

Lesley Humphrey-Quality Manage

From: Lesley Humphrey-Quality Manage
To: David Barker-Communication Mgr; Rob Dalton-Communications Adv.
Cc: Max Millett - Chief Executive; Tony Horne - Operational Direc
Subject: FW: POlice interest - Gladys Richards case
Date: 15 May 2000 15:13

Rob/David, I don't know how much you know/remember about this case. You will gather from the email below that the police press people will be contacting you about preparing a joint strategy in case there is press interest in this case - as the police are stepping up their investigation.

Mrs Richards died in GWMH on 21/8/98, aged 91 years and with multiple medical problems, including dementia. She had fallen at a nursing home, had a half hip replacement at Haslar, transferred to GWMH where she fell and dislocated her hip, transferred back to Haslar for manipulation; when transferred back to GWMH was in great pain, had a large haematoma and was not considered fit for transfer back to Haslar, TLC + analgesia only and died. Following death her two daughters made a formal complaint. This was never concluded, we offered a meeting and they never came back to us [to be fair we never chased them either]. The complaint covered a number of medical/nursing and transfer issues but did not raise the question of whether death was avoidable, or even deliberate.

Dec 1998 the police contacted us. One daughter had made a complaint of unlawful killing [I understood that the other daughter did not agree]. An investigation was carried out following which the CPS said they could not see that there was a case to answer, from the evidence presented.

Oct 1999 we heard from DCI Ray Burt. The daughter had complained that the police investigation was not thorough - and on checking they had to agree that mistakes had been made. This not surprisingly meant they had to re-investigate. At this stage we were told they were simply gathering information, they had no evidence that a crime had been committed. The police took independent medical advice, based on the medical records, following which a number of further questions/requests for information were raised [not yet answered].

I suspect, but this is only a guess, that the decision to step up this investigation [and the implied suggestion that there might be a criminal act warranting prosecution] comes from the comments/advice given by Professor Livesey [medical adviser].

I guess you'll want to talk to me about the content of any draft press statement - presumably simply confirmation that Mrs R was a patient, did die in our care and that we are assisting the police with their investigation. Lorna is being very helpful in checking things out with Wansboroughs and would be happy to run any statement past them if necessary.

Lesley

From: Lesley Humphrey-Quality Manage
To: Max Millett - Chief Executive; Tony Horne - Operational Direc
Cc: Bill Hooper General Manager; Fiona Cameron-General Manager; Ian Reid-Medical Director; Lorna Green Business Mgr (HQ); [Code A] - Personal Assist; Peter King - Personnel Director
Subject: POlice interest - Gladys Richards case
Date: 15 May 2000 14:01

I've just had DCI Ray Burt on the phone; as a result of his preliminary screening they have decided to take a higher profile with this case. I asked the 6 million dollar question of why/what found - not surprisingly I got a very bland answer - simply that Ray has seen enough to suggest a higher profile warranted [he has to justify increased use of resources etc]. He seemed to agree that this means the local police feel there may be a case for prosecution [where as before they were responding to a complaint] - however, the decision still lies with the CPS as to whether criminal action is taken.

From 22 May additional officers will be joining the team and the investigation will move into a higher gear in gathering information - formal interviews will be held with potential witnesses [staff who had direct contact with Mrs Richards + staff who can explain policies/procedures etc]. Where appropriate, people like Jane Barton will be afforded some protection with regard to these interviews; presumably to help them avoid incriminating themselves.

I will still act as the main contact for the police, in arranging staff interviews; but will need support from Yvonne. I told Ray we would be advising staff to be accompanied when interviewed - MDU/Union/Solicitor etc [LORNA/PETER any comments on this?].

BILL can you please let Althea know
FIONA can you please let Jane and ward staff know
Max - I guess you will want to do a board briefing paper

There is of course a higher potential now for a press leak - the police are getting thier media people to put together a statement just in case - I've given them David/Rob as contacts as joint strategy seems sensible and I'll let David/Rob know.

Lesley