

Norman Lamb MP

Code A

11 January 2010

Dear Mr Lamb

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Thank you for your letter dated 17 November 2009 in respect of the above matter.

Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in responding to you. I have recently taken up my post as the NMC Chief Executive and Registrar and I was keen to discuss the background to this case with my Fitness to Practise colleagues before responding to you.

This is an extremely distressing matter for all the friends and relatives of those who died at the hospital and I can assure you that this matter is receiving our utmost attention. However, this is also a complicated case and unique in the circumstances in which it was referred to the NMC, the involvement of a number of agencies, including the GMC and the way it which has developed since its referral.

However, this remains a 'live' case for the NMC and, as such, I am somewhat limited by what I can say at this time. However, by the end of January 2010, I hope that we will be in a position to update you and the other interested parties of developments with the handling of this case and I will ensure that you are added to the list of those people who receive regular updates about this case.

From my understanding of our handling of this case, I accept that we could have been more pro-active in our engagement with those members of the public who had raised this issue with us. Notwithstanding some of the limitations about what we could have said about progress at various stages, I acknowledge that we could – and should - have kept patients, relatives and others with a key interest in the case better informed about developments and I would like to assure you that we will seek to improve on this aspect as the case proceeds.

As I have stated, while I am currently limited by the nature of the ongoing proceedings to go into further detail about this case at this time, I would like to give you an undertaking that I would like to meet with you at the conclusion of this matter to speak about some of the issues highlighted by our handling of this case.

Once again, please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in getting back to you and thank you again for writing to us about this matter.

Yours sincerely

Professor Dickon Weir-Hughes
Chief Executive and Registrar