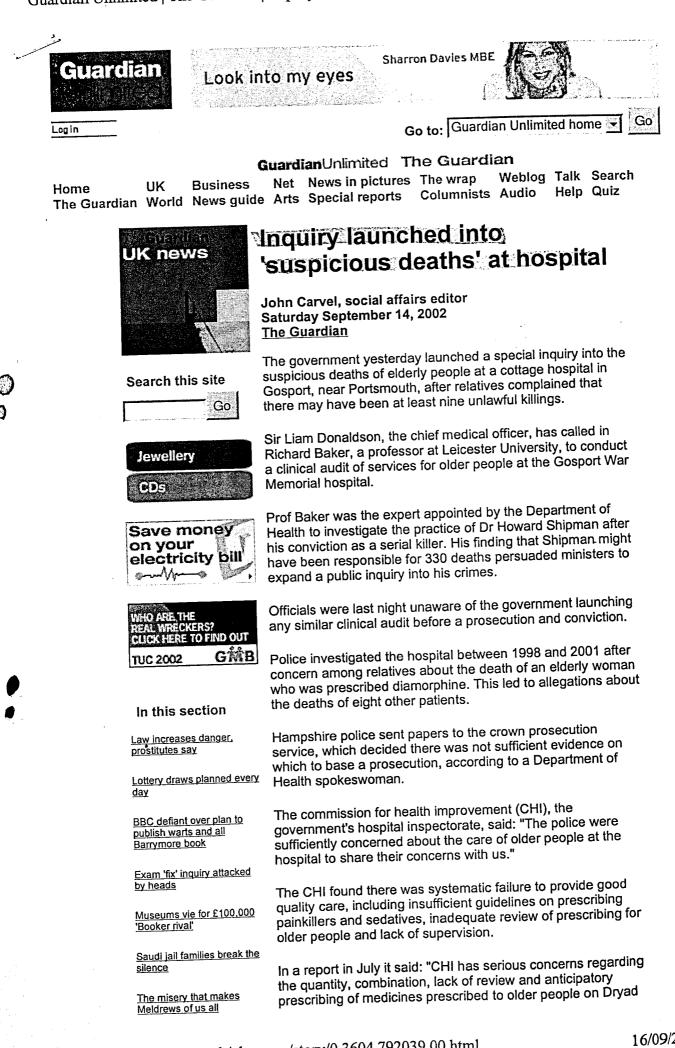
Guardian Unlimited | The Guardian | Inquiry launched into 'suspicious deaths' at hospit... Page 1 of 3



Unlimited | The Guardian | Inquiry launched into 'suspicious deaths' at hospit... Page 2 of 3

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The inspectors were "unable to determine whether these levels of prescribing contributed to the deaths of any patients". But it was clear that this level of prescribing would have been questioned if adequate checking mechanisms had been in place.

"Relatives speaking to CHI had some serious concerns about the care their relatives received on Daedalus and Dryad wards between 1998 and 2001."

However, the inspectors said they had no serious concerns about current standards.

Sir Liam's decision to mount an investigation was based on uneasiness that neither the police nor the inspection team "was in a position to establish whether trends and patterns of death were out of line with what would be expected". Inquiries of this kind are extremely unusual, officials said.

The original investigation was sparked when Gillian Mackenzie of <u>code A</u>; contacted police about the death of her 91-year-old mother in 1998.

She said at the time: "I am a realistic woman. I knew there was a chance of my mother dying when she was admitted to hospital. It is the manner she died that shocked me.

"I will never know what would have happened if she had not been prescribed diamorphine, but we must ensure that all the circumstances of these deaths are fully explained."

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