

National Health Service Savile reports June 2014

Introduction

On June 26 2014 the Department of Health (DH) published 28 reports by NHS Trusts into allegations of abuse by Jimmy Savile on their premises, with a further report into Stoke Mandeville Hospital due to be published in October 2014. A further four reports have still to be completed.

A summary of the published reports follows, more detailed individual summaries of the reports from Broadmoor, Leeds General Hospital are also part of this NOTA series and the Stoke Mandeville Hospital report will be added when published. Taken overall it is apparent that a huge amount of resource has been expended to respond to all allegations received, many passed on by the police undertaking Operation Yewtree.

A number found no indication of wrongdoing or indeed evidence of Savile ever having been present. Others, however, reveal evidence of a chilling pattern of ruthless, callous, opportunistic and planned rapes and sexual assaults on vulnerable children and adults, as well as staff.

In the introduction to the first of this series of summaries I commented that whilst it was stated as fact that Savile was a sex offender, this was opinion based on allegations that would never be able to be tested. That remains the case and these reports vary in their account of the methodology that they used to arrive at their conclusions, ranging from giving the view of the investigator to, in the case of the Leeds enquiry, all the team undertaking interviewing training and applying a number of specific tests to ascertain the validity of the accounts of both victims and witnesses. However rigorous the process, in the absence of other evidence ultimately these judgements can only ever be based on the balance of probability.

Nevertheless the similarities in the accounts contained in the enquiry reports based on the accounts of witnesses who had no knowledge of each other – the patterns of the offending, the arrogance and confidence with which Savile behaved and the callousness with which they were committed do tend to support the assertion that he was indeed the ‘predatory, serial sex offender’ that he is now frequently described as.

The reports also give some indication as to how a combination of a relatively authoritarian hospital culture at the time, victim and bystander’s perceptions of Savile’s influence and celebrity and quite possibly the impunity with which he appears to have behaved may have contributed to the majority of the offences not being reported at the time.

As always, for those interested in the complete picture these summaries are no substitute for reading the original reports, all available on the DH website.

Savile Report summaries

Marcus Erooga, NOTANews 75, March / April 2015

Brief summaries of 28 NHS Trust Reports about concerns relating to Jimmy Savile, published June 26th 2014

Barnet General Hospital, London

A former patient said that nurses in 1983 told her that Savile 'liked to have sex with dead bodies'.

The report said: 'She described having a conversation with the nurses in which they allegedly said they spied on Savile (JS) when they worked at another hospital and observed him having sex with a dead body'.

'The witness confirmed that this was not something that happened at Barnet General Hospital (BGH), and she thought that it had happened at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, but could not be certain of that'.

The report concluded: 'The conversation reported by the witness happened at BGH, however the incident of JS having sex with dead bodies did not happen at BGH'.

Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospitals, London

A former member of staff reported having two sightings of Savile walking across the Maudsley site of the Bethlem Hospital in 1964/65. In 1980 Savile opened the Interim Medium Secure Unit at the Bethlem Hospital. No specific concerns about his contact with the hospital were identified.

Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Manchester

A woman said she was assaulted by Savile at the hospital in about 1958 when she was about seven or eight-years-old and a patient. She alleged that her father let Savile abuse her.

In another allegation a man said he was assaulted in 1974 at a hospital he said was 'Middleton Hospital' when he was nine or ten.

The report concluded: 'It has not been possible therefore to produce conclusive evidence that the events described by both alleged victims took place'.

Cardiff Royal Infirmary

A former patient reported an incident she said happened when she was in her early 20s, when she thought he was attempting to indecently assault her – he got as far as kissing her all up her arm.

However, the Director of Nursing for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, said: 'The Health Board has conducted an exhaustive investigation into this one case from the 1960s, reviewing hundreds of archived documents over a period going back 50 years and interviewing staff who worked at Cardiff Royal Infirmary at the time'.

'Those efforts have found no documented evidence to support the patient's account or place Jimmy Savile at the hospital during the time in question'.

De La Pole Hospital, Hull

An allegation was made that Savile was witnessed sexually assaulting a teenager who was in traction at the time. Investigators traced the patient, who denied that it happened.

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Dewsbury District Hospital / Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield

A woman alleged Savile sexually assaulted her when she was 15 and an in-patient. Investigators found the woman was actually a patient at Staincliffe Hospital, now demolished. They concluded that the incident did take place.

The investigators also found that Savile was heard making a lewd remark to a young woman patient at an opening ceremony at Pinderfields Hospital in 2010. The report said: 'The investigation into this incident concluded that the ward sister should have reported this incident at the time and the management of official visitors into clinical areas should be improved'.

Digby Hospital, Exeter

The report found that Savile raped a woman in a motorhome at this mental hospital in 1970.

Dryburn Hospital, Durham

An allegation was made that someone connected with the hospital helped procure children for Savile. The report said: 'This investigation has ... not found any evidence of any procurement of boys or girls for Jimmy Savile connected to Dryburn Hospital'.

'The allegations ... raise the question of whether or not any such procurement took place elsewhere in the North East but that is a matter beyond the remit of this investigation'.

Great Ormond Street Hospital, London

On one allegation from more than 40 years ago, the hospital stated: 'Despite rigorous examination of information provided by the informant, the trust has found no evidence that the alleged incident took place'.

'We also found no evidence of Jimmy Savile fundraising on behalf of Great Ormond Street hospital and there were no, and never have been, access arrangements or privileges accorded to Jimmy Savile at Great Ormond Street Hospital'.

Hammersmith Hospital, London

One allegation was that Savile made inappropriate comments during a visit and another related to an allegation of a serious sexual offence by a senior employee of the Hospital. The report concluded the more serious allegation was not possible to investigate due to a complete lack of relevant evidence.

High Royds Hospital, Leeds

A former patient at the mental health unit and a member of staff both reported that Savile had inappropriately touched people during a fancy dress fun run in the 1980s. The report said the allegations were accepted and appeared to be true.

Leavesden Hospital, Abbots Langley, Herts.

Information was received that Savile might have visited Leavesden Hospital in the 1970s. No accusation of impropriety was made relating to Savile. Ten credible witnesses identified as having worked at Leavesden Hospital in the 1970s gave corroborating evidence to the enquiry indicating that Savile never visited Leavesden Hospital at any time during their employment at the hospital, including before and after the 1970s.

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Moss Side Hospital, Liverpool

This used to be part of Ashworth and is now one of three top-security mental hospitals in England, together with Rampton and Broadmoor.

Two female former patients accused Savile of sexually abusing them in a ward and a third allegation came from a male ex-patient who claimed that he witnessed Savile stroking a patient's breast at a hospital social event. A fourth person, a former employee, also advised the enquiry that 'something distasteful happened and that patients were too frightened to raise their experiences as a complaint'. The enquiry was unable to find evidence to confirm or contradict the allegations and concerns they were made aware of.

North Manchester General Hospital

An investigation was conducted into a patient allegation relating to Jimmy Savile and NHS children's services in a former hospital in the North Manchester area. Following preliminary investigations the information was passed on for formal inclusion as part of their investigations into Savile and Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Odstock Hospital, Salisbury

Various confirmed reports were received of Savile having visited Odstock Hospital. The investigation team did not receive any allegations or find evidence to establish any wrongdoing by Savile at Odstock.

Prestwich Psychiatric Hospital, Manchester

A member of the public made an allegation that in or around 1960, when she was about seven or eight years old, she was twice brought onto the Prestwich Hospital site and sexually abused by Savile and another unidentified male.

The visits were accompanied by threats that if she disclosed the abuse she would be brought back to the hospital and locked away with the patients. The investigation team concluded that the alleged incidents are likely to have occurred.

Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton

The enquiry received an anonymous allegation that Savile and 3 associates were denied unsupervised access to a ward at Queen Mary's on one occasion in the 1970s.

No witness recalled ever seeing Savile at Queen Mary's hospital nor recalled him having any association with Queen Mary's. The enquiry concludes that whilst it would seem unlikely that the informant would have made an allegation without substance, the investigation could not conclude one way or the other whether the incident occurred.

Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead

An allegation was received that, in the 1950s, Savile indecently assaulted a woman in her twenties as she recovered from an operation. The enquiry concluded that while the lead investigator does not doubt the allegation, the alleged assault could not be conclusively attributed to Savile. It was also not possible to attribute the assault to any other specific individual. They concluded that the probability was that the assault related to somebody other than Savile.

Roecliffe Manor Children's Convalescent Home, Woodhouse Eaves, Leicestershire

A male adult alleged that between the ages of 7 and 9 years Savile sexually abused him on four occasions when Savile visited the home in the early 1960s.

The enquiry concluded that sexual abuse of children is likely to have taken place at Roecliffe Manor, though the extent of such abuse is unknown. Despite this, it was not possible to associate Savile conclusively with such abuse.

Royal Free Hospital, London

An allegation was made regarding Jimmy Savile. An investigation took place and the allegation proved to be unfounded, therefore a report was not published.

Royal Hospital, Portsmouth

A man alleged a cleaner had told him that Savile had abused him while unconscious. The report's author found that "The lack of any evidence that corroborates the account of the complainant and the disparities in the accounts given to the police and myself leads me to believe that it is highly unlikely that the alleged incident took place".

The Royal Marsden Hospital, Surrey

The concern was expressed by an informant who, in 1986, had a young female colleague whose relative or friend had cancer and was either in 'the Marsden' or 'Stoke Mandeville' and she used to visit/stay overnight. One day this colleague was very upset and when asked why she said that Savile had been at the hospital and had made sexual advances towards her and had possibly touched her.

The informant was unable to recall the details and the colleague could not be identified. The enquiry was unable to find any record of Savile having any contact with the hospital.

Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle and Newcastle General Hospital

Savile visited the children's wards of the hospital in 1986/7 and 1991. The enquiry established that these presentations coincided with the Great North Run, there was continual supervision and that 'nothing untoward occurred'.

Saxondale Hospital, Nottingham

One victim alleged that Savile pulled up her skirt with a hockey stick at a disco. The report said: 'There was no reason to doubt that she gave an honest and truthful account of the incident as she recalled it'.

Shotley Bridge Hospital, County Durham

There were allegations of inappropriate behaviour during a visit in 1981, but the report said: 'No evidence of anything untoward or inappropriate taking place during the visit involving Jimmy Savile and the children on the ward has come to light'.

St. Catherine's Hospital, Birkenhead

A victim, then aged 14, reported that in 1964 Savile jumped into bed with her and touched her inappropriately. The report found her 'credible and convincing'.

Wheatfields Hospice, Leeds

A woman reported that, as a girl under 16, she was indecently assaulted at the opening ceremony of the Sue Ryder run hospice in 1978. The enquiry found the

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woman's account to be credible.

Whitby Hospital

A former member of staff said that Savile had been present occasionally in Whitby Hospital in the years between 1964 and 1968. On one of those occasions, he had put his arms around her and touched her inappropriately. There was no allegation of an indecent element to the behaviour.

The enquiry was unable to find any corroborative evidence to support the account but accepted the evidence as true.

Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester

The concern related to a reported conversation at Wythenshawe Hospital in 1962/1963. This conversation took place in the presence of the informant, who was 17 or 18 years old at the time. During the course of a general conversation in the day room of a ward another patient, a woman in her 50s, told a group of patients that: 'Jimmy Savile is a dirty old man up to no good' and used to hold parties at his house with very young girls amongst the guests.

No evidence was identified by the investigation team to suggest that Savile was ever present at Wythenshawe Hospital.

Marcus Erooga
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