

HEALTH: Relatives demand fresh investigation into Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Families blast police over deaths inquiry

by Richard Whitehouse
The News

RELATIVES fighting to find out the truth about the deaths of their parents at a Gosport hospital say the police are still letting them down.

They have already filed complaints to the Hampshire force saying officers did not investigate the deaths properly.

The relatives say their loved ones were given excessive levels of drugs and they want to prosecute medical staff at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

But when none of the cases was pursued by the police they rounded on officers saying they had not done their job properly.

Yesterday 15 relatives from 11 families met with the deputy chief constable of Hampshire police Ian Readhead to discuss what was happening after the police said they were resubmitting the case to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

This will include a report by the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) published earlier this year which criticised the administration of drugs for rehabilitation patients at the hospital when the cases took place.

Relatives hope the independent report will convince the CPS that the police need to investigate the cases further.

The report did not look at individual cases and reported just on the general care at the hospital. It concluded that practices have since changed making the system more effective.

Gillian Mackenzie, whose mother Gladys Richards died at the hospital in 1998, said: "The CHI report is extremely damn-

Boards check staff

PROFESSIONAL medical boards have also been asked by relatives to look at the conduct of medical staff at Gosport War Memorial Hospital who treated their parents.

The General Medical Council has held a private preliminary hearing about Dr Jane Barton, who is involved in the cases, and is expected to make an announcement soon about whether a public hearing will take place to discuss Dr Barton.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council was also due to hold a private hearing last month about nurses, including Philip Beed, but changed it for later this month as there was too much paperwork to go through.

ing in what it says.

If the entire report has been sent to the CPS hopefully they will go back to the police and say that more investigation is needed.

But she added: "The police, as we have said before, still need to interview the relatives and staff and look at medical reports before they can submit any evidence to the CPS."

Chief Supt Clacher's report gives details of how the police investigated the deaths and comments on the relatives complaints officers did not act properly.

A previous file sent to the CPS did not contain the CHI report or the new report written by Ch Supt Clacher.

That file was sent back by the CPS who said that there was not enough evidence for a prosecution.



Gillian Mackenzie, daughter of Gladys Richards who died at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, at Fareham Police Station

PICTURE: MARCUS MINGINS ((024651-84)