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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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Dear Giani

It was a great pleasure to meet you on Tuesday. From my point of view the meeting was extremely helpful. I was very grateful for the time and consideration shown to me by all present.

It is with some regret that I have to write to you on an entirely different matter. It has recently been brought to my attention that there are concerns about the mortality rates for paediatric, especially neonatal and infant, cardiac surgery performed at the BRI. I further understand that some sort of audit has been carried out which confirms a greater than expected mortality rate for certain procedures.

I am sure you will agree this is a matter for very great concern. If the position proves to be as reported to me, the excess deaths are in themselves a tragedy. If the problem has been recognised and adequate remedial steps have not been taken, it becomes an unacceptable tragedy.

I recognise that audit remains a professional matter and it is therefore for the profession to act in the first instance. I trust steps are being taken, therefore, to remedy any problems that have been identified. I trust that any future audit will clearly demonstrate that BRI's performance is comparable to that of any other cardiac centre in the UK.

If there is a problem and, for any reason, you are not able to reassure me that it has been resolved, the circumstances are such that I would be obliged to seek the help of colleagues in the Performance Management Directorate who would doubtless raise the matter formally with the Trust. It is highly likely that some sort of formal enquiry would follow.