

Dr I Reid
 Hampshire Primary Care Trust
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4 December 2008

Dear Dr Reid

Gosport Inquests (Joint Instruction)

It was good meet you again last Thursday.

As you know, it has been agreed that at this stage I am happy to assist you in this matter and I am advising the NHS generally on the conduct of this inquest and I am arranging representation at the forthcoming hearing.

You should be aware that I have been contacted by Messrs Radcliffes le Brasseur who are instructed on behalf of the MPS. I understand your colleague, Dr Logan, has contacted the MPS for assistance and they are in touch with me to see whether or not I am happy to represent and assist Dr Logan at the forthcoming hearing. I do not anticipate any problems in that respect but if you have any views, kindly let me know.

It may be that you would want to contact the MDU simply to let them know what is happening and if you do so, it may be worth pointing out that Dr Logan has already contacted the MPS and that their lawyers are in contact with me so that they are fully aware of the situation.

In the meantime, I have received the witness statements from the coroner. They number 88 in total. Some of the witnesses will give evidence in person and some statements will be read out. The majority will be read out. I am aware that you have been called to give evidence. I assume that you have copies of your statements but let me know if that is not the case.

For your information, I attach expert evidence from Dr Andrew Wilcock (expert in palliative medicine and medical oncology) and Prof. David Black (consultant physician, geriatric medicine). These are the experts being called by the coroner. I attach a statement from each expert which he has prepared for each of the separate inquests. Perhaps you would care to have a quick look at these and let me have any points or issues that you feel are important and which should be raised. This will assist in our consideration of the matter in due course and especially when I instruct counsel.

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The problem here is that these experts were instructed by the police essentially to advise on whether or not there were any criminal issues which needed to be considered. You will see that they say there are no criminal issues. There are however a number of recurring themes in these reports which you will no doubt see. In a couple of cases, you are criticised directly. You should be reassured however these are relatively minor criticisms when taken in the context of the whole case. Essentially, it appears there is some criticism of you for continuing or permitting this 'over prescription' of some patients and perhaps in failing to reduce the prescribed drugs far enough. Let me have your thoughts when you have had an opportunity to look at this.

If any questions arise out of the medical evidence, then you must not hesitate to contact me and I am happy to chat it through with you.

Interestingly, I do not believe there is any evidence that in fact these patients ever received 200mg of diamorphine. I know it was prescribed by Dr Barton but I don't find in the evidence that the patients ever received much more than 20 or 40mg. I accept that may still be 'too much' but I appreciate that Dr Barton was prescribing to allow drugs to be drawn down as and when, when she was off duty. Unfortunately, although understandable as that practice may be, am I right in thinking that the controlled drugs book would show that in fact no such high doses were ever supplied to patients?

Please do not worry unduly about this and if you have any questions, of course you must not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely



Season's Greetings from Mills & Reeve. To reduce our impact on the environment we will be donating money to local homeless charities rather than sending Christmas cards. The charities benefiting are: St Basil's in Birmingham, Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge, St George's Crypt in Leeds, The Whitechapel Mission in London, Lifeshare in Manchester and St Martin's Housing Trust in Norwich. Best wishes for Christmas and a happy and peaceful New Year.