

38. As regards clinical outcomes and adverse events, these were fundamentally a matter for the audit meetings of the particular services involved. These were not as a matter of course reported to the Board. As the work of the Patient Care Committee of the Board progressed, a statistical picture would have been built up, but always in retrospect. As previously stated, it was my intention that the Patient Care Committee would move into the area of clinical standards but it would have taken time and needed to be handled carefully.
39. Control of individual situations was in the hands of the clinical teams and the Trust executive management. A yearly audit report covering clinical performance was produced by the Medical Audit Committee under a senior consultant. In my time, it was not practice in UBHT for this report to be seen by the Board or the Board Committees.
40. To an outsider used to an open statistical approach to performance monitoring, I was not comfortable with the activities of the Medical Audit Committee. They seemed to carry out audits without established criteria. I personally saw only one report. In that report, I could not find the criteria used, the information was expressed in a generalised manner, and I could not get a clear picture of areas where there should be concern and the actions which might be taken. I, of course, recognise and respect the need to maintain patient confidentiality.
41. In the area of audit, Hugh Ross moved towards setting criteria and logging statistics, while maintaining patient confidentiality. He moved to set up specific people in each Directorate with the responsibility of logging data into the audit system.
42. Managing costs was the responsibility of the Clinical Directorates. They were required to operate within the negotiated budgets. The Trust operated a good financial monitoring system and it was relatively easy to have an up to date accurate position. In principle, Directorates were required to live within their budgets but when an unexpected problem arose, the Financial Directorate was very positive in trying to release more funds, including negotiating funds from the relevant authority.