

was very large, and the coronary arteries were in the wrong place. He was nevertheless hopeful that it could be successful, but quoted a 25% risk factor.

9. At this time there was a lot of publicity in the media to do with children's heart operations being put off - not at Bristol but at other hospitals such as Birmingham - and there appeared to be added pressure on Cardiac Surgeons to perform their operations. Although there was some delay in setting a date for Melanie's further surgery, there was never the least suggestion that we might have considered going elsewhere other than to the Bristol hospitals, partly because of the adverse publicity surrounding other centres, but more importantly because we were very happy with what had been achieved so far and the way in which it had all been done.
10. I believe they were also extending the Intensive Care Unit at the BRI in 1987, and it had been necessary to defer a number of operations where the condition was not life threatening. There were therefore a number of factors influencing the timing of the surgery, but although it all took a little longer than we were initially expecting, we were not unduly concerned.
11. Melanie's condition was monitored at regular outpatient visits, and in March 1988 Mr Wisheart wrote to us stating that "Unfortunately, I have not found it possible to arrange her operation in April due to the severe restrictions which are placed upon us at present. I realise that you have waited a long time and that Melanie is not very well and therefore I will do my very best to arrange it for May. If you are