

P366D251 SN

BRISTOL ROYAL INFIRMARY INQUIRY

1. My name is Gareth Crompton. I was Chief Medical Officer (CMO) at the Welsh Office from 1 January 1978 to 31 August 1989. My role, as CMO Wales, was to be the chief adviser on medical matters arising from and pertaining to the statutory functions of the Secretary of State for Wales. I was, also, the head of the Health Professionals Group.
2. On leaving the Welsh Office in 1989, I was appointed to the University of Wales Chair of Public Health Medicine at the College of Medicine (UWCM). I retired from medical practice at the end of October 1997 and made Professor Emeritus. For most of my eight years in academia I was also Chief Administrative Medical Officer, later restyled Director of Public Health Medicine, at South Glamorgan Health Authority (Teaching) serving Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The academic portion of my command was known at the UWCM as the Centre for Applied Public Health Medicine and was housed in Health Authority premises.
3. I have prepared and submitted this evidence in response to the request made by the Inquiry to the Director of NHS Wales, Mr Peter Gregory, whom you saw on 26 April. I trust that it may be helpful to you. You should know, however, that I have no relevant files or documents in my personal possession nor have I ever kept a diary during my career. Regrettably my memory of events is incomplete and I also have difficulty in dating some of them. I have read copies of the statements and papers submitted by the Welsh Office to the Inquiry under cover of the letters of 12 and 19 March 1999, together with Mr Gregory's oral evidence as recorded in the transcript of proceedings on 26 April. This statement is offered as a supplement to the papers I have mentioned above.
4. The only other relevant material I have seen is the transcript of Dr Norman Halliday's oral evidence of the 29 April.
5. In the Welsh experience throughout this period certain key principles applied:-
 - a. clinicians had total freedom to refer cardiac patients for further opinions, treatment and aftercare to any hospital consultant in the NHS, UK. They were not subject to recommendations or guidance by the Welsh Office;
 - b. Welsh policy was heavily reliant on the best available authoritative advice, notably from:-
 - i. Welsh Medical Committee (WMC)
 - ii. Joint Cardiac Committee of the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England.