

Gosport panel rejects claims

We, the members of the Gosport independent panel, unanimously challenge the allegations being investigated by the Department of Health and the Home Office, as covered in your story "Gosport patient deaths inquiry 'buried evidence'" (News, last week).

The two civil servants who face investigation worked scrupulously in serving the panel's determination to deliver, in full, the terms of reference of the inquiry without fear or favour.

In addition, no panel member has engaged in what the article described as a "culture of waste" and abuse of taxpayers' money. No panel member is under investigation for any such matter, and the health department has informed us that no such allegation has been received. As the source of these false and spurious claims remains undisclosed, the panel is unable to speculate upon their motive.

Bishop James Jones; Kate Blackwell QC; Christine Gifford; David Hencke; Duncan Jarrett; Dr Bill Kirkup; Dr John Pounsford; Professor Deborah Sturdy; Professor Jim Smith

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