

I can only conclude that the post-mortem was demanded because they wanted to take Josie's organs. I understand that some parents would be happy to donate their child's organs for research, but we would not have been ready to do so. I feel I was deceived by Dr Martin, who assured me that she would be "the same old Josie" after the post-mortem examination.

Mr Wisheart didn't make any contact with us after Josie's death. There could have been very good reasons why he wasn't available at the precise moment she died, but even a brief letter would have been welcome. It would have meant a lot to think that he had actually noticed. Mr Wisheart's statement (@ WIT 0121 0234) says:

I, together with a nurse and/or the counsellor, always talked with the parents of a child who died as soon as possible after the death.

In our case, this simply wasn't true.

I would also like to raise concerns about the accuracy of the initial diagnosis on the basis of which Mr Wisheart operated on Josie. Firstly, Dr Martin told us (para. 21) that Josie's paralysis had resulted from Mr Wisheart having to clamp the aorta higher up than normal, because he had not expected her arteries to have the configuration they did. Secondly, from the operation note, I understand that Mr Wisheart had expected to be able to do both procedures through the same incision. However, because of the arterial anatomy, he had found that he could only do the pulmonary banding through the first incision he had made. Therefore, he had been forced to make a second incision, on the other side of Josie's body, to repair the aorta. Because the banding had been done first, he was unable to carry out measurements which would check its effectiveness. Had the initial diagnosis been more accurate, Mr Wisheart would surely have opened Josie from the other side first and, hence, would have been able to adjust the band correctly. Given that Josie's subsequent heart failure and ultimate death were attributable to the looseness of the band applied by Mr Wisheart, I wonder just how significant the diagnostic error may have been.