

*John and Averill Hardman,*Tel/Fax
Mobile:
E-mail:**Code A****Code A**6th April, 2009

The Coroner,
Inquest on Gosport War Memorial Hospital Deaths,
Crown Courts,
Winston Churchill Avenue,
Portsmouth
PO1

FOR DAVID'S
ATTENTION - WHEN
HE IS STRONG ENOUGH

Dear Sir,

Re: Inquest on Gosport War Memorial Hospital Deaths

In relation to the above, I wish to place before you some details of an experience I had at the hospital a short time before the dates being considered by the inquest.

My mother (Mrs Mabel Hardman) was a patient at Gosport War Memorial Hospital early in 1995, after suffering two strokes. She was transferred to the War Memorial from QA at my request to facilitate more frequent visiting.

After she had been in the hospital for about 10 days I was interviewed by Dr Jane Barton, who asked me for permission "to administer something to ease your mother's passing if things get difficult for her". Naturally, I was very upset by this and certainly shed a few tears. I was also angry and told Dr Barton that I felt this to be a totally inappropriate request to the relative of a sick person. When we left the interview room, Dr Barton went over to a group of nursing staff and told them that that I had been "a blubber", or words to that effect and they all seemed to find this amusing.

I subsequently made a verbal complaint about Dr Barton to the geriatrician (a Sri Lankan lady) responsible for my mother's care. My complaint was not only that Dr Barton's attitude appeared to be callous, but also that I did not feel it was acceptable to place on me the responsibility for a clinical decision. Her comment to me was that Dr Barton "sometimes has a strange way of dealing with people".

My mother was nearly 85 years of age. She had suffered two strokes, the second one quite serious; the prognosis for her quality of life was not good. From my interview with Dr Barton I gained the distinct impression that the medical team had decided to terminate my mother's life as and when it appeared to them to have become unsupportable.

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I am unsure the about the legal protocol of your proceedings and whether or not this letter is entirely appropriate, but as details of the inquest have been made public I felt that I should unburden myself of a very distressing experience which appears to be relevant to your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Code A

Dr John S. Hardman