

Other Document Form

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Title

LETTER TO CMO FROM DAVID WILLIAMS

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4TH September 2004.

Sir Liam DONALDSON
Chief Medical Officer
Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2NS.

Dear Sir Liam

Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

Following our meeting of 11th June 2004 may I provide you with an update in respect of the ongoing police investigation.

Through consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service it has been agreed to provide files of evidence in respect of four cases assessed as 'potentially most negligent' with a view to allowing Counsel and CPS to review the prospect of criminal proceedings. This is likely to take place in October 2004 but will of course be dependent upon experts completing their evidential assessment of those cases and there being a sufficiency of evidence to place before the CPS.

I have in recent months liaised closely with the GMC and reached agreement in the provision of a substantial amount of material relating to 'category 2 sub optimal care' cases, not likely to be subject to criminal prosecution. This disclosure will in effect allow the GMC to consider further Interim Order Committee hearing/s if appropriate. By agreement the release of this information has been made subject to certain conditions to prevent prejudice to either the police investigation or any subsequent criminal proceedings.

I have confirmed that Dr BARTON since November 2002 has voluntarily been subject to stringent controls regulating her prescription of Opiates and controlled drugs and that situation continues to be the case. The GMC have been informed of the full conditions.

As discussed during our meeting, we have made contact with Professor BAKER who is in the process of compiling a witness statement. The family group members in respect of the

sixteen cases raised by Professor BAKER and subject to police investigation have all been visited personally by police family liaison officers and we will continue to update those families regarding the progress of their individual cases. Whilst the majority of the 16 cases have fallen under 'category 2', two of those cases have been assessed as 'category 3' and will be subject to full investigation.

We continue to update the Strategic Health Authority and the Fareham and Gosport healthcare trust of developments and timescales.

July and August 2004 have seen the statementing of many healthcare professionals in respect of the priority cases. Through a partnership approach with the local healthcare trust the impact of the considerable police presence has been ameliorated. All interviewees have received in advance a briefing note and have been offered appropriate support and guidance where necessary through the relevant union/representative bodies. This work is likely to extend throughout September and October 2004.

In order to complete this phase of the investigation staffing levels have increased and will remain under review to ensure that the investigation continues to be driven and completed expeditiously.

Yours Sincerely

David WILLIAMS.
Detective Superintendent
Operation ROCHESTER.