

## **TAMESIDE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

In June 2007, an independent report was prepared by Dame Pauline Fielding into the quality of care at Tameside Hospital. This report was commissioned at the request of the North West Strategic Health Authority following concerns expressed by HM Coroner, Mr J Pollard.

Following the review, the hospital acknowledged that on occasions the standard of nursing and medical care at the hospital had fallen below acceptable standards.

One of the issues raised was “communication and information giving” and in particular, how there was a lack of information given to patients families about progress and in particular deterioration.

### **Case Study**

Medical negligence solicitor, Rachel Donovan, was recently approached by three children who believe they lost their mother due to the actions of Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Their mother was only 42 when she died and she left behind her three children who at that time were 22, 20 and 16.

Their mother, who the children describe as “the best” had been suffering with right sided stomach pain and a change in bowel habit for about 3 months before she attended the hospital.

In March 2009, the pain increased so she decided to attend the Accident and Emergency with her son. She apparently underwent an ultrasound scan and was given an enema and told that if the pain continued, she should make an appointment with her General Practitioner.

Over the next couple of weeks her pain increased and she made an appointment with her GP who referred her immediately to hospital.

Their mother went into hospital on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 and was placed on morphine and according to the childrens' account of events, their mother's symptoms were ignored.

Their mother was in hospital from the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 to the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2009 and in that time the children were never informed about their mother's condition and in particular her deterioration.

Their mother eventually received surgery on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2009 and was then transferred to the Intensive Care Unit in North Manchester Hospital.

Tameside Hospital did not send their mother's notes across with her and they did not arrive for a further 4 days.

In the absence of the notes, North Manchester Hospital struggled to tell the family what happened in Tameside who were again left in the dark but were told how serious their mother's condition was.

Between the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2009 and the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2009 their mother had a further 4 operations to try and treat the peritonitis and ongoing multi organ failure. Sadly, their mother died on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2009, leaving behind her 3 children and her newly born grand-daughter.

After her death, the children discovered that she had died from a perforation of the colon due to an obstruction in the sigmoid colon.

The children now want to know why this was not picked up before her attendance at the hospital on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 and why it was not diagnosed and treated during her time in hospital from the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 to the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

As far as the family are concerned, there was a failure to recognise the signs and symptoms of the obstruction which caused their mother's death.

In December 2009, the Dr Foster Hospital guide labelled Tameside Hospital as one of the worst hospitals in the country. Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust scored just 4.8 out of 100 on patient safety.

The report which was assessed on areas such as death rates, infection and staffing put Tameside in the bottom 12 of more than 150 Trusts in England. It particularly pointed to the high death rate which was the third highest in the country.

David Heyes, MP for Ashton-under-Lyne, has formed a Tameside Hospital Action Group for concerned families and the e-mail for the group is [Tamesidehospitalactiongroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Tamesidehospitalactiongroup@yahoo.co.uk).

Health watchdogs are to join together to discuss concerns about death rates at Tameside Hospital. A local conference has been planned to enable Councillors, MPs, Tameside Hospital Action Group, members of Tameside local involvement network and other interested parties to discuss the underlying reasons for the high levels of mortality at Tameside Hospital.

The Chairman and Chief Executive of Tameside Primary Care Trust will also be present.

The meeting will be held at Dukinfield Town Hall on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010 at 2.00 p.m. and it will be chaired by Dame Pauline Fielding. Members of the public are invited to attend to observe proceedings.

A spokesman from the hospital said “the Trust welcomes the opportunity to discuss and explain the hospital’s mortality rate and action that that is taken in response.”

If there is anything that you wish to discuss with regards to medical negligence following reading this article, then please do not hesitate to contact the solicitor, Rachel Donovan, on 0151 227 1214 or e-mail her at: [don@johnpickering.co.uk](mailto:don@johnpickering.co.uk).

## Notes

### [John Pickering and Partners LLP](#)

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We try to obtain maximum amounts of compensation.

We are committed to providing public funding (previously known as Legal Aid) and have a franchise from the Community Legal Services Commission. This means that they have looked at the firm carefully and approved of the way we work. They

consider that we are medical negligence claims specialists. They trust us to handle medical accident claims properly.

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All 3 of our offices (Liverpool, Manchester and Halifax) are accredited by the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers.

Claire Horton is an experienced clinical negligence solicitor who is based in our Manchester office. She continues to practice as an independent funding adjudicator for the Legal Services Commission and acts on a pro-bono basis for the [AvMA](#) helpline.

For further advice on medical negligence in Liverpool please also contact Rachel Donovan and for Halifax contact Ruth Davies, who are both experienced in the field of clinical negligence.

We provide free initial advice to people seeking information about a potential clinical negligence claim.

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