

Code A



MP critical of hospital inquests

A Conservative MP has criticised the inquests which are due to start on 10 elderly patients who died at a Hampshire hospital in the late 1990s.

The deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital between 1996 and 1999 were the subject of a lengthy police inquiry but no prosecutions have ever been brought.

Some families have claimed sedatives like diamorphine were used excessively.

Sir Peter Viggers said police had decided no action was required and the issue should be "allowed to rest".

The hearings before a jury in Portsmouth are due to start on Wednesday.

Two investigations

Sir Peter, MP for Gosport, said: "There have been so many inquiries, there was a police inquiry that came to a conclusion that no further action was required.

"I like, and know the hospital and the people there, and would like the issue to be allowed to rest."

Hampshire Police conducted three investigations into the deaths.

Officers looked into the deaths of 92 patients, which resulted in 10 files being passed to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

But in October 2007, the CPS said there was not enough evidence to charge anyone.

In 2007, the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire coroner asked for the police files, and opened and adjourned the inquest into the 10 deaths.

One of the cases is Robert Wilson, 73, who was transferred from the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Cosham, Portsmouth.

His son Iain said: "My dad was very, very anti-drug. He was in so much pain at the QA.

"He got to the War Memorial (Hospital) and they suddenly decided that he was in so much pain he was put on a syringe driver and the morphine was upped and he died on the fourth day.

"I bent down to talk to him and he whispered to me 'help me son they are killing me'.

"I turned around and said that they weren't they were trying to help him.

"That is something I have to live with."

Full inquests, which will be heard in front of a jury in Portsmouth, will take place into the