

Your ref:

Our ref: 2002/1345

05 August 2002

**First Class Post**

Mrs R Carby

**Code A**

# GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL

*Protecting patients,  
guiding doctors*

Dear Mrs Carby

**Dr Jane Barton (1587920)**

I write further to your letter of 27 May 2002 concerning Dr Barton and other. Please accept my apologies for the very lengthy delay in responding.

I have enclosed a leaflet which explains the GMC's remit and how we assess complaints and I hope you find this information helpful. It is important that you read it so that you understand from the outset what we can, and cannot, do. Our role is to license doctors to practise in the United Kingdom. Although we provide guidance to doctors about what constitutes good medical practice, not all alleged breaches of that guidance will warrant formal action by us. We have power to take action against a doctor *only* where their behaviour justifies our restricting or removing their permission to practise medicine. In legal terms this behaviour is described as 'serious professional misconduct' or 'seriously deficient performance'. In short, we are able to use our powers where we consider a doctor to be a threat to patients' health or well-being.

Please note that our jurisdiction only covers doctors and we are therefore unable to consider any complaints about nursing staff. The professional body which regulates nursing and midwifery is the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) 23 Portland Place London W1B 1PZ.

I should explain that no decision has yet been made about whether we can take action on the matters which you have raised. To help us decide whether we can assist, please complete the attached consent form and return it to us by 29 August 2002. If you answer no to any of the questions on the form it is unlikely that we can take this matter forward.

Upon receipt of the completed form, we will give further consideration to the matters you have raised. Your enquiry has been allocated the reference number FPD 2002/1345. It would be very helpful if you could quote this reference when you write or speak to us.

Yours sincerely

**Code A**

**Michael Hudspith**  
**Fitness to Practise Directorate**

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