

**Background:**

The NHS Lanarkshire Communications Department received a call from Eleanor Bradford at BBC at 9.30am this morning (Friday 11 July)

The BBC advised that a photographer had been on the old hospital site, without permission at Law to take photographs and had found what he describes as patient information.

The photographer contacted the BBC and they went out to the hospital with the photographer and they filmed patient information found at Law Hospital on the evening of 10 July.

They found:

- A list of patient names from an orthopaedic clinic
- A black book with patient names and treatment they received
- X-rays with patient names on them

**Press statement provided by NHS Lanarkshire at 11.30 am Friday 11 July**

“At the time Law Hospital was vacated extensive checks were undertaken of the site.

We are currently undertaking a full search of the Law Hospital site to ascertain the details of the documentation referred to by the BBC.

We are taking this situation extremely seriously and will launch a full investigation if patient clinical information has been found at that site.”

**Public Statement published on website 5.00 pm Friday 11 July 2008**

“NHS Lanarkshire is investigating an incident where some miscellaneous pieces of patient information were found within derelict buildings on the former Law Hospital site.

We are confident that patient care has not been compromised however we would like to reassure members of the public that we are taking this situation extremely seriously and will undertake a full investigation. We apologise for any public anxieties resulting from this situation.

We must stress that we have found no patient records in the buildings and that medical records were safely and securely transferred from Law to Wishaw in 2001.

There are clear policies and processes in place when transferring patient information from one site to the other. There has however been an error which has resulted in some information being left on the site.

Immediate action has been taken to securely clear the site and additional 24-hour security measures have been put in place.”

### **NHS Lanarkshire Background Information:**

- The Law Hospital site is clearly marked as dangerous throughout and warning signs are in place on the buildings.
- There is a 24-hour security presence on site.
- In response to recent correspondence from the Scottish Government Health Department, the NHSL Corporate Management team received assurances that the buildings and contents at the Law Site had been appropriately managed and secured.
- There is a clear process in place to ensure that during building disposals, the contents of buildings is appropriately managed and in instances where this includes records, these are either disposed of, or transferred appropriately to another location. In circumstances where records require to be confidentially destroyed, this is done through an approved contractor. All vacated premises are subjected to a visual inspection of the buildings immediately prior to final de-commissioning.
- During the search on 11 July no medical records have been found. Miscellaneous pieces of patient information was discovered, which is clearly a breach of our policy and procedures.
- Law Hospital was a live hospital site which transferred to another live hospital site at Wishaw General, in 2001.
- This has clearly been an error and a full investigation will be undertaken. A public statement has been issued to confirm the NHS Lanarkshire's regret for any anxieties this incident may have caused members of the public and to provide public reassurance.

### **Actions taken by NHS Lanarkshire**

- Senior staff from Property and Support Services and Information management arrived on site at Law Hospital at 9.45am and conducted a search of the hospital to identify the areas that the BBC were filming.
- The Chief Executive convened an emergency meeting at 12noon (11 July) on the site of Law Hospital with the Medical Director, Director of CHP North, Head of Information Manager, Deputy PSSD Manager, Corporate Affairs Manager and Head of Communications. An inspection of the areas identified by the BBC took place.

Initial Actions Agreed:
Urgent arrangements in place to securely clear the Law Hospital site
Enhanced 24-hour security with effect from (11 July 2008)
Urgent inspection of all other disused sites
Investigation Team established
Briefing prepared and issued to: Board Members Information Commissioner Scottish Government MSPs
Publish public statement on website (11 July 2008) Issue public statement to media (11 July 2008)
Provide public statement to switchboards and Referral Management Centre (11 July 2008)
Issue briefing to all staff reinforcing records management policy (14 July 2008)