

STATEMENT OF MR MALCOLM CURNOW

22. The Day before Verity's Death

I went home on the morning of 15.9.90. I was contacted early the next day by a local police officer, who told me to go to Bristol as soon as possible. I arrived at the BCH at about 10.30 a.m. My wife had been joined by her parents. I found out that Verity had deteriorated badly at about 1.00 a.m. the previous night, following a physiotherapy session, and had not recovered. During the course of the day I told the physiotherapist to stop exercising Verity, as it was obvious that the treatments were causing her to deteriorate.

23. Verity's Death

At about 6.15 p.m. in the ITU ward, Verity collapsed. The nurses started panicking, and several alarms went off. A doctor whose name I never discovered came, and asked my wife and me to leave. My wife was ushered into an anteroom. I refused. I watched the doctor and the other staff attempt the normal methods of resuscitation and cardiac massage. They did this for between 10-15 minutes, using increasing amounts of adrenaline. At this point I said, "I think the time has come to let her go." Verity died at 6.37 p.m.

24. Immediate Aftermath

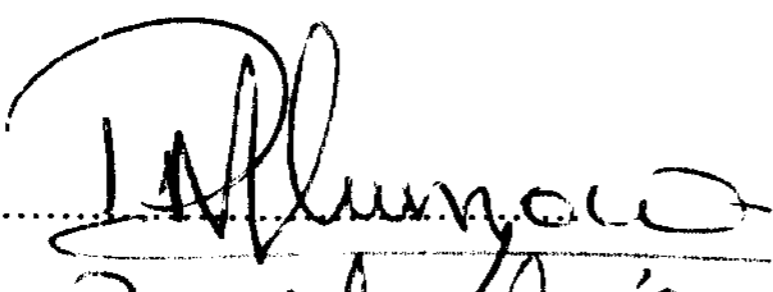
Following Verity's death, a nurse began to move the drips. I walked out of the ITU and into the anteroom, where my wife was sitting with her parents. I said, "She's gone". After a few minutes, when the nursing staff had removed all the attachments, I took Verity into my wife, and we stayed together for about 15 minutes. Then I took Verity back into ITU. A nurse asked me to get some clothes for her.

25. Going Back to our Room

I went back to our room to find some clothes for Verity, together with my wife and her parents. No one said anything. The staff seemed upset, but took it as a matter of course. I still felt that the question of how such a simple operation could have gone so tragically wrong was unanswered.

Signed.....

Dated.....


 20 March '99

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26. Feelings about Time after Death

Both my wife and I felt under pressure to leave the hospital. We were not given adequate time to mourn, or to be left alone. I felt as if we were on a conveyor belt. One of the nursing staff asked us to clear our room, as it was needed by another family.

27. The Chapel of Rest

Once we had put our belongings in our car, we were taken to the Chapel of Rest to see Verity. The chapel was at the end of a series of long, narrow tunnels which appeared to lead downwards. It was cold, dimly lit, and felt subterranean. I did not find it reassuring or welcoming. We were left alone with Verity for about ten minutes. We were then taken back to the hospital, where we were informed that the relevant documents would be forwarded to us in the post.

28. A Doctor Approaches Us

As we left, we were approached by the doctor who had tried to resuscitate her in ITU. He stated that one in a thousand children die of heart disease, and that it was just unfortunate that it was ours.

29. Feeling of Incredulity

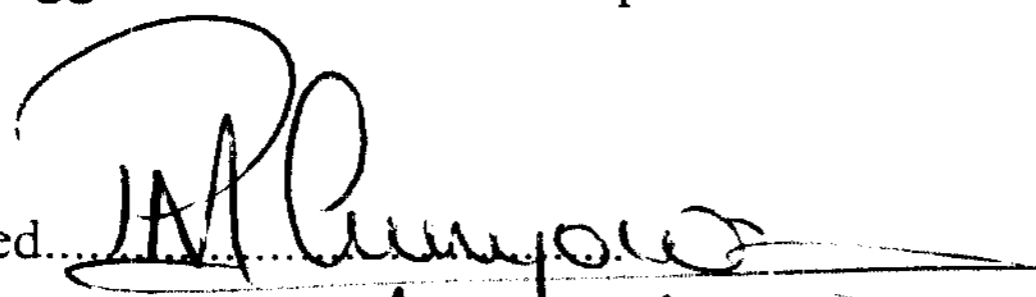
Within an hour to an hour and a half of my daughter's death I was driving home with my wife. My overriding feeling was of incredulity. I had gone to BCH with a reasonably healthy child sitting in the back of my car in a childseat. On the way home, the childseat was empty.

30. Letter from Mr Dhasmana

During the next week my wife and I received a letter dated 17.9.90 from Mr Dhasmana in which he offered his condolences. I noticed that when he wrote of the operation, he used the word "failed" in his description of the outcome. I felt that this implied a level of personal responsibility. I also thought the fact that he wrote on the day after Verity died suggested that he felt responsible.

Signed.....

Dated.....


20 March '99