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 18 SEP 2000

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P F O Whitehurst
 Solicitor to the Inquiry
 The Bristol Royal Infirmary Inquiry
 2 - 10 Temple Way
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Dear Mr Whitehurst

Thank you for your letter of 26 July 2000 reminding me that I had not dealt with your earlier communications. I apologise for the dreadful delay in replying.

You will recall that in my evidence to the Inquiry I did touch on the subject of the peripheral clinics which were undertaken by the Southampton unit and the area which we served.

My understanding was that we were receiving referrals from the South West and South Wales because we offered a high quality service, that Southampton's results were known to be outstanding, second to none, and, I believe, widely known to be superior to Bristol's.

When the supraregional services for paediatric cardiac surgery were first being discussed by the British Paediatric Association and the Joint Consultant's Committee in the early 1980's Bristol was not included on the list of 8 centres recommended. I believe that this was because, even at that time, there was a general perception that the Bristol surgical results were not as good as those being achieved at the 8 centres which were recommended. There was concern expressed by members of the profession when the Regional medical officers' report in 1984 added Bristol to the list. I have already supplied you with a copy of the letter written by Mr James Monro (our paediatric cardiac surgeon) to Dr McKee, Wessex Regional Medical Officer saying that he did not feel the Bristol unit should continue to be supported.

Patients were referred to me from Plymouth starting soon after I was appointed to Southampton in October 1978 as the first paediatric cardiologist in the Wessex Cardiothoracic Centre. I think that, initially, this happened when the Brompton were unable to accept emergency referrals but gradually more and more of the patients came to Southampton. My diary indicates that I visited Plymouth in 1979 and although I cannot be certain precisely when the regular Plymouth clinics performed by Dr George Sutherland and myself started I was certainly visiting to do clinics in 1984 and have been going regularly since then. Dr Perham, Dr Baumer and Dr Jones, the consultant paediatricians in Plymouth would be in a better position to tell you why they chose to use Southampton rather than Bristol.

As far as the Cardiff clinics were concerned Dr Sutherland and I and subsequently Dr Lance Fong covered these clinics following the death of Dr L G Davies at the invitation of the local cardiologists and paediatricians. Dr Philip Rees from Great Ormond Street was also doing Cardiff Clinics during the same time period. I know that I was going regularly during 1990 but cannot recall exactly when I started and stopped doing these particular clinics. My understanding was that the reason for inviting Southampton and