

The News TOMORROW: ALMOST 200,000 PEOPLE WILL READ THIS...

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**HEALTH:** Relatives of those who died at hospital come forward

## Families call for new ward deaths probe

by Richard Whitehouse  
The News

TEN more families have asked police and health officials to look into the deaths of their relatives at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

Police and health chiefs are already investigating the complaints of 21 families about the care and treatment their loved ones received before they died.

Many of the cases concern the administration of sedative drugs, such as diamorphine.

Now more families have come forward after a document dated from 1991 was uncovered by the health authority about prescribing practice at the hospital.

The health authority set up an information line for anyone with any concerns and to families contacted it and have had their details passed onto the police.

A police spokesman said: "After the last announcements about the report the health authority set up an information line through NHS Direct."

Ten relatives contacted the line and expressed concerns about deaths at the hospital.

### INQUIRIES

Investigations into deaths of relatives of Gosport War Memorial Hospital started in 1998 after Gillian Macfarlane raised concerns about the death of her mother Gladys Nicholas.

Police says information on Mrs Nicholas's death, together with that concerning a dozen other patients, in the Crown Prosecution Service which said it did not contain enough evidence to convict anyone.

"This information has been passed on to the health authority and also on to us. We have written to them all and we told them that we will be in touch shortly."

Other relatives have prevented completion about the case taken by police to investigate their case.

Police have recently sent a file on some of the other cases to the Crown Prosecution Service.

This includes a report published by the Consultant for Health Improvement, independent medical reports on five of the people who died at the hospital and a report by Child

A report published by health watchdog the Commission for Health Improvement criticised the use of powerful drugs at the hospital.

Professor Richard Benge, who worked on the Harold Shipman case, is now conducting a death audit. An internal management document, which raised concerns about the use of drugs in 1997, headed to police.

Superintendent Dan Clatton told former complainants remain against the probe.

When a review file was sent to the CPS it was returned and police were told there was not enough evidence for a prosecution.

One of the relatives, Gillian Macfarlane, whose mother Gladys Nicholas died in 1996, has now written to the prime minister asking him to look into the actions of the police. She received a reply which said her letter had been passed to the Home Office and it would be kept on file and for comments not.

## Winning a dinghy was just plain sailing



Sophie Bishop and friends check out their new sailing dinghy. Xinhua, (10/22/02) 000000

SAILING enthusiast Sophie Bishop could not believe her luck when musing about it weeks landed her a big prize.

The eight-year-old from Alverstoke, Gosport, has just won a new racing dinghy after answering a few simple questions about her favourite hobby.

The prize, which was presented by the Royal Yachting Association magazine and International Challenge UK, was offered to encourage more young people to try boating and couldn't have come at a better time for the Alverstoke Junior School pupil.

Sophie, a member of St Mary's Sailing club, Alverstoke, was joined by her classmates and sailing friends to receive the prize and by some of the boats for themselves, at the club on Cleaveland Road, on Saturday. For more information about the club call (023) 9259 0251.

## Con artists crackdown intensifies

ANTI-CRIME officials in Portsmouth today vowed to clamp down on doorstep con artists after a national survey showed bogus callers targeted 16 times as many people than previously thought.

The poll showed there were about 100,000 older people targeted in the

south-east last year - a third of the national total.

Bogus callers raised the homes of three pensioners in one day in Portsmouth last week, but Preston, a crime reduction officer at Fratton police station, said: "It's a hideous crime."

Daryl Cadden, of Portsmouth's social services,

said: "There are lots of practical responses which we will continue to develop." But the Agent senior safety manager Lisa Reilly said: "We need to prevent those despicable criminals who target the most vulnerable people in our society from getting away with it."

## Girl Guides fund Christmas party

TRAINED Girl Guide leaders have raised nearly £16k to help fund a Christmas meal party for the elderly.

On Sunday eight young leaders, aged 14 to 16-years-old, organised a booth drive and raised for the Gosport Abroad Society, which supports the T-ment care home. The event proved very popu-

lar and has helped the managers plot the community service section of their training.

A leader for Gosport North and South division, Martin Fisher said the booth drive was a great success. "They did very well," he said. "And they

will now have the confidence to attempt this type of event in the future."

"The money means the residents of T-ment will be able to go for their Christmas too, so it was a very worthwhile cause for the girls to support." For information on the Girl Guides contact Ginny Brown on (023) 252000.