

The inquest into 10 suspicious deaths at a Hampshire hospital begins next week, ten years after relatives first began their fight for justice.

The coroner and a jury will spend four weeks considering evidence. The patients were among a group of 92 who died unexpectedly after being given abnormally high doses of morphine and. The relatives believe their deaths were a form of euthanasia, similar to the allegations made against Harold Shipman who was arrested ten years ago this September.

The inquest was ordered by Jack Straw last year even though seven of the bodies have been cremated because relatives believe the police investigations were incompetent.

Gillian Mackenzie has recently been granted permission for an inquest into the death of her mother whose she believes was prescribed morphine unnecessarily. There is no date for this inquest.

Only one of the doctors involved - Jane Baron - has faced any disciplinary action by the GMC. She was stopped from prescribing morphine last year - 10 years too late according to the families.

The Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, commissioned a clinical audit to examine the death rates at the hospital in September 2002. The report by Richard Baker, a professor of clinical governance at Leicester University who worked on the Shipman inquiry, has never been made public, despite repeated calls from the families.

Professor Baker's investigation found that Dr Harold Shipman may have been responsible for 330 deaths. This persuaded ministers to hold a public inquiry into his crimes.

"A lack of openness breeds suspicion," said Ms Alexander. "Professor Baker's report about Harold Shipman was published so I have no idea why the Gosport families have been denied access to his findings."

The report has been requested under the Freedom of Information Act by AvMA.

The NHS watchdog, Commission for Health Improvement [CHI], identified a number of systemic investigated care at Gosport Hospital

Why did it take the GMC so many years to take any action in such a serious case?

"This is a difficult and complex case which has been investigated by various agencies.

"Criminal investigations always take precedence over any GMC procedures. It was necessary to wait for the outcome of the various investigations."

How many other doctors have the GMC been informed about and/or investigated in relation to these deaths at Gosport?

"Doctor Jane Barton is the only doctor that the GMC is investigating in relation to this case."

Can the public be satisfied that the GMC has taken the necessary steps to fully investigate any concerns about competence and malpractice in these deaths?

"Yes. The GMC has restricted the practise of Dr Jane Barton. However, as this is an on going case we are unable to comment on the specifics of this investigation until it is concluded."

I decided to look at the medical files because I din't feel comfortable, but weren't told there was already a police investigation going on into Jnae Barto./ over the next twp years, 100 letters from the Trust about my mother's care. I wanted to know why my mother was heavily sedated and none of the family was called. I then found out thought they'd and. I didn't think they were killing my mother but thought they'd made a big mistake.

Excessive use and no pharmacy control of opiodes - CHI July 2002. The police spent four years pushing paperwork around an office- absolutely furious with the police. Should be a public inquriry into Hampshire police and the Trust into their handling of this case.

Asked Professor Richard Baker - Shipman - to hold an audit. Two nurses came forward with minutes from 1991 meeting -

In December 2007 the police said no case to answer - didn't believe it, is so serious, that there is a cover up.

The end of the day want justice for my mother and transparency - haven't had that in ten. Exactly who inviol&#59;ved. Haver all eth documents released. We believe this is another Shipman and people should know - it seems extraordinary. from my independent review, I wrote to the GMC in 2002 with my concerns, who reassured me all the necessary steps had been taken. They only took action after the coroner announced the inquest because they knew the expert opinions would be made public. Absolute disgrace - Guiding doctors, silencing patients not protecting patient - that is a mockery. They protect doctors, not patients. The disgusting way my mother was treated, I continue to fight even though they try to drag you down - has tken ten years of my life.

