

patient unfortunately did not survive and this allegedly led to the letter received from the Department of Health, (advising to stop) open-heart surgery for neonates and complex infants (we have not seen the letter from the Department of Health). *concerning*

FORWARD PLANNING

The Trust has taken a number of positive steps to improve the paediatric cardiac services. They can be summarised as follows:

From next October all paediatric cardiac services will be provided at the Children's Hospital where an operating theatre will be dedicated to cardiac work. The intensive care unit will expand from five to twelve beds. Professor Peter Fleming will run the paediatric intensive care unit and provision for a round-the-clock service will be made.

Mr Ash Pawade has been appointed as paediatric cardiac surgeon and he is expected to take up his post within the next two or three months with the intention of ~~putting him in charge of~~ neonatal and complex paediatric cardiac surgery. *developing*

The anaesthetic department will provide four paediatric cardiac anaesthetists. The fourth post will be created after the forthcoming retirement of a senior paediatric anaesthetist.

PERCEPTIONS COLLECTED DURING THE VISIT

1. Although well intentioned, the auditing activities of the surgical results by the anaesthetic department was lacking the collaborative attitude that such a delicate endeavour would have required.
2. The *perception* surgeons' reticence to produce and analyse their own results has obviously contributed to tension and eventually conflict between the department of cardiac surgery and the department of anaesthetics, *or at least some of its members.*
3. The channel that was followed by those concerned about the problem that led to the Department of Health before professional bodies is unfortunate. Admittedly, Dr Doyle has rectified this situation in suggesting to approach the Cardiac Society or the Royal College of Surgeons.
4. The members of the anaesthetic department were unanimous in claiming that not only the mortality but the morbidity was excessive. Mortality figures will be discussed later. There was no hard data on morbidity.
5. The tension which has arisen from this long saga has created an atmosphere of distrust and lack of confidence, which have made the working conditions for the surgeons nearly untenable.