

March 17, 1999

[1] it was not hers and she did not like white on Mia, but
 [2] any event she picked her up and cuddled her. Helen
 [3] took a photograph and said that if we didn't want it,
 [4] that was okay, but if we did, we were to ring her. She
 [5] also took a small lock of her hair and took a hand and
 [6] foot print. She then left us with Mia. After a short
 [7] time, she returned and said that it was best if we went
 [8] home. We actually said we would prefer to stay in the
 [9] little room at the hospital, and I think in all honesty
 [10] it was because we did not want to leave Mia. In
 [11] addition, we were both exhausted, confused and terribly
 [12] distressed. We had no sleep the night before and for my
 [13] part, I hoped to stay and talk about the operation and
 [14] say goodbye to Mia in my own time and in my own way.
 [15] I know that Leen felt the same thing, but wanted to
 [16] express and say goodbyes in a different way.

[17] **Q:** The junk room, you say it was not a junk room, it was
 [18] something more than that, was it?

[19] **A:** There was, you know, medical equipment as such, tissues
 [20] and boxes and a settee in there, such that it was
 [21] a general purpose room, very small.

[22] **Q:** And there were just, what, the three of you?

[23] **A:** The three of us, yes, and Mia.

[24] **Q:** Can you help us with the room: was it one which had
 [25] a window high up in the wall, do you remember?

Page 85

[1] a room with, you know, like catering facilities at the
 [2] other side of the ward. If you go to the cross
 [3] corridor, it was opposite, across the corridor, which
 [4] I presume is what people were calling the family room.
 [5] We were not shown this room before.

[6] **Q:** The room you had been in before, the room with the
 [7] kitchen: were other families or parents using it?

[8] **A:** At that time, the actual whole ward was very quiet as
 [9] far as we were concerned. We did not really talk or see
 [10] any other patients. There were patients in there when
 [11] we were first admitted, but they all left.

[12] **Q:** So I suppose, really, the use of the family room would
 [13] depend on who was admitted during the day?

[14] **A:** Yes. We did not actually use the family room, or what
 [15] I would say was the kitchen as such. We did not use any
 [16] of those facilities. We were not there long enough.

[17] **Q:** If you were going to say your goodbyes to Mia properly,
 [18] you would need to be there on your own, would you not?

[19] **A:** I must say, at that time, one could say we were not
 [20] stable, but we were, you know, put on our heels in the
 [21] aspect of the room itself, because it was so small, and
 [22] messy, and it seemed to me, and I can visualise the
 [23] room, as I say, I can describe where it is, that it was
 [24] a junk room with a settee in it.

[25] **Q:** The question I think that I am asking you, to invite

Page 87

[1] **A:** If you went down the ward towards the Intensive Care
 [2] Unit, it would be two-thirds of the way down on the
 [3] right. The Intensive Care is on the left.

[4] **Q:** The Trust in their comments on your statement have
 [5] suggested this is probably the relatives' room which had
 [6] a settee and did not normally have any other furniture
 [7] apart from easy chairs?

[8] **A:** There would not have been room for easy chairs. The
 [9] settee would fill a considerable - it was a small
 [10] room. There was not much room. There was, if you like,
 [11] stock in that room.

[12] **Q:** When you say extraneous items: stock?

[13] **A:** Tissues, boxes, bandages, big plastic bags.

[14] **Q:** So it gave the impression of being a room that was used
 [15] for more than one purpose?

[16] **A:** Our impression is that it was a junk room with a settee
 [17] in there. It was a small room. If that is the family
 [18] room, well.

[19] **Q:** You were going to go on and say, well -

[20] **A:** If that is what they call a family room, so be it.

[21] **Q:** You did not think a lot of it?

[22] **A:** No. We had not seen or been shown that room before.

[23] **Q:** Had you been shown any room to wait in before?

[24] **A:** When I heard mentioned recently the family room,
 [25] I presumed that was where the kitchen was. There was

Page 86

[1] your comment, really, is this: that if there is a family
 [2] room with a kitchen where families may go, there is
 [3] something public about it?

[4] **A:** Yes.

[5] **Q:** You found it distressing, quite understandably, to be
 [6] told of Mia's death in a small ward shared with another
 [7] parent?

[8] **A:** Yes. In ward 5A we were told of her death.

[9] **Q:** You wanted to say your goodbyes to Mia, and Helen
 [10] Strachan can speak for herself, but it may very well
 [11] have been she thought you would be better doing that
 [12] privately, so you could express your private grief and
 [13] goodbyes?

[14] **A:** Yes, sir.

[15] **Q:** There must be a limit on the number of large
 [16] well-equipped rooms which can be made private in a busy
 [17] hospital, perhaps?

[18] **A:** Yes, there would be.

[19] **Q:** So your complaint about it, really, is the impact on
 [20] you, is it?

[21] **A:** The day started wrong and finished worse. The events
 [22] that followed the announcement of her death, which meant
 [23] we had to go into the corridor, it was just rolling on
 [24] in a chaotic fashion, and then, to go into this room,
 [25] which, to me was not an appropriate room, and even at

Page 88