors and perhaps other staff who work in GWMH and other hospitals. Dr Lord for example was responsible for my mother's care in both QAH and GWMH, if that is the case now you have no control over her actions whilst she is working in QAH.

During the early stages of our meeting it became clear that you were in possession of all the relevant documents appertaining to the Serious Crimes Investigation to your hospital, which has been halted. You stated that you had no objection to me having these reports, and you also felt it unfair that everyone involved in the enquiry, including staff and management at GWMH, have access to these reports **except** the Next of Kin of the those who died and whose deaths are still of great concern. You agreed to investigate further to see if you are able to release these reports to me.

You agreed that the practices and in effect the management (staffing levels etc) of the hospital at the time of my mother's death was unsatisfactory. I understand that you have initiated and installed many procedures, plans, training and documents to support a change in the management of this hospital.

I explained that I had examined my mother's medical notes, and had them viewed by another medical qualified professional. Our interpretation of the medical and nursing staff reports and drug records show many areas of grave concern in the treatment she received. No firm diagnosis was ever made; her routine daily medication was suddenly stopped; opiates used when the notes clearly show my mother was not in pain; drugs administered which were not only contra indicated but should only have been used under a Consultant Specialist's supervision; simple measures early on like solving her nausea although prescribed was never given.....I could go on.

When I suggested that there is a culture within the hospital that is operating an unlawful euthanasia system with certain patients you naturally felt I was wrong and that the changes you have made should give me confidence in the hospital. I explained that I and all the other relatives of patients who have died whilst in the care of the medical and nursing staff of your hospital will be unable to accept that conditions and attitudes have changed whilst you still continue to employ the same staff mentioned in these highly critical investigation reports. I agreed that terminating their employment cannot be performed without just cause, and for that reason I feel you should support our request that this police enquiry into the deaths continue. The local population is aware that all is not well in your hospital; more individuals are coming forward with their own concerns relating to the care their relatives received.

You asked what you the PCT can do to give me confidence in the new management of the hospital, we agreed on the following three points:

1. That you would release the names of the four patients spearheading the police investigations.
2. That you release all the police reports including the medical reports, which were highly critical of the care of these patients.
3. That you publicly and openly endorse our efforts to have the police enquiry reinstated to enable a full investigation of all the patients that died in the period we discussed.

Finally may I again emphasize the point that I made, that you are responsible for a hospital that employs staff that are already under a cloud. Unless you support an open and honest investigation into the events you will never get the support of the people in Gosport who matter.

Thank you again for the meeting.

Bernard Page