

RESTRICTED

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I am a registered Medical Practitioner. I practised in the NHS as a Consultant Anaesthetist until July, 1987.

I joined the Department of Health in September 1989, as a 'casual' Senior Medical Officer. I was appointed to a substantive post one year later and I worked for the DoH until the end of March, 1995, when I moved to a post as a Senior Medical Officer in the Welsh Office.

As regards this statement it should be noted that, although the Secretary of State for Health has statutory responsibility for the promotion of the National Health Service in England, it is for the General Medical Council (GMC) to regulate the professional conduct of medical practitioners. Generally, the profession and the Department look to the medical Royal Colleges and other professional organisations for guidance as to appropriate clinical standards, and an NHS body - as the employer of its medical staff - is responsible for the performance by practitioners of their duties as employees. It is therefore unusual for the Department or its officers to intervene directly in issues of clinical judgment or performance, unless it appears that the appropriate agency (be it an NHS body, the GMC or some