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UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Hampshire

November 6, 2001

Hospital safety inquiry.

BYLINE: Sian Davies (author email Code A)

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 539 words

DATELINE: GOSPORT

A PROBE has been launched at Gosport War Memorial Hospital by a government health watchdog into patient safety following concerns over the quality of care for elderly patients.

The 24-week investigation by the Commission for Health Improvement was launched after concerns were raised over the level of care older people have received at the hospital.

Concerns have been raised by families of nine people who died at the hospital.

Local organisations and members of the public are being urged to talk to investigators about their experiences of care for older people at the hospital in a bid to determine whether standards at the hospital are being met.

CHI chief executive Peter Homa said: "CHI is undertaking this investigation to look into concerns over the quality and culture of care that patients, who are elderly and particularly vulnerable, have received at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

"The trust, which runs the hospital, is keen to work closely with us to address these concerns and work to improve the quality of care provided."

The investigation will start a week-long visit by inspectors at the hospital in January where they will visit wards and theatres and interview staff and former patients.

Mr Homa said: "The findings of our investigation will result in lessons for the whole of the NHS and this is especially important at a time when community and primary care services are undergoing major change."

The CHI investigation will centre on the administration of drugs at the hospital, transfer arrangements for patients between Gosport War Memorial Hospital and other local hospitals and the clarity of responsibility for patient care.

Today, officials at Portsmouth NHS Trust, who run the hospital, welcomed the investigation.

Hospital safety inquiry. UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Hampshire November 6, 2001

Chief executive Max Millett said: "We welcome the commission's visit and its review of the service we provide for older people at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

"We hope the CHI visit will help reassure people about the care provided today and allow us to demonstrate the progress we have made in service provision over the past two or three years."

The latest probe follows an inquiry by detectives into allegations of unlawful killing at the Bury Road hospital.

In April prosecutors examined files concerning the death of 91-year-old **Gladys Richards** whose daughter Gillian Mac-Kenzie claimed she died as a result of mistreatment at the hospital.

However, prosecutors found insufficient evidence to press charges against the hospital and despite a public meeting with Portsmouth NHS Healthcare chiefs Mrs MacKenzie insisted her mother's death could have been avoided.

Mrs Richards had been admitted to the hospital in August 1998 for rehabilitation following surgery on a damaged hip at neighbouring Royal Haslar Hospital.

Mrs MacKenzie, 67, of Eastbourne, East Sussex, told the Daily Echo: "I am not satisfied that my mother was treated correctly."

A new investigation was launched in September by Hampshire Police Major Crime Unit into Mrs Richards' death along with claims from eight other families over the death of relatives at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

A report into the findings of the CHI investigation will be published in a year.

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UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Hampshire

October 7, 2001

MY FURY.

BYLINE: Guy Woodford (author email: Code A)

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 369 words

DATELINE: GOSPORT

THE GRIEVING daughter of a 91-year-old woman confronted health chiefs at a public meeting yesterday over the death of her mother at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

Gillian MacKenzie, 67, refuses to accept a Crown Prosecution Service report claiming there was insufficient evidence to prosecute doctors over the death of her mum **Gladys Richards** in August 1998.

MY FURY. UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Hampshire October 7, 2001

Mrs Richards had been admitted to the hospital for rehabilitation following surgery on a damaged hip at neighbouring Royal Hospital Haslar.

During the Portsmouth Healthcare NHS Trust public meeting held at Fareham civic offices Mrs MacKenzie asked Max Millet, chief executive of Portsmouth Healthcare NHS Trust, to answer her "many questions" over her mother's death.

Mr Millet pledged to answer each of Mrs MacKenzie's questions by letter. He refused to be drawn into a face-to-face discussion.

Afterwards Mrs MacKenzie, who lives in Eastbourne, East Sussex told the Daily Echo: "I'm not satisfied at all that mum was treated correctly.

"She underwent surgery on her hip at Royal Hospital Haslar and had been making a very good recovery at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, but in a matter of days was told that she was about to die.

"Some quarters are saying that the diamorphine (painkillers) she was given can cause pneumonia but I don't believe that's what caused her death.

"I will now wait to hear back from Mr Millet. I hope he can answer some very challenging questions - nothing else will do."

In 1999, The Police Complaints Authority upheld a complaint by Mrs MacKenzie that senior officers in Gosport CID had failed to thoroughly pursue their inquiry into Mrs Richards death.

Supt John James of Hampshire Police Major Crime Unit is now heading a new team investigating Mrs Richards case and the claims of eight other families who have since come forward over the death's of their loved ones at under-fire Gosport War Memorial Hospital over the past ten years.

Mrs MacKenzie added: "I would like to meet members of the eight other families. We have a lot in common and maybe if we put our heads together we can help make sure that no other families have to suffer the pain of not fully knowing how a loved one died."

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