

Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Health Authority

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20 September 2002

Dear **Mavis Yates**

We understand that you have been in contact either with Hampshire Constabulary or the local NHS in relation to the Gosport War Memorial Hospital. Whilst my office did try to contact you by telephone, we were unable to speak to you before we issued a press statement outlining some new developments on this matter.

As you are aware, the care and treatment of inpatients at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital has been the subject of an investigation by the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI), ongoing investigation by the Hampshire Constabulary and proceedings of the appropriate professional regulatory bodies. Last week, the Government's Chief Medical Officer commissioned a clinical audit of the service concerned to be undertaken by acknowledged national expert Professor Richard Baker.

Additional information relevant to these matters has recently come to light and this information has been handed to Hampshire Constabulary and the appropriate professional regulatory bodies. This information includes internal documents from 1991 highlighting concerns about prescribing practices at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

We are committed to ensuring the quality and safety of local NHS services, and recognise that this information may raise concerns for people about their inpatient care or that of their relatives at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital. People who have not previously come forward can ring an information line (**0845 602 4116**) so that we can follow up their concerns.

In order to ensure that the ongoing investigation is, and is seen to be, fully independent and able to command the trust of local people it has been agreed that Ian Piper, Chief Executive of Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, and Tony Horne, Chief Executive of East Hampshire Primary Care Trust, will be temporarily redeployed to other duties.

It is important to note that whilst the CHI investigation had some serious concerns about services in the past it concluded that policies and procedures are now in place to ensure safe standards of care at the hospital. However, to further reassure local people we have asked an experienced senior nurse from outside the area, working alongside the PCTs, to oversee and review patient care at Gosport War Memorial Hospital over the next few months.

Chairman: Peter Bingham
Chief Executive: Gareth Cruddace