

BRI Inquiry**Comments of the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust on the
Witness Statement of Mrs Michelle Cummings****Paragraph 69**

The Intensive Care Unit had been moved to a smaller area whilst the adjacent Ward 6 was being converted from use as a short-stay general surgical ward to the post-operative care of cardiac surgical patients.

Paragraph 70

The students who cared for Charlotte were fully qualified nurses who were undertaking a post-graduate course in cardiac intensive care at the Bristol Royal Infirmary which was a training centre for this. They would only have been permitted to care for Charlotte without being physically overseen by another member of staff, in a technique in which they had been trained and demonstrated proficiency.

Paragraph 73

Mr Wisheart's holiday had been planned to coincide with the opening of the new cardiac surgical ward and the moving of patients from the existing ward to the new accommodation.

Paragraph 74

The need to move patients from the Intensive Care Unit would not have been because of visiting politicians opening the new accommodation but as a staged development of the floor for the expansion of cardiac surgical facilities.

Paragraph 75

It is difficult over ten years later for any member of the staff involved to have a specific recollection of the details of this move. However, as Mr Wisheart was not operating and therefore post-operative patients requiring intensive care were not resulting, there would not have been any shortage of intensive care facilities. It is envisaged that a decision was made that if Charlotte had to be moved, she no longer required cardiac intensive care but respiratory intensive care and that this would best be provided by paediatric specialists at the Bristol Children's Hospital. It was normal practice to transfer children to the Bristol Children's Hospital if their cardiac condition had stabilised and their principal problem made their care more appropriate by another speciality.

Transfers to the Bristol Children's Hospital were always organised at least a day in advance to meet the requirements of the ambulance service and the planning of staff to accompany the child.

Paragraph 76

Despite this, the pressure upon the beds at the Bristol Children's Hospital is extremely unpredictable and although a bed may be available one day, it may be filled by an emergency patient overnight.

It is not possible to ascertain why the individual staff who received Charlotte and Mrs Cummings were not expecting her, when this arrangement would have been made at least the day before.

Mrs Cummings' comments on the events at the Children's Hospital do not refer to any cardiac problems but respiratory ones.