

Janardan Prasad Dhasmana

Response to Ms Helen Stratton's statement

I Janardan Prasad Dhasmana served the Bristol Royal Infirmary and the Children Hospital as a Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon from 1st January 1986 to 9th September 1998. I have been asked by the Inquiry to submit my comments on her statement at the paragraphs 37 and 38.

1. Paragraph 37: I do take exception to her remark that there was very strong surgical control in the unit, implying that nurses and anaesthetists did not have much say in the post-operative management of the patient. I believed in the multidisciplinary team management in the ITU and always appreciated advice, help and support from anaesthetists and nurses. Mrs Fiona Thomas has already stated this in her evidence to the Inquiry. However we were late in adopting the system of Intensivists at Bristol and our unit was a mixed unit comprising of adult and paediatric patients. Anaesthetists and nurses were changing every day and I used to find my self in a role to provide a continuity of care for my patients and similarly to work with senior nurses to make sure that paediatric patients were looked after by experienced nurses. This did put extra pressure on me and I used to make my self available in the ITU most of times. The system improved in early to mid nineties when more anaesthetists were appointed, intensivists were organised and the intensive care management was streamlined. Ms Stratton compares the system with the GOS and Birmingham, both of which are dedicated paediatric centres with every member of staff well versed in looking after children and have well established system of intensivists, especially at GOS. I am not surprised that she and new nurses noticed the difference in the management structure of ITU.
2. I am extremely disappointed that Ms Stratton did not come and raise her concerns directly to me, as quite a few patients would have been operated by me. I believe that we worked together for a period of three years and I am not aware if we had any serious disagreement during this period. I was easily approachable and was still being

called by my first name. She would have helped me by talking to me directly and raising her concerns. I am sure that she knew that I was always working to improve my self, analysing my work to the extent of being self-critical.

3. The contents of this statement are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed: Janardan Prasad Dhasmana

Date: 16 August 1999

Janardan Prasad Dhasmana

Supplementary report in response to Ms Helen Stratton's statement

I Janardan Prasad Dhasmana have already submitted my response dated 16th August 1999, to Ms Stratton's statement (WIT 0256). In view of my recent knowledge of Mr Jonathan Gibbons' statement (WIT 0142) to the Inquiry, I would like to add following to my previous submission.

1. Ms Stratton has stated in paragraphs 28-33 and 38 (pages WIT 0001-0014) that she first became concerned about the practice and results of the paediatric cardiac surgery during the second year of her term as the Cardiac Liaison Sister in the unit. At paragraph 33 she mentions that the Arterial Switch programme causing her distress starting around early 1992. I think she probably means the Neonatal Switch programme, which started in January 1992. The Arterial Switch in older children (non-neonatal) had started in 1988. Therefore, it would have been in 1992 that she was raising her concerns with members of nursing staff, including the nurse manager and Ms Leslie Salmon, the Associate General Manager, and also Mrs Jean Pratten and Dr Bolsin. This contrasts with Mr Gibbons' statement in paragraph 17 (page WIT 0142 0007), where he describes his meeting with Ms Helen Stratton; he states that "She told us how lucky we were to have Mr Dhasmana operating on our daughter. According to her, he was an eminent surgeon, and Bristol was a centre of excellence in paediatric heart surgery." This meeting would have taken place in the cardiac unit a day or two before their daughter's operation on 3rd November 1992, which is about two years into her post and well in the midst of her concerns.

Signed: Janardan Prasad Dhasmana

Date: 6th September 1999