

Complain
Portsmouth Health Care NHS Trust

Received
21 JAN 1999

General Manager, Fareham / Gosport

CONFIDENTIAL

MM/LH/YJM

Detective Constable Madeson,
Gosport Police Station,
South Street,
GOSPORT. PO12 1ES

19th January, 1999

4378

Dear Detective Constable Madeson,

Mrs. Gladys Richards (deceased)

Further to your telephone conversation with Mrs. Lesley Humphrey, Quality Manager, please find enclosed a written report from Dr. A. Lord, Consultant Geriatrician, explaining the care provided to Mrs. Richards prior to her death. You will see from Dr. Lord's report that the use of a syringe-driver was discussed with Mrs. Richards' daughters, Code A and Code A. The administration of intravenous fluids was not raised by either daughter prior to Mrs. Richards' death, or in the subsequent formal complaint. The care provided was appropriate for Mrs. Richards' needs.

Strictly speaking the complaint was never formally concluded. Our offer to meet with both daughters to discuss their concerns was accepted and arrangements were made for this to take place on 29th October, 1998. Code A then advised us that this date was not convenient and volunteered to agree a suitable date with her sister and inform us accordingly. This action was agreed on 30th September, 1998; we heard nothing further until your call to Mrs. Humphrey on 11th December, 1998.

I hope these details help with your investigation. Please contact Mrs. Humphrey if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Max Millett
Chief Executive

Silent copy to: Mrs. N. Pendleton (to share with Dr. A. Lord), Dr. J. Barton, and ~~Mr. W. Hooper~~

cc B. Robinson info. (B/Mh)

Portsmouth HealthCare NHS Trust
MEMORANDUM

FILE
COMPLAIN

From

Barbara Robinson

BFR/svn

Portsmouth Health Care NHS Trust

Received
-5 JAN 1999

General Manager, Fareham / Gosport

To

Dr Lord

Bill Hooper ✓
Nicky Pendleton
Dr Jane Barton
Lesley Humphrey

31 December 1998

Re; The Late Gladys Richards

Althea, I have discussed your points with Bill Hooper and he has asked me to reply to your letter to Lesley Humphrey. The following is our response to your two comments:-

1 "Review agreed "policy" of medical consultant team not to transfer patients to A & E, Haslar outside of working hours."

As you quite rightly say there is no written policy to this effect. The use of the word "policy" was an unfortunate way of putting it. As you will know there is an unwritten agreement between Dr Barton and the staff that each patient is assessed as to whether it is in their best interests to be transferred to Haslar particularly if their prognosis is very poor.

On this particular occasion no doubt it would have been in Mrs Richards' best interests to have been transferred immediately and we agree that S/N Brewer should have insisted upon it.

Thank you for the clear instructions you have sent to the wards.

2 Complaints Procedure

It is our policy to send the appropriate consultant a copy of any complaint as soon as it is received. The Trust procedure is then followed and if the response includes any statements from medical staff they are shown the letter before it is sent out from Max Millett.

Please accept our sincere apologies for omitting to send you a copy of the original complaint in August '98. There is no explanation for the procedure failing on that occasion and we are really sorry that this has caused you to be unaware of what has turned out to be a serious complaint.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any of the above more fully or if you would like to talk about the policies and procedures at Gosport War Memorial which should be similar to those in the Dept of Elderly Medicine.

Portsmouth Health Care NHS Trust

Received
24 DEC 1998

22nd December 98.

General Manager, Fareham / Gosport

Dear Lesley, *Bill*

In addition to the 2 pages of the requested report on the late Gladys Richards I have 2 further comments to make, and would value a written reply to these from yourself, Barbara Robinson and Bill Hooper.

1) "Review agreed 'policy' of medical consultant team not to transfer patients to Accident and Emergency, Haslar outside of working hours (i.e. G.W.M.H. X-Ray Department)" This statement is taken from Sue Hutchings signed CONCLUSION of 11/9/98. Copy attached - *Note 2*.

This statement is false. I am the sole member of the medical consultant team for NHS Continuing Care at GWMH at present. Neither I or any of my predecessors have recommended such a policy. There is no written policy regarding transfer of patients to A & E at Haslar. If there is one as mentioned I would be grateful for a copy as I have not been able to find one either at QAH or Gosport. It is expected that anyone suspected of a fracture or dislocation is sent to the nearest A & E department and if there is a reason for not doing so this is documented in the notes.

Further I was not consulted about this complaint in August or September. In spite of a statement that is an insult to my professional integrity I find out by chance on the 18th December - more than 3 months after it was written. Why?

At no point was either myself or the duty Consultant Geriatrician involved in making the decision not to transfer Mrs. Richards to Haslar on the night of 13/8. I attach a Memo (*Note 3*) that has gone out to Daedalus and Dryad wards, Dr. Jane Barton, Dr. A. Knapman so that appropriate action can be taken if similar events occur over the Christmas and New Year weekends. This memo contains temporary guidelines of what should be done in the event of a suspected fracture or dislocation and hasn't been agreed by the medical or nursing staff on Daedalus and Dryad wards yet. I will discuss this further with Mrs. N. Pendleton and Consultant Colleagues so that a suitable policy could be circulated to all NHS Continuing Care Wards of the department.

2) There seems to be discrepancy in the way in which complaints are handled at QAH and GWMH. If there is a complaint on the acute ward at QAH, Nicky Pendleton sends me a copy as soon as it arrives requesting a response and then sends me a copy of the final statement before it is sent out to the complainant. This is not the case in Gosport and I'm writing to request that the system that is and always has been operational in QAH is carried out in Gosport and hope that this will happen with immediate effect.

Sincerely,

Code A

Althea Lord
Consultant Geriatrician

copies:
Barbara Robinson
Bill Hooper
Nicky Pendleton

Note 3

**URGENT - FOR THE NOTICE OF ALL MEDICAL
AND NURSING STAFF**

***DAEDALUS AND DRYAD WARDS*
GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

In the event of a **suspected fracture and/or dislocation** in a patient on the ward the following must be adhered to:

- 1) Ensure the patient is comfortable and pain free.
- 2) Call out Dr. Jane Barton or the duty doctor.
- 3) If after a medical examination a fracture and/or dislocation cannot be confidently excluded an urgent X-Ray must be arranged as soon as is possible. If this is not possible at GWMH, the patient must be transferred to the nearest A&E Department irrespective of the time of day.
- 4) If for any reason this is not done (eg: in someone who is for palliative care) this must be discussed with the next-of-kin and documented in the medical and nursing notes.
- 5) If there is any concern about making the right decision the duty Geriatrician should be contacted via QA switchboard.

If there is any problem with carrying this out please let me know.

Code A

Dr. Althea Lord
Consultant Geriatrician
20.12.98.

Circulation:

- Dr. Jane Barton, Clinical Assitant
- Dr. A.Knapman and partners
- Sr. G. Hamblin, Dryad Ward
- Philip Beed, C/N Daedalus Ward
- Lesley Humphrey, Quality Manager, Portsmouth HealthCare Trust

Bill Hooper General Manager

From: Lesley Humphrey-Quality Manage
To: Barbara Robinson-Service Mgr; Bill Hooper General Manager
Cc: Nicky Pendleton-General Mgr
Subject: Mrs Richards/Dr Lord fax
Date: 23 December 1998 16:48

I presume you have all got Althea's fax. With regard to the statement for the police I'll get our solicitors to cast an eye over it before forwarding to police with a covering letter from Max (looks excellent to me) and I've told Althea this.

Althea's comments/concerns seem perfectly reasonable to me. We need to make sure we confirm to her the actions taken re: memo about transfers to A&E and we need to review how complaints are handled.

Complaints are further complicated cos. Barbara M handles gosport whilst I handle QAH, but it shouldn't be difficult to agree a system. We had to make similar arrangements re. EMH/AMH etc.

Lesley

Letter of response re BA/WPA
ce LH.
NP.