

**The Bristol Royal Infirmary Inquiry**  
**Day 2**

**March 17, 1999**

[1] it, all children.  
 [2] **Q:** On her first day of admission, who was Amy seen by?  
 [3] **A:** We were seen initially by the nursing staff, and then  
 [4] later in the day we saw the anaesthetist who was to  
 [5] carry out the operation.  
 [6] **Q:** What did he explain to you?  
 [7] **A:** He really explained the anaesthetic procedure: that she  
 [8] would be taken down - well, she would be given a drink,  
 [9] a sort of pre-med drink early in morning, and then taken  
 [10] down to the operating theatre.  
 [11] **Q:** Was there any discussion of risks or side effects of the  
 [12] anaesthetic?  
 [13] **A:** I cannot remember, to be quite honest.  
 [14] **Q:** Did you see Mr Wisheart at any time before the operation  
 [15] took place?  
 [16] **A:** Yes, we saw him on that day, on the Friday as well.  
 [17] **Q:** What happened then?  
 [18] **A:** He came to Amy's bed and again, he ran through what the  
 [19] operation entailed and what he was going to do. He also  
 [20] mentioned that the narrow tube possibly, if it was too  
 [21] narrow, he may have to put a patch into it, to widen it,  
 [22] and he explained, really going over what he had been  
 [23] through before, that he was going to close the holes and  
 [24] that sort of thing.  
 [25] **Q:** Did he say how long the operation would take?

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[1] she would be on drugs after the operation, sort of  
 [2] intensive care, there would be heart drugs and such.  
 [3] **Q:** Were you shown around the ITU itself that Amy would be  
 [4] taken back to?  
 [5] **A:** Yes. Yes, we were shown around there. I believe that  
 [6] was the night before her operation.  
 [7] **Q:** Who performed that exercise?  
 [8] **A:** It was Helen Strachan, the cardiac liaison sister.  
 [9] **Q:** What did you understand her role was?  
 [10] **A:** I understood she was actually employed by the Children's  
 [11] Heart Circle, which is a charity and her role really was  
 [12] to sort of help parents through the ordeal, really, to  
 [13] liaise with the parents and the hospital staff.  
 [14] **Q:** Was that a helpful exercise, being shown around the ITU?  
 [15] **A:** Yes, it was.  
 [16] **Q:** Why?  
 [17] **A:** I think it really prepared us for the shock of seeing  
 [18] Amy with all the tubes and pipes and everything coming  
 [19] out of her, so at least we knew what to expect the  
 [20] following day.  
 [21] **Q:** So the following day was when the operation took place?  
 [22] **A:** Yes.  
 [23] **Q:** What happened?  
 [24] **A:** Amy was taken down early in the morning, about half 7,  
 [25] 8 o'clock, and we went down with her to the anaesthetic

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[1] **A:** I believe he said about three or four hours.  
 [2] **Q:** Was there any discussion of the risks attached to the  
 [3] operation?  
 [4] **A:** Yes. I mean, again, we discussed the, I suppose the  
 [5] mortality rate, the 95 per cent figure. He also  
 [6] mentioned the risks concerned with going on to the  
 [7] bypass machine, that it could affect other organs in the  
 [8] body.  
 [9] **Q:** Such as?  
 [10] **A:** Such as the kidneys and the brain may be affected  
 [11] because the blood was being pumped through a machine  
 [12] rather than by the heart.  
 [13] **Q:** Were you told anything about how likely any possible  
 [14] brain damage might be?  
 [15] **A:** No. I mean - no, he did not put a figure on it.  
 [16] **Q:** What about the possibility of any future surgery, was  
 [17] that discussed?  
 [18] **A:** Yes. He said that sometimes with this problem, as the  
 [19] children grow up into to their teens, they may need  
 [20] further correction. I am not sure why. Perhaps they  
 [21] grow out of the changes that are being made to the  
 [22] heart.  
 [23] **Q:** What about the question of any drugs that Amy might  
 [24] need? Was that discussed?  
 [25] **A:** I cannot remember at that stage, actually. But we knew

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[1] room, and left her there for the operation.  
 [2] **Q:** Where had you been staying that night?  
 [3] **A:** The previous night, my wife actually stayed in the ward  
 [4] with Amy, by her bedside and I think I was in a hostel  
 [5] up the road.  
 [6] **Q:** So whilst the operation took place, what did you do?  
 [7] **A:** We actually came into Bristol, looked around the shops  
 [8] for a couple of hours, just really to try and take our  
 [9] minds off it.  
 [10] **Q:** Was that your own idea?  
 [11] **A:** I think Helen Strachan sort of suggested that we go  
 [12] somewhere and sort of at least go for a walk, to try  
 [13] and - not just sit in hospital, waiting, as such.  
 [14] **Q:** So how did you find out when the operation had finished?  
 [15] **A:** Well, we went back to the hospital, I believe about half  
 [16] past 10, and we saw Helen Strachan there, and really,  
 [17] she sat with us in the - there was like a common room  
 [18] there. She sat with us there, really waiting for news,  
 [19] how the operation had gone. I believe she phoned down  
 [20] to theatre a couple of times just to find out how it was  
 [21] going.  
 [22] **Q:** So when did you first see Amy?  
 [23] **A:** I believe it was about sort of lunchtime, we saw her in  
 [24] ITU.  
 [25] **Q:** Was that where she had been the previous night?

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