

Detective Chief Inspector Ray Burt
Hampshire Constabulary
Major Crime Complex
Fratton Police Station
Kingston Crescent
North End
PORTSMOUTH PO2 8BU

MM/LH/db

HQ/E/CID/DCI/99

18 October, 1999

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Dear Detective Chief Inspector Burt

I have received your letter requesting access to the medical records of the late Mrs Gladys Richards. We will, of course, help you all we can in your review of this case. I presume you already have access to the information previously provided to Code A in January this year.

You mention "taking possession" of these records, but I am assuming that what you require is access / copies. It would be unusual for records to be simply handed over. What I suggest is that we provide you with photocopies of our records for the period in question, and should you wish, we can arrange for you to see the originals. We are currently checking the volume of paper involved; if this is extensive, we may need to make an administration charge.

These records will not, of course, cover what may have happened in the nursing home or during Mrs Richards' stay in Haslar. You will need to approach them directly for their records. We can, however, make available any referral or transfer letters sent to us by either of these agencies.

It would be helpful if you could let us know the reason for and purpose of your review of this case. Mrs Lesley Humphrey, Quality Manager to the Trust, handled the original complaint made by Mrs Richards' daughters, Mrs Lack and Mrs McKenzie. Mrs Humphrey would be happy to provide you with any other information you may need; perhaps you could telephone her to explain the background to your review (telephone Code A). Mrs Humphrey will contact you as soon as possible with regard to accessing the medical records.

We have every sympathy with Mrs Lack and Mrs McKenzie in their grief and distress over their mother's death. I feel it only fair, however, to point out that we have already put a great deal of time and effort into resolving their complaint, giving them full access to the NHS

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complaint procedure. Poor performance and, in particular, negligence or criminal actions must be actively dealt with through the appropriate channels. Concern is, however, increasing about clinicians being subjected to unfair and long term processes which, on occasions, could be viewed as harassment. We are currently facing the real danger of losing excellent clinicians because they cannot continue to provide the care for which they feel they are being unjustly pilloried. I am sure that your review will be fair, taking all aspects into consideration.

In order that we can provide appropriate support, we request that you liaise with Mrs Humphrey should you wish to interview any members of staff.

We look forward to hearing the outcome of your review.

Yours sincerely

Max Millett
Chief Executive

Silent copies to: Dr I Reid
 Dr D Jarrett
 Mrs N Pendleton
 Mr W Hooper

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