

Memorandum24103525
1902**General
Medical
Council**Regulating doctors
Ensuring good medical practice**To:** Jackie Rowley
Stephanie McNamara**Code A**

Thorin Radford

Code A

Christine Challis

From: Code A**Copy:** Sarah Gulbransen

Code A

Press office team

Date: 5 June 2009**Dr Jane Barton hearing – commencing 8th June 2009****Background:**

Dr Jane Barton's fitness to practise hearing is scheduled from 8th June - 21st August 2009.

The fitness to practise hearing follows an inquest into the deaths of 10 elderly patients at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital in Portsmouth. The inquest found that three of the patients had been given inappropriate medication. There has been extensive local press interest in this case, and in addition, two in-depth pieces from the Independent on Sunday.

Press release issued:

11 May 2009

Non-sitting days:

Thursday 18 June and Tuesday 23 July 2009 are non-sitting days.

NB:

Day one sits until 2.45pm

Dr Barton is expected to give evidence w/c 29th June, or thereabouts.

Responsibilities: The organisation and running of the hearing falls across 3 directorates, FPD, Communications and Registration and Resources. The table below outlines the actions and responsibilities broken down by directorate.

Adjudication

Planning	Next steps
Hearing room (Room 1)	Room to be set up by Friday 5 th June
Dr Barton	Is expected to be present
Badges	To be prepared in advance (with facilities)
Room set up and witness rooms	The hearing room will be set up by 5 th June. Doctor's waiting room will be vulnerable witness room.
Press blue/charge sheet	Press blues x 30 for attending journalists – to be handed out by committee assistant as soon as charge read out. Also charge sheet to be sent to press team AS SOON AS the charges have been read out.

Other hearings/risks at opening and throughout hearing:

The hearing for [Code A] et al reconvenes on 8 June. This will commence with closing submissions for [Code A] and [Code A], and a low level of press interest is expected at this stage.

However, when Dr Barton's hearing finishes, there is a chance that the Panel for the Wakefield et al hearing will have reached a decision on facts, when there will be heightened press interest.

An additional case to note is that, following the recent inquest into patient deaths at Gosport, another inquest is planned following the death of Gladys Richards. Depending on timings, there could be media interest if this coincides with part of Dr Barton's hearing.

Communications

Action	Comments
Broadcast Room	There will be no broadcast room set up for this session.
Radio Room	Una Lane's office available 8 th June
Attendees list	Members of public to confirm (6 TBC) 10 journalists have confirmed attendance (plus cameramen).
Supporter/anti-doctor liaison	AVMA/ other groups of supporters and or protestors; those whose cases the GMC is not taking forward.
Website monitoring	[Code A] will keep a watch of relevant website for news.
Monitoring hearing	Press team will keep close eye on attendees in hearing room and monitor the hearing for any comms risks.
Signage for hearings rooms (no recording devices)	Press team will provide signage for rooms.
Internal comms to staff	Inside Info to be update to brief London staff
Filming	[Code A] has advised that press are expected to film on ground floor. [Code A] to advise Broadgate.
Admin	[Code A] to print 'old rules' background – case is PCC

Facilities

Action	Comments
Police liaison	Code A to continue to liaise with Met police; 5 police will attend opening of hearing.
Liaison with Broadgate	Code A to continue to liaise with Broadgate (and update re broadcast journalists filming).
Internal security	There will be security guards at this session (3)
Hearing room set-up	Facilities to set up rooms
VC unit in press room	A VC unit for the press will not be used for this session
VC unit in hearing	VC unit will be used for a witness's evidence
Brief 1 st and 3 rd Floor staff on Fire Register	Adjudication to advise re housekeeping
Security passes and lanyards for press / public	Passes and lanyards will be left on reception for all parties to access rooms on 8 th June. Colour coding TBC
Room set up	Set up as usual expected – 40 seats to be divided equally between public and press.
Catering	Tea and coffee for the press on day 1 to be refreshed in the afternoon

Security:

- ID checking and searching required (and queries to be handled by press office)

Interested parties:

AVMA

Blake Laphorn solicitors (representing four family members)

Media team responsibilities at opening of hearing

Liaison with journalists – 3 rd floor	Code A
Keep track of ground floor protestors/supporters – additional press office support	Code A
Keep list of expected attendees/supporters	Code A
Field press calls	Code A and Code A

Other information:

Panel secretary: Christine Challis

Close of hearing

- Code A to produce additional planning note for close of hearing.
- Points to note – there may be additional press interest in 'quiet' August. Consider additional broadcast facilities.