

D6 WHETHER ANY OF THE PAEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGISTS BASED AT THE BRI DECIDED TO REFER A CHILD TO A PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC SURGEON OUTSIDE THE BRI; AND, IF SO, WHY.

D7 THE EXTENT OF AND THE REASONS FOR TERTIARY REFERRAL FROM THE BRI TO OTHER CENTRES OF PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC SURGERY.

These two headings may be considered together.

There were always a small number of referrals away from Bristol to other centres, such as Great Ormond Street, The Brompton, the National Heart Hospital or in recent years to Birmingham. In many instances the decision to refer elsewhere was a joint one between the surgeons and the cardiologists. It is impossible for me to say whether or how many were referred elsewhere by the cardiologists without consulting the surgeons.

The reasons for sending patients away would have included the following:

- a) At the beginning of the period, before Mr Dhasmana was appointed, an urgent patient who presented when I was on leave would have had to be sent elsewhere.
- b) Patients with conditions whose rarity and/or complexity placed them outside our experience would have presented from time to time, and referral elsewhere would have been considered.
- c) There were patients about whom it was difficult to be confident as to what was the appropriate advice and therefore from time to time we would have consulted with colleagues elsewhere, most commonly with Great Ormond Street. In the light of their advice, there were some occasions when we asked the surgeons at Great Ormond Street to undertake a surgical procedure they had recommended. On other occasions we undertook the surgical procedure in Bristol.