

Written Ministerial Statement

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Death rates of elderly patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital between 1988 and 2000

Thursday 10 July 2014

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Norman Lamb): Following the publication of the Baker Report in August 2013 into higher than expected death rates of elderly patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital between 1988 and 2000, families have continued to raise concerns about the initial care of their relatives and the subsequent investigations into their deaths. In order to try and address their concerns, and having given consideration to a number of alternative options, I am setting up an independent panel to review the documentary evidence held across a range of organisations.

I have asked Bishop James Jones to chair the panel. Having successfully steered the Hillsborough panel, he brings a wealth of expertise and experience to this work. He has begun to work with affected families, and will continue to do so over the coming weeks and months to ensure that the views of those most affected by these deaths are taken into account. I have also asked Christine Gifford, a recognised expert in the field of access to information, to work alongside him and the various organisations to ensure maximum possible disclosure of the documentary evidence to the panel.

I will announce further details of the other panel members and agreed terms of reference in the autumn.