



Mr David Horsley
Coroner
Room T20
The Guildhall
The Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
Hampshire
PO1 2AJ

New Kings Court, Tollgate, Chandler's Ford
Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 3LG

DX: 155850 Eastleigh 7

DDI:
T:
F:
E:
Code A
www.blaw.co.uk

BY LETTER AND FAX

FAX NUMBER: **Code A**

Our Ref: 558203/000001/JCW/RICHARD/HP

Your Ref:

26 June 2012

Dear Sirs

David

Re: Gladys Richards (deceased) – Inquest

RECEIVED
27 JUN 2012
BY H.M CORONER

We write to update you with regard to our preparation for the hearing and in particular obtaining an independent medical expert report concerning the late Mrs Richards' death.

As you will be aware previously we approached Professor Forrest. In spite of him accepting our instructions we are still awaiting his report and we have therefore given him a deadline until the end of this month. Consequently we are now having to approach other experts. In that regard we have had some difficulties.

We have identified that Professor Robin Ferner, based at City Hospital Birmingham, would be suitable. He is willing to prepare a report. However he has pointed out two important issues which we wish to canvass with you:-

- (i) He has an unbreakable commitment for 12 December 2012 which presently is anticipated has been the day for the experts. We understand that he would be able to do several other days during the time listed for the hearing. We wondered whether it is critical that he gives evidence on 12 December 2012 or alternatively if he could give evidence on either side of that date.
- (ii) We understand that he prepared a report for the Police at the outset of the Gosport War Memorial Hospital investigations. We have never seen that report and nor have we asked Professor Ferner for a copy. We know that the Coroner wishes to obtain fresh evidence, not coloured by any of the previous investigations. Professor Ferner believes that he can provide such a report but we wanted to check that the Coroner would have no issue with that earlier involvement in the investigations. As mentioned, we propose to instruct Professor Ferner to prepare an entirely fresh report based upon the Inquest documents.

Please can the Coroner consider these above points and confirm if he is satisfied that they will not cause difficulties. We can then proceed to instruct Professor Ferner and ask him to report as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Code A

Blake Lapthorn