

for trust status. I also wanted to let him know that if he was going to become the chief executive of the shadow trust he could help in resolving a potential problem in paediatric cardiac surgery.

Q In the context of the letter which ended, "I look forward to your reply, which I hope will help to persuade me of the benefits of trust status for the cardiac unit". Is that not right?

A Yes.

Q You would have been aware, would you not, that Dr Roylance's main task at that time as shadow chief executive of the shadow trust -- and I may have the terminology slightly wrong -- was the management of the process whereby the application was made and the transfer took place, assuming the application was granted?

A I was not sure exactly of the details of Dr Roylance's.... He was district general manager, I think, when I wrote to him.

Q In the penultimate paragraph of that letter you say "This..." -- by which you meant mortality in the cardiac centre of patients under one year of age -- "...as you may or may not know, is one of the highest in the country" and that the problem should be addressed. You had no statistical basis, did you, for saying it was one of the highest in the country?

A It is not a statistical statement. It says it is one of the highest in the country. It does not say it is the highest, or it is the highest by a certain amount. It is a comparative statement.

Q Clearly, either then or indeed at any other time, hospitals cannot have an identical rate of mortality. Is that right?

A It is certainly true, yes.

Q No doubt all hospitals aspire to have the lowest rate of mortality.

A Yes, and it could be possible for them all to have the same rate.

Q Bristol Royal Infirmary was a teaching hospital. Still is -- if they have such things -- is that right?

A I have not worked there for a year and a half but I think it still is, yes.

Q And as such, in all its departments let alone cardiac surgery, would aspire to be top of the tree?

A Absolutely. That was my aspiration when I went there.

Q It is right, is it not, that your letter could well convey a message of just that: an aspiration that the