

**Other Document Form**

Number

1248

Title EMAILS WITH DSUPT WILLIAMS RE PORTSMOUTH NEWS

(Include source and any document number if relevant)

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Further actions no(s)

When satisfied all action raised Office Manager to endorse other Document Master Number Form.

Code A	
O/M	SIO
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**Code A**

**From:** Williams, David M  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 18:24  
**To:** **Code A**  
**Cc:** **Code A**  
**Subject:** FW: Portsmouth News

**Code A**

Many thanks for fielding the calls on this..  
 We will be writing to family members in terms..as below..

**Code A**

Whilst I would not want to enter a spat with the News continuing the speculation as to numbers, the report is misleading..I have spoken with **Code A** and told him so..Can we please speak regarding ongoing media strategy..

Thanks.DW **Code A**

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**From:** Williams, David M  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 18:15  
**To:** WATTS, Steve  
**Cc:** Niven, Nigel; **Code A**  
**Subject:** FW: Portsmouth News

Mr WATTS as discussed..

I have informed the key stakeholders,and the FLO continues to update the FGM's.

I will write to the remaining FGM's this week (there are 22) explaining that the article could mislead the situation..(if not read very carefully).

Nigel..

Tuesday.. Please draft the FGM update as previously discussed incorporating the following passage..

On the 14th February 2005 the Portsmouth Evening News published an article that intimated that files in respect of 28 cases had been passed to the CPS. It is unfortunate that the NEWS suggested this to be the case, particularly as the police have refused to be drawn on numbers generally given that this type of sensationalist speculative reporting could ultimately have an adverse effect both on the outcome of the investigation in terms of prosecution and securing the ongoing co-operation of Healthcare staff which to date has been first class.

We continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding patient deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital during the 1990's and to liaise with the Crown Prosecution Service in this respect. This liaison will continue throughout 2005 during which papers will be incrementally passed for their consideration.

It is not likely that any decision as to outcome will be made until later in the year.We continue to receive the fullest co-operation from the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust and the Healthcare Staff involved.

Thanks DW.

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**From:** Williams, David M  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 17:58  
**To:** Code A  
**Subject:** FW: Portsmouth News

Sally as discussed..

Det Supt WILLIAMS said..

We continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding patient deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital during the 1990's and to liaise with the Crown Prosecution Service in this respect. This liaison will continue throughout 2005 during which papers will be incrementally passed for their consideration.

It is not likely that any decision as to outcome will be made until later in the year. We continue to receive the fullest co-operation from the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust and the Healthcare Staff involved.

DW.

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**From:** Williams, David M  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 16:37  
**To:** Code A  
**Cc:** Niven, Nigel; Code A  
**Subject:** FW: Portsmouth News

Code A

I received a telephone call from Nick BROOKES of the news this morning who informed that that they were going to print today on the back of a letter sent by the DCC to Nigel Winterhouse MP for Eastbourne providing a brief update in respect of the case.. It seems that a family group member Mrs MACKENZIE forwarded a copy of the letter to the evening News..

The passage from the letter of interest to the news was as follows..

As I explained in my last letter to you on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2004, the Constabulary have utilised a number of medical experts in order to assist us in assessing the quality of treatment provided by staff at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. As a result of that process, cases were put into three categories according to the advice of those medical experts on whether or not in their opinion there had been compliance with medical procedures which complied with the rules that existed at that time. We had then concentrated our investigation on those cases which have raised most concern with the medical experts. We have obtained many hundreds of statements from staff who worked in the hospital at that time and interviews have also been conducted with doctors. A small number of cases will be put through the Crown Prosecution service within the next two months in order to test whether or not the conduct of medical care at the hospital raises issues of criminal conduct by individuals associated with the administration of care.

An article appeared this afternoon in the Portsmouth News relating to the police investigation known as Operation Rochester. This article suggests that that our investigation was focusing on 28 patient deaths and further intimated that case papers relating to those cases had been submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). These are the words of the Portsmouth Evening news not the police, who refused to be drawn on numbers and timescales, but commented that the CPS were unlikely to make a decision on culpability of Healthcare professionals until they had reviewed all of the evidence and the investigation remained ongoing.

Can I suggest that in the event of any other media interest that we refer to our media release of November 2004 (attached).. And add that a considerable body of work needs to be completed throughout 2005 before any decision is likely to be made as to the final outcome of this investigation.



Operation  
Chester - more fam

Thanks. Dave WILLIAMS.

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**From:** Code A  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 15:13  
**To:** Niven, Nigel  
**Cc:** Williams, David M  
**Subject:** RE: Portsmouth News

Hello,

I am still awaiting the Portsmouth News article, and once I receive it I will send it to you both.

Now, I have just spoken to Mr Readhead's PA, and she told me that Det Supt Williams gave an interview to The News saying that the files were in the hands of the CPS now, that they would review the evidence presented and then decide what (if any) charges are to be brought. Is this a fair summary?

Meridian have asked if we have anyone they can interview about this, but we have told them that as we have just routinely passed the files onto the CPS, there is not a huge amount we can say. They accepted this.

Will go and check the fax machine now for the News article. It won't surprise either of you to hear that it was Jill Mackenzie who brought this to The News' attention!

**Code A**

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**From:** Niven, Nigel  
**Sent:** 14 February 2005 14:04  
**To:** Code A  
**Cc:** Williams, David M  
**Subject:** RE: Portsmouth News

**Code A**

Can you scan in the paper article and send it to D/Supt David Williams and myself. Once checked we will draft a media position. In the meantime, I would suggest that we advise other media organisation to exercise caution before they get too excited about this.

Thanks  
Nigel

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**From:** Code A

**Sent:** 14 February 2005 13:36  
**To:** Niven, Nigel  
**Subject:** Portsmouth News

Hello Nigel,

The Portsmouth News isn't delivered to Portsmouth BCU until 3pm, but as soon as it's there the front page will be faxed to us.

I would ask The News to fax us a copy of their front page, but we have both seen over the last week how asking for newspaper cuttings can have less than desirable consequences!

I am nipping into Winchester now, so if I see a News I will buy it and fax it over to you, but failing that, you will have it shortly after 3.

Speak soon,

Code A

## Hampshire Constabulary. Operation Rochester – more families informed

Hampshire Constabulary detectives from Operation Rochester investigating the deaths of 90 elderly patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital before 2002, have now updated the families of 62 of the 90 cases under investigation.

During the course of this week 28 families have been notified in writing by Hampshire Constabulary that there is no evidence of criminal culpability in respect of their individual cases. Neither is there any evidence of criminal culpability in respect of the 34 families already notified.

Investigations are continuing into the deaths of 28 elderly patients at the hospital. A team of clinical experts is continuing to review and assess the cases to establish whether or not there is any criminal culpability in respect of the deaths.

Detective Superintendent David Williams said: “We are committed to fully investigating all of the complaints made to us and have received considerable co-operation from the Fareham and Gosport Healthcare Trust in facilitating interviews with staff.”

“We have engaged in a process which will enable issues to be considered by the Crown Prosecution Service as early as possible. The nature of the investigation is such that it has not been possible to fix timescales but we anticipate that a substantial amount of the priority work will have been completed this year”.

The investigation team continues its close liaison with family group members, the CPS, the NHS and other regulatory bodies.

### Notes for editors.

1. Operation Rochester is an investigation into a number of deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital before 2002.
2. Relatives who made complaints to Hampshire Constabulary have been kept informed with regular letters and a newsletter updating them on the progress of the inquiry.
3. Each case referred to Hampshire Constabulary has been examined by a panel of eminent national experts in the fields of palliative care, geriatric care, general practice, nursing and forensic toxicology in association with the case investigation officers.
  - a. That investigation showed that in a number of the cases they were content that the treatment that the patient received while at the hospital was appropriate and did not cause them concern.
  - b. It also showed there were a number of cases needing further examination of the circumstances of the death before any formal conclusion could be reached. The vast majority of work has been completed around those cases, which have now been referred to other regulatory bodies.

4. A medical lawyer quality assured those decisions and conclusions before any relatives were approached with the details of their cases.
5. The investigation team has liaised closely with the health authorities the Nursing & Midwifery Council and the General Medical Council throughout this investigation and continue to do so.

End

1220 hrs 25.11.2004

Dave WILLIAMS. Det Supt.