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'Dangerous' doctor still fine to work

By **Ross McGuinness**

THE families of 12 patients who died in the 1990s face another delay to find out if the doctor who prescribed them large doses of powerful painkillers will be struck off.

The General Medical Council yesterday said there was enough evidence to support a finding of serious misconduct against Dr Jane Barton – but it would wait until next year to decide when to hold a hearing.

The GMC yesterday found Dr Barton guilty of wrongly prescribing large doses of diamorphine and midazolam. It was done to 'keep patients quiet', the panel heard.

She still works – at Forton Medical Centre in Gosport – but is banned from prescribing diamorphine.

Dr Barton oversaw two wards at Gosport War Memorial Hospital in Portsmouth from 1996 to 1999.

Police investigated her over 92 deaths but she was never charged. Dr



Hearing: Dr Jane Barton faces being struck off

Barton, branded a 'monster' by relatives of the dead patients, has admitted prescribing 'potentially hazardous' dosages to 11 of the 12 patients in question – all pensioners.

Leslie Pittock, 82, was given six times the recommended dose of midazolam in 1996, which 'shortened his life', the hearing was told.

And Dr Barton told patient Alice Wilkie, 81, 'it won't be long now' after giving her a large dose of painkillers in 1998, the panel heard.



Medicine

**Doctor may be struck off
over high drug doses**

A doctor who prescribed "potentially hazardous" levels of drugs to elderly patients moved a step closer to being struck off yesterday. Dr Jane Barton faced a catalogue of allegations about her treatment of 12 patients at the Gosport War Memorial hospital in Hampshire between January 1996 and November 1999. She admitted a series of allegations about dose levels of painkillers and opiates that could have sedative effects on patients. The General Medical Council said further evidence would be heard in order to decide whether Barton was guilty of serious professional misconduct. **PA**

