

MARK HOBAN M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Charles Stewart-Farthing Esq

Code A

23 January 2009

Dr Mr Stewart-Farthing

I enclose a letter from Ann Keen MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Health in response to the concerns that you raised in your letter of 27 November 2008.

The Minister has advised me that a decision was taken at the meeting between various interested bodies to await the outcome of the Inquests. This clearly means that no further action will take place at the present time but I note that an assessment will be made in due course, to see if there are any outstanding matters that require further resolution.

Whilst I acknowledge that you will be disappointed with the response, I hope that you will find the Minister's letter helpful in up-dating you on the current situation.

Yours sincerely

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Enclosure

From Ann Keen MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State



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Mark Hoban MP
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Dear Mark

20 JAN 2009

Thank you for your letter of 3 December to Jack Straw enclosing correspondence from your constituent Mr Charles Stewart-Farthing of **Code A** **Code A** about an inquiry into the death of his stepfather. Your letter has been passed to the Department of Health and I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

In August 2007, following the coroner's report to the Secretary of State for Justice under section 15 of the Coroners Act 1988, a meeting was held between the coroner and representatives of Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Constabulary, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Health to discuss a number of issues surrounding the deaths of patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. It is our view, as expressed at that meeting, that, given the number and variety of investigations and inquiries that have already taken place, combined with the powers that the Coroner has to fully investigate all the issues surrounding the deaths, a further investigation now is likely simply to duplicate the work in hand and that already undertaken by, among others the police, the Health authorities, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the General Medical Council and the Healthcare Commission.

We intend to await the outcome of the Inquests and then assess if there remain matters outstanding which require further resolution.

I fully appreciate that this is not a reply that your constituent will agree with, but I hope you will appreciate why we believe a full public inquiry now is not an appropriate way to proceed.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Ann Keen

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ANN KEEN