

Meeting with Hampshire Constabulary

These notes are made following conversation with DI Niven and Mr Kenney whilst reviewing the records of 5 persons who had been cared for at GWMH.

Their view was that a case would reach court in 1-2 years time. They have recruited 4-5 expert reviewers, and these are being asked to examine the records of 60 individuals. This makes it possible that a prosecution could be brought against managers as well as doctors – on the basis of corporate responsibility. If a pattern can be firmly established, identification of the pattern in other cases would justify conviction.

The police are concerned that NHS investigations that involved interview of witnesses or suspects would lead to problems in their inquiry; they are requesting the second CHI review be suspended, although are happy for my review to proceed on the understanding that it does not involve interviewing of staff. I informed the police of the material I am using in the review, including telling them about the death certificate counterfoils, the ward admissions book, and the drugs registers. I explained that it will be difficult to interpret patterns of mortality because of the changes in the numbers of beds and admissions policies at GWMH.

The police are in discussions with the NHS, including the CMO, about the NHS investigations. They discussed my role as they saw it; they had considered whether to ask me to work with them, but had decided this would not be an appropriate course of action, since it could be interpreted as the NHS investigating the NHS, and therefore not be helpful in a subsequent case, or in demonstrating the independence of their work. They would welcome any pointers, but would be following up these themselves. They will write to the CMO in order to clarify this working arrangement.