



**Alexander
Harris**

solicitors

Mr Charles Farthing

Code A

Our ref:

AA/CLA/31243/1/9516

Your ref:

Please ask for:

ANN ALEXANDER

Direct dial:

Code A

19 November 2002

Dear Charles

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

I write to update you with the progress made over the last couple of weeks, and to explain further the work that we are continuing to do on your behalf. .

We have agreed to act as a conduit between the police, the GMC and those families whom we represent. We have now received many consent forms, detailing those investigations which you feel should take priority. The general consensus appears to be that a police investigation has your full support. It is apparent that the majority of people wish proceedings to be brought before the GMC and Nursing and Midwifery Council, but only after the conclusion of any criminal investigation, so as not to jeopardise a criminal prosecution by bringing evidence into the public domain.

May I reassure you that, although the preparation for bringing a case before the GMC can continue alongside a police investigation, it will stop short of hearing actual proceedings until the conclusion of any criminal case.

As you know, I had a very successful meeting with officers from Hampshire Constabulary last week. As promised, I enclose a summarised transcript of the meeting. I have, today, written to ask for assurance that the police will be taking statements from those people whose names and addresses we supplied to them.

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Consultants: Rosie Houghton LL.B (Hons), Prof. Daniel S Simons B.A (Hons) J.D (Member of the Florida Bar)

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Richard Follis and I have decided to divide the work up between us, so that Richard will be dealing with the GMC, and I shall be liasing with the police.

As soon as we hear further from the police or the GMC, we shall be in contact with you.

As always, if you have any queries, or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact any member of our team.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

Code A **Code A**

ANN ALEXANDER
ALEXANDER HARRIS

Code A

Summary of meeting with Hampshire Constabulary re: Gosport War Memorial Hospital Investigation.

Wednesday 6th November 2002 1.30pm

Present:

Steve Watts (SW)
Nigel Niven (NN)
Owen Kenny (OK)
Ann Alexander (AA)
Claire Amos (CLA)

- SW explained the objective of the meeting was to talk through where the Hampshire police investigation is going.
- He said they felt as though they had lost their engagement with the relatives. He explained that it was of paramount importance that the relatives have confidence in them, and that it disappoints them that there is a situation where some relatives do not have that confidence in them.
- SW asked if the police could have the names and details of all the relatives who have contacted Alexander Harris – to ensure that they have the full figure. AA agreed subject to obtaining consent.
- SW stated that he is Head of Hampshire CID. Prior to this position, he was the Senior Investigating Officer of East Hampshire – SW explained that the investigation had so far been headed up by Ray Burt and John James.
- SW stated that complaints have been made by relatives, but he did not go into details about these at this time. He explained that John James had now been promoted to CSI, and the investigation has been handed back to SW. Nigel Niven is his deputy, and Owen Kenny is managing the investigating team – which comprises of 11 officers.
- The police have already spoken to Professor Baker and a Professor from Sheffield, and are liaising further with the CPS. The 1991 document was discovered at around the time SW took over.
- The CMO appointed Baker shortly afterwards. The police want to get to the point where all of the material has been analysed, and all the relevant people have been spoken to, in addition to Dr Barton. They will also be speaking to the two administrators in the NHS who have now been relocated.
- Where are they going to go from here? They are going to go back to the relatives, to see what evidence they have to give, and they will be taking statements. Then, they have to decide whether to go back over each case, or whether to take a random sample. They will be taking advice from experts.
- AA explained to the police the importance of the medical records.
- The police explained that they are exploring other opportunities to pin down issues of causation. It will have to be based on more than the 5 cases they have already looked at.

- CLA agreed to contact all the families and ask for their consent for their details to be released to the police.
- AA explained that there needs to be an exercise of caution on relying on records from Gosport.
- Discussion re: the state of the records from GWMH – and the importance of listening to the recollections of relatives.
- The police expressed surprise at the horrifyingly consistent rate of bronchopneumonia as certified cause of death on these death certificates.
- AA offered to help the police to frame questions to experts, as that is so vital, to obtain the right answers.
- AA offered for Alexander Harris to act as a conduit between the families and the police, although the police were keen to emphasise that they do not want to seem completely out of touch, so if the families have any pressing issues, they are more than welcome to contact the police directly. It would certainly help matters if request for updates were dealt with by Alexander Harris.
- CLA explained that there is certainly a group of families who would like constant contact, and if the police could keep us updated, Alexander Harris could pass that information on. That group of clients would very much appreciate a visit by the police, some of whom have not been seen for years, or never seen at all.
- AA asked about disclosure of the expert reports which the police commissioned, and the chances of her seeing those? SW stated that he would look into this.