

STATEMENT OF DIANA HILL

41. Dr Martin

I was referred to Dr Martin, who appeared to be in possession of no notes or other details. He asked why we were there. We said that a GP, Dr James, had insisted that our son see a cardiologist because he had a loud heart murmur. Dr Martin listened to James's heart, and agreed that he had a murmur, but still appeared to be unsure as to why we had been referred to him. We asked about the ECG that had just been done, and Dr Martin looked at it. He agreed that it was a little irregular, but still did not understand the need for a referral to see a cardiologist. At this point, I explained about Jessica. Dr Martin's attitude suddenly changed, and he said that he would arrange for an echocardiogram to be performed.

42. An Echocardiogram Is Performed

Half an hour later, an echocardiogram was performed, and this clearly demonstrated that my son was still suffering from pulmonary stenosis. This had become so severe that he needed an operation quite soon. If we had not been insistent, I am convinced that Dr Martin would have sent us home, and that we would not have known the seriousness of my son's condition. When the conversation turned to the matter of the potential dangers of the surgery, Dr Martin said that my son was at more risk of falling off his chair than he would be in this operation. I did not want the operation to be performed at Bristol, and I put this request through the GP, who had to contact Dr Martin.

43. Problems With Referral

Dr Martin was reluctant to refer us elsewhere, and wrote to our GP, stating that this course of action was not necessary. In the end, my husband wrote to our GP, making it clear that we did not trust Dr Martin's clinical judgement, and that we wished to be referred to another hospital. We also asked Hugh Ross, the Chief Executive of UBHT, to intervene. James was subsequently referred to a cardiologist at the Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Signed Diana Hill.
Dated 7th August 1999.