

From: Code A
Sent: 13 September 2002 10:53
To: Baker, Prof R.
Subject: Re: review at a community hospital

Importance: High

Professor Baker

As discussed, please find below the text of the DH statement about Gosport War Memorial Hospital due to be issued later today:

GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

STATEMENT FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER SIR LIAM DONALDSON

Following the publication of the Commission for Health Improvement report and the police investigation into concerns about the care of elderly patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, the Chief Medical Officer has commissioned a clinical audit of the service concerned.

" Even though both previous investigations found no grounds for serious concern, neither was in a position to establish whether trends and patterns of death were out of line with what would be expected. It was a wish to ensure that all necessary investigation was carried out that led to the decision to carry out this further investigation.

" I have asked Professor Richard Baker from the Clinical Governance Research and Development Unit at the University of Leicester to undertake the audit. The timing of the audit will be agreed in consultation with the police." Sir Liam said.

Note to Editors:

1. Media inquiries only to Alison Pitts-Bland in the Department of Health Media Centre on 020 7210 5230.

I also attach a proposed line to take should further questions be asked concerning Professor Baker and his previous involvement with the Shipman audit:

"Professor Baker is our premier national expert in carrying out an analysis of this kind. We were aware that his involvement would raise these sorts of questions but rather than making a selection that would minimise publicity, the priority was to ensure a thoroughly rigorous methodology in an audit such as this. It is important to keep an open mind about the outcome of the clinical audit."

DH will not comment on press inquiries regarding the GMC, the police or the employment status of the doctor.

thanks

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PS/CMO

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