

FILE NOTE

On Wednesday, 18 September 2002, I received a telephone call from Mr. Gareth Cruddace, Chief Executive of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Health Authority. He advised me that he had in his possession a bundle of correspondence that had been forwarded to him by representatives of the Royal College for Nursing. These papers contained details of meetings and other correspondence which took place between October, 1991 and January, 1992. They referred to the alleged inappropriate use of diamorphine and the concerns of some nursing staff that it was bringing about the inappropriate hastening of death. Although the papers referred to a possible policy being drafted, no policy in fact evolved. Key personnel who were associated with the decision making processes, or who attended meetings, included amongst others, Dr. Barton, Clinical Assistant, Dr. Logan, Consultant Geriatrician, Sister Hanblin, Tony Horne, and apparently, Ian Piper. The matter seems to have come to a close in 1992. In 1998, however, concerns commenced following the death of Mrs. Richards. The recent Commission for Health Improvement Report refers back to 1998 but no apparent disclosure has taken place of these earlier papers, nor would it appear that any disclosure of these papers was made to the police when they were conducting their criminal investigations. As a result, Ian Piper, who is the Chief Executive of Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, and Tony Horne, who is now the Chief Executive of the east Hampshire Primary Care Trust, were both temporarily redeployed (suspended) by the Hampshire and IOW Health Authority as from 18th September, 2002.

The Health Authority will seek to make this public knowledge on 19th September, 2002 and furthermore, will wish to now review all deaths which occurred in the hospital from 1990 onwards and would like to seek to use NHS Direct inviting concerned relatives to contact them and to record their concerns.

As a result of this advice, I advised Mr. Cruddace as follows:

1. No Press statement should be made until we can co-ordinate our responses and this would take place a.m. on 19th September, 2002.
2. That there would be a need for the police to recover evidence and the original documents in this case.
3. The use of a public announcement may be an inappropriate means to achieve the objective and we should seek the views of Professor Baker in this matter.
4. I would consult with ACC 'SO' and D/C/Supt. Watts in order to co-ordinate our initial response.
5. I would arrange for the papers to be collected from his officer and delivered to my home address.
6. I would contact him a.m. 19.09.02.

I.R. READHEAD
DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE
19.09.02.