

Horsley, David

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**From:** MacDonald, Avril [Code A]  
**Sent:** 14 May 2008 10:50  
**To:** Horsley, David  
**Cc:** 4 OCU MEDIA AND COMMS Mailbox; Ball, Kate  
**Subject:** FW: Inquests into 10 deaths of patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Dear David,

I'm afraid the police media department do not handle press releases on behalf of the coroner.

I have spoken to Kate Ball, Media Manager at Hampshire County Council to try and find out who would do this for you.

It may well be the Ministry of Justice Dept's press office in London, but Kate is trying to clarify this.

Avril MacDonald  
News Manager  
Media & Corporate Communications Department  
Hampshire Constabulary  
Tel Int:: **Code A**  
Tel Ext::

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Horsley, David [mailto:Code A]  
**Sent:** 13 May 2008 14:37  
**To:** Harding, Elizabeth  
**Subject:** Inquests into 10 deaths of patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Dear Liz,

As mentioned to you on the phone, please could you organise a press

release to go out to local and national media to announce that I have on 14 May 2008 opened Inquests into the deaths of 10 patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital -

Leslie Pittock died 24.1.96  
Elsie Lavender died 6.3.96  
Ruby Lake died 21.8.98  
Robert Wilson died 18.10.96  
Enid Spurgeon died 13.4.99  
Elsie Devine died 21.11.99  
Helena Service died 5.6.97  
Arthur Cunningham died 26.9.98  
Sheila Gregory died 22.11.99  
Geoffrey Packman died 3.9.99

These deaths were the subject of a Police criminal investigation entitled Operation Rochester.

It is envisaged that the 10 Inquests will be held concurrently.

They are all complex matters and it is envisaged that the Inquest hearings will not take place before Autumn 2008.

The joint hearings are likely to take a number of weeks to conclude.

At present, it is likely that the venue for the hearings will be in the Coroner's Court in Portsmouth.

To ensure that the Inquests are given the detailed care and attention they merit without undue interruption to the ongoing heavy workload of the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Coroner and his staff, it is intended that they will be conducted by Mr A M Bradley, HM Coroner for North Hampshire, acting as a special Assistant Deputy Coroner for the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Coroner solely in relation to them.

I will be opening the Inquests in the morning (i.e. 14 May) and should like the press release to go out after I have done so, please. Please may I have a draft to look at prior to mid morning tomorrow ?

Thanks very much for your assistance.

Best wishes,

David Horsley.

David C. Horsley

H.M. Coroner  
Portsmouth & South East Hampshire

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