

DWV64  
CONFIDENTIAL

Notes of Meeting – 5 Nov 04

Present :

Dr Martin Strahan – VMO Gen Medicine - BBH  
Mr Peter Leck – DM BHSD  
Dr Darren Keating – DMS BHSD

Context :

Ms Toni Hoffman NUM ICU/CCU has made a number of allegations against Dr Jayant Patel, Director of Surgery BBH, including some allegations about his clinical competence. Dr Strahan was asked to provide any comment in relation to these allegations because Ms Hoffman had named him as one doctor who shared similar concerns.

Response :

Dr Strahan outlined a case where a woman from Biggenden was referred to him for investigation of abdominal pain. He performed a gastroscopy on the woman finding obstruction in the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the duodenum and was unable to advance the scope any further, despite multiple attempts. After the procedure the woman experienced ongoing abdominal pain (? perforation), so was referred to BBH and seen by Dr Patel. A CT scan was performed and reported to Dr Strahan as showing dye in the abdominal cavity. He reviewed the films and believed the dye showed a nephrogram. Nevertheless Dr Patel operated and found carcinoma of the pancreas (which was confirmed as adenocarcinoma by biopsies taken at time of endoscopy). Dr Strahan believed this case showed Dr Patel was rigid in his thinking and judgement being unwilling to be flexible as new evidence came to hand. This lady was sent home and returned for a Whipples operation. Unfortunately she died several days after the operation. He also questioned whether the Whipples operation should be done in Bundaberg, whilst acknowledging most specialists (inc himself) in regional areas may have kept patients too long before referring to metropolitan hospitals.

Dr Strahan believed that Dr Patel had an aggressive and assertive personality, but had he had kept his distance from Dr Patel. Dr Strahan noted that the local specialists felt Dr Patel had arrived from the US, been appointed as Director of Surgery and given appropriate authority supported by management, which he had used to reduce surgical waiting lists. However he appeared to operate without some form of peer review. He was seen as a self declared expert from the 1<sup>st</sup> world here to help the 3<sup>rd</sup> world of Bundaberg. The local specialists saw him as 'a Johnny come lately' who had been given the 'inside running by management' with concerns held by the specialists over his university appointment and appointment to the local Oncology committee.

Dr Darren Keating  
DMS

CONFIDENTIAL

168