

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. J. Barton,
The Surgery,
148 Forton road,
GOSPORT.

LH/YJM

7th December, 1999

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Dear Jane,

Gladys Richards

I am writing as explained on the telephone to bring you up to date with the police investigation. I met again last week with DCI Burt, who is conducting the second police investigation. He asked me to forward the enclosed letter to you, and I have kept a copy.

The police investigation is progressing steadily, and statements from Mrs. Richards' daughters (Mrs. Lack and Mrs. MacKenzie) are currently being prepared. A statement from me is also being prepared to introduce both the Trust, and Mrs. Richards' health records (simply confirming who we are and what the documents are). Mrs. Richards' records and X-rays are under lock and key in my office.

DCI Burt will need to interview you under caution and on tape; he has asked me to stress that this is standard procedure under such circumstances and in no way implies police opinion with regard to the allegation made by Mrs. Richards' daughter. The interview (which is not likely to happen until late January) will need to be carried out in a police station, at a time and venue to your convenience. DCI Burt assures me that arrangements will be made as sensitively as possible.

Mrs. Lorna Green, Business Manager, has been in touch with the Trust's solicitors, Beachcroft Wansbroughs. They have advised us that as this is a criminal, not a civil case, any ensuring prosecution would be against the individuals involved and not the Trust. For this reason you should again contact your medical defence union and ask them to provide you with a solicitor to accompany you to your interview with DCI Burt. The Trust will, of course, fully support you, and anyone else involved, throughout the police investigation. Mr. David Roche, a solicitor attached to Beachcroft Wansbroughs will be happy to help your medical defence union solicitor in any way he can.

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DCI Burt is seeking an independent medical opinion on this case. The National Crime Faculty keep a database of clinical experts who can be asked to give such an opinion. From this database, Professor Brian Livesley, MBChB, DHMSA, MD Lond, FRCP, NAE, Care of the Elderly specialist, has been contacted and agreed to help. It is not yet clear if this will be simply a paper exercise, or whether he will want to speak to you. I'll let you know more as soon as the position is clearer.

This is an uncomfortable challenge to be facing, especially with Christmas coming up. Please let me know if I can offer any help or support. I have copied this letter to Bill Hooper who I am sure feels likewise. We are seeking further advice from our solicitors and again I'll keep you informed.

You might be interested to hear that the issue of prescribing opiates in community hospitals is being taken up. Following our conversation on the subject I discussed the matter with Drs. Ian Reid and Eileen Thomas. Mrs. Fiona Cameron (soon to be General Manager for Fareham and Gosport) has been asked to work with the administration of medicines group (a sub-group of the Nursing Advisory Committee) to develop a Trust-wide policy. Mrs. Cameron is consulting initially with pharmacy and the draft policy will be circulated widely for comment, including the Nursing Advisory Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Humphrey

Copy to: Mr. W. Hooper
Dr. A. Lord
Mrs. L. Green