



HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY

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Your Ref.

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Mrs M Bulbeck

Code A

Dear Mrs Bulbeck,

I have asked that this personal letter to you be included with the latest newsletter that the team have prepared to update you on the progress of Operation Rochester.

I wanted the opportunity to clarify some issues, that may be of concern to you.

Firstly, I know that some of you are becoming more concerned about the length of time that it is taking to give you information as to whether the treatment received by your relative gives rise for concern.

We are mindful of the need to get this information to you as quickly as possible, but as I said at the last meeting, we've got to get this right. The quality assurance process has validated the analysis of the clinical team. I really do hope that very soon, we will be able to give you more information, including an indication of the status of your loved one's case, based upon the analysis of the material available.

I am also aware that there are concerns regarding the condition of the medical records. We have done all that we can to recover all that is available from Gosport War Memorial Hospital and the feeder Hospitals. There are some missing documents so where possible we have filled the gaps in information by seeking out other more general records in addition to those particular to your relative. It does not appear at this stage that there is anything sinister in those deficiencies in the records.

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With regard to the taking of statements, there does appear to be some confusion over this issue. Statements are formal documents that are used to place evidence before a Court. At this stage in the investigation we have focused on an initial analysis of the medical records by our team of medical experts. This has allowed the patient treatment to be graded. Thereafter, the quality assurance process has taken account of the information that has been provided in respect of your concerns. This information has been recorded in writing and retained but it was not necessary to take a formal witness statement at this stage to progress this investigation.

I therefore decided that the important issue was to get the information and leave the formal recording of evidence to a later phase.

Finally, I know that some of you are concerned regarding the fact that I am due to embark on a 'Strategic Command Course' and the effect on my ability to direct the enquiry.

I am committed to this investigation, I have an excellent, dedicated team working with me. The Constabulary have given the investigation the highest priority.

I am determined to keep my promise to you, in conducting a thorough, impartial, ethical and professional investigation. I would like to be able to do that more quickly, but it is not possible to do so without introducing error and superficiality.

Operation Rochester is being conducted in accordance with the national best practice, those that we have briefed, including the Crown Prosecution Service are content that we are doing the right things.

Thank you for your continued support, for my part I undertake to continue keeping you up to date with progress.

Yours sincerely

Code A

**Steve Watts, MSc, DPM, MIMgt
Detective Chief Superintendent
Senior Investigating Officer
Operation Rochester**