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UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Professor G.D. Angelini, MD, MCh, FRCS
British Heart Foundation
Chair of Cardiac Surgery

Mr A.J. Bryan, BMedSci, BM, FRCS
Senior Lecturer

Department of Cardiac Surgery
Bristol Royal Infirmary
Bristol BS2 8HW
Telephone: (0272) 283145
Fax: (0272) ~~283074~~ 299737

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GDA/NJM

Dr P J Doyle
Senior Medical Officer
Department of Health
Health Care (Medical) Division
Eileen House
80-94 Newington Causeway
London SE1 6EF

*Already received
19.8.94*

Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter of the 21st July to which I am a bit late in replying since I have been abroad.

I appreciate your frankness and concern about some of our paediatric cardiac surgery work. I have to admit that indeed there have been audits carried out which have shown a greater mortality than perhaps could be expected in a particular surgical procedure. This has been a matter of concern for us all and we have tried very hard in the last few months to implement changes aimed at improving our results.

In line with the expansion which is taking place in our department, we have been able to advertise a new position for a full-time consultant paediatric cardiac surgeon. I am glad to say that we have had a good response to our advert and an interview is now being held on the 20th September. I can assure you that we will do our best to appoint a suitable candidate - it is our desire to find somebody familiar with the surgical procedure for which our results have been least satisfactory. Of course, it all depends on the quality of the applicants but I can tell you that from the interest this position has generated, we will certainly have at least one, or possibly two, very experienced candidates.

In order to achieve an excellent paediatric service, however, it is also necessary to provide a better environment in which such surgery can be conducted. The view of all the medics involved in this work, anaesthetists, surgeons and cardiologists, is that the present facilities should be moved from the Bristol Royal Infirmary into the Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children and it is my understanding that the Trust has been looking in this direction. The appointment of a full-time paediatric surgeon and the move of the activity to the 'Children's Hospital' would greatly strengthen our unit and address the short-comings pointed out in your letter. I can assure you that everything will be done to appoint a suitably experienced person and I can also assure you that it is the wish of all the medics to move the paediatric surgery to the 'Children's Hospital'. Ultimately, however, the decision to move the unit is not in my hands but in the hands of the UBHT Trust so I am not in a position to comment any further on this particular issue.

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