



PRESS RELEASE

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**COMPLAINTS RECOMMENDATIONS WELCOME BUT ACTION NEEDED NOW
NOT WORDS**

The patient safety charity Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA) has welcomed the report on NHS Complaints by Ann Clwyd and Professor Tricia Hart, which was published today. However, the charity warns that many of the recommendations simply echo what has been recommended in the past and not been implemented. It is calling for a commitment from health secretary Jeremy Hunt that they will be implemented without delay. AvMA also warn that if controversial Government plans to water down the proposed statutory Duty of Candour go ahead, any reform of the complaints system may be rendered useless.

AvMA chief executive Peter Walsh said:

“We are grateful to Ann Clwyd and Tricia Hart for their very sensible recommendations, but now is the time for action not words. We already have key recommendations from the Francis inquiry which the Government have not signed up to leave alone implemented. The plan revealed this week to water down the much vaunted Duty of Candour by restricting it only to the very most severe cases would overshadow any tinkering with the complaints system. It would, in effect, legitimise cover ups of the vast majority of incidents which cause serious harm. It would kindle a culture of cover up and denial. Any complaints system worth its salt relies on honesty. It is also the bedrock of a patient safety culture.”

ENDS