

**RESTRICTED**

Form MG11(T)

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**WITNESS STATEMENT**

(CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3) (a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981, r.70)

Statement of: RICHARDS, LESLEY FRANCES

Age if under 18: 0.18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: RETIRED REGISTERED GENERAL

This statement (consisting of 4 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signed: Lesley RICHARDS

Date: 11/08/2004

I originally made a statement to the police dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2000 (31/01/2000). I made this statement in my previous married name of LACK. I have been known by my maiden name of RICHARDS since 1/4/2000 (01/04/2000). I have been asked about my mother, Gladys RICHARDS, operation site.

I inspected my mother's wound where she had her replacement hip on a number of occasions at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital. I remember distinctly that the scar had healed perfectly.

In my original statement I refer to Phillip BEED telling me that my mother had developed a massive **Code A** and that this was the cause of her pain and the reason for the use of **Code A**. This conversation took place on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 1998 (18/08/1998).

On 21<sup>st</sup> August 1998 (21/08/1998) my mother died. I was present at her death and shortly afterwards I and my daughter **Code A** laid my mother out.

We washed her face and hands and brushed her hair. We then changed her into a clean nightie. In order to change the nightie we had to turn her on to both sides so I had a clear view of her body. There was no sign of a haematoma nor did she have any pressure sores.

If my mother had a **Code A** I would have expected to see a raised bruised area of some magnitude with discolouration of the skin.

Signed: Lesley RICHARDS  
2004(1)

Signature Witnessed by:

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I have been asked if my mother showed any symptoms of suffering from Bronchopneumonia.

The symptoms for bronchopneumonia are a raised temperature, increased secretions from the nose, mouth and chest, sterterous breathing (difficulty in breathing) and laboured respirations.

My mother's breathing was soft and gentle and quiet throughout the last days of her life.

I am now aware that my mother was given  but this would not prevent symptoms of bronchopneumonia from being present. In my opinion my mother had no signs and symptoms of suffering from bronchopneumonia.

I have been asked about the events relating to the registering of my mothers death.

On 24<sup>th</sup> August 1998 (24/08/1998) I collected a sealed envelope from the administration office at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, this contained my mothers death certificate.

I took this envelope to the Registrars Office at the Civic Offices in Gosport.

I handed the envelope to the registrar, a lady I now know as Helen PASSMORE .

She opened it and asked me what was my relationship to the deceased.

I told her that I was the daughter and she began to fill out the relevant documentation.

I have registered the deaths of a number of relatives as well as a number of elderly people who had no next of kin when I was director of nursing in a nursing home, so I am conversant with the procedure.

Helen PASSMORE handed the certificate supplied by the hospital and said something to the effect of "Can you read through this and confirm that it is correct".

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I looked at the certificate and the first thing that I noticed was that the entry was 1a which normally means that there would be a b or a 2 indicating more than one contributing factor to the cause of death.

There was only one entry and the cause of death was given as 1(a) Bronchopneumonia.

I knew that my mother didn't have Bronchopneumonia at the time of her death so I said to the Registrar "This is not correct". She replied "What do you mean?" I said "My mother didn't have bronchopneumonia. She was in hospital following surgery and a fall. She definitely didn't have bronchopneumonia".

Helen PASSMORE said "Don't say another word, if you say another word I will have to stop this interview and call the Coroners Officer and there will be a post mortem". I was by this time extremely distressed and in tears. I didn't want my poor mother to be cut up. I wanted her to be left in peace. I didn't argue any further and so I said "Ok, just give me the certificate so that I can get mother cremated".

I accepted the certificate with my mother's cause of death given as Bronchopneumonia (LR/DC/1).

I went home and told my daughters Peta and Karen what had happened shortly afterwards.

On the first occasion of my speaking to the police at Gosport Police Station I raised the matter of my mother's death certificate with Code A I told him that I was concerned that I had accepted an incorrect death certificate and that I might be guilty of an offence. He assured me that I wouldn't be prosecuted over the matter.

I also raised the matter of my mother's death certificate with DCI BURT when I made my original statement.

Taken by Code A

Signed: Lesley RICHARDS

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