

Supplementary Statement by James D Wisheart on Issue J4

“The Retention of Tissues”

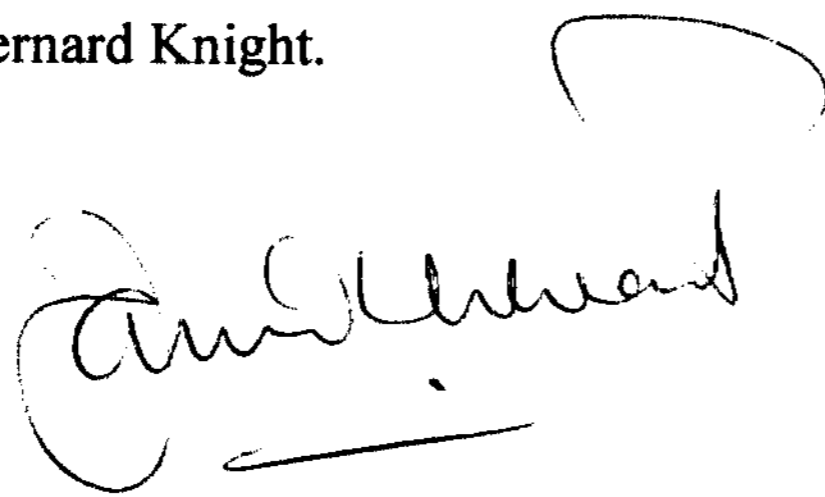
I should say that I am not now sure of the accuracy of my recollection of the detail contained in the consent forms for hospital autopsies between 1984 and 1995. In my statement in relation to J4B, “The retention of tissues”, I stated that it was not clear whether or not consent was needed and that there was very little if any guidance on this issue from the legal or ethical authorities.

Since writing the statement I have been shown a bundle of documents containing correspondence relating to this issue. They include a letter of the 6th August 1992 from Professor Berry to Mr Dhasmana which states among other things that “in future we will not be able retain the heart unless there is a signed statement in the notes from one of the doctors looking after the child, that they have satisfied themselves that the parents of the child do not object to the retention of tissue during the course of the Coroner’s post-mortem examination” .

I believe that I received a copy of a similar letter from Professor Berry at about the same time and I believe he had discussed this subject informally with me some time previously. However this was followed by a conversation later in 1992 about consent for the retention of tissue. My recollection was that this conversation was with Professor Berry but having seen my letter of 9th September 1992 to Professor Berry it is possible that the conversation was with Dr Sheffield. The burden of that conversation was that the need to obtain consent had “eased”. I should add that until the bundle was recently disclosed to me for this hearing I do not believe that I had ever seen the letter dated 24th December 1985 from the Medical Defence Union to Professor Berry or the article by Professor Bernard Knight.

Signed

Date


 16th July 1999