

Witness Statement Ref. No.

106/1

NAME OF CHILD: Adam Strain

Name: Peter Shaw

Title: Mr

Present position and institution: Retired

Previous position(s) and institution(s): Medical Technical Officer
[As at the time of the child's death] Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children

Membership of Advisory Panels and Committees:
[Identify by date and title all of those between January 1995-December 2010]

Other Statements, Depositions and Reports:
[Identify by date and title all those made in relation to the child's death]

OFFICIAL USE:
List of previous statements, depositions and reports attached (*):

Ref:	Date:	
093-014	02.05.06	PSNI Witness Statement

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANSWERING:

Please attach additional sheets if more space is required. Please identify clearly any document to which you refer or rely upon for your answer. If the document has an Inquiry reference number, e.g. Ref: 049-001-001 which is 'Chart No.1 Old Notes', then please provide that number. If the document does not have such a number then please provide a copy of the document.

I QUERIES ARISING OUT OF YOUR PSNI WITNESS STATEMENT

With reference to your PSNI Witness Statement dated 2nd May 2006 (Ref: 093-014-045), please provide clarification and/or further information in respect of the following:

(1) *"I am now retired but in November 1995 I was employed in the Royal Group of Hospitals as a Medical Technical Officer. My duties were to check all operating equipment, such as lights, monitors, anaesthetic machines, operating tables. I assisted in positioning the patients on the tables, and I assisted in setting up the theatre for an operation. During the operation my role was to assist the anaesthetists in their duties and if needed to act as a second runner. I have 27 years experience in that role, commencing in 1978."*

(a) Describe exactly what was involved in your role of *"to assist the anaesthetists in their duties"* during Adam's transplant surgery.

Apart from the duties I have already described, my role was to comply with any request from the anaesthetist during the operation. I have checked the information made available on the Inquiry's website but I am unable to find the information on the anaesthetic machine used during the operation which would inform me as to some of the duties and responsibilities which I might have had to perform. Unfortunately despite my best efforts I cannot now recall the machine used or the duties I was asked to perform.

(b) State the time at which you would have arrived at the operating theatre to *"check all operating equipment, such as lights, monitors, anaesthetic machines, operating tables"* in time for the scheduled start of Adam's transplant surgery at 7.00am on 27th November 1995

I can only rely on the evidence of my line manager that I was present during the operation. I have no personal recollection of being present. If I was on duty or on call, it would have been my usual practice to be in attendance upwards of two hours before the operation commenced.

(c) Describe and explain your role during surgery generally and Adam's transplant surgery in particular in:

- setting up pressure transducer systems
- zeroing, calibrating and replacing pressure transducers
- taking blood samples from an indwelling arterial or venous catheter

I have already described the procedure to the police. I would emphasise that I cannot recall being present during Adam's surgery and also:

- (i) setting up blood pressure transducer systems is done prior to surgery commencing.
- (ii) the zeroing etc of pressure transducers is also done and set up before surgery commences.
- (iii) The taking of blood samples is a matter for the anaesthetist.

(d) State whether you acted as "second runner" during Adam's renal transplant surgery and if so:

- explain what is involved in the role of "a second runner"
- describe what you actually did in that capacity

The term "first runner" refers to the person who was present during surgery and primarily assisted the scrub nurse in obtaining additional items required by the surgeon during the course of an operation. The first runner also counted along with the scrub nurse and noted the swabs used during the operation. The first runner is always a qualified nurse.

I would only act as second runner when the first runner had gone to obtain something at the request of the scrub nurse. I have no recollection of what I did as second runner during Adam's operation or indeed having actually performed that function.

(e) State whether on 27th November 1995 you knew how to use a blood gas machine to measure blood gases and electrolytes, and whether you were trained and authorised to do so

On the 27th November 1995 I knew how to use a blood gas machine and was trained and authorised to do so.

(f) Describe and explain who, in the course of paediatric surgery, would normally transport blood samples from the operating theatre for:

- laboratory analysis and/or
- analysis by the nearest blood gas machine

If there was a blood gas analyser in the Intensive Care Unit on the 27th November 1995 I would have taken the sample to the Analyser and brought the printout to the anaesthetist. However I cannot recall if there was such a machine in the unit at that date. If not the sample would have been taken by me or available personnel to the Labs.

(g) Identify the person(s) who, during Adam's surgery, took the blood sample(s) for analysis by the blood gas machine and/or laboratory.

Unfortunately, although I have tried my best I cannot recall if I or some other person took the samples.

(h) State how, in 1995, blood tests results would have been communicated from the laboratory to the theatre and how long the laboratory analysis of the blood sample and reporting back of the results to theatre would typically have taken:

- during normal working hours
- out of hours

The results from the Labs would take a timescale that I cannot give, but the results would be phoned through to the appropriate theatre and taken down by the anaesthetist, with a printed copy to follow.

(2) *"I cannot specifically recall being present during that operation but I have been informed by Tommy Ryan, my line manager, that he has checked the notes and that I was on duty that day, but [sic] that I mean I was on call and therefore would have been called in for an operation commencing at 0700 hours ... I can recall nothing specifically. I cannot remember specifically any issues arising about blood gas result, CVP, quantities of fluid administered, or of Adam failing to revive at the end of the operation ... I have no recollection of the identities of the medical staff involved in this operation"*

(a) State the times at which you were on duty over the period from Adam's admission on 26th November 1995 to his transfer to PICU on 27th November 1995

I cannot recall these times.

(b) Identify the "notes" that your line manager Tommy Ryan "checked" and produce a copy of them

I do not know what notes Tommy Ryan checked. All I can think of is that Tommy Ryan checked the MTOs' rota for that date and time.

(c) State the time at which you were "called in for" Adam's "operation commencing at 0700 hours" and identify the person by whom you were "called in"

I do not know when I was called in for Adam's operation or the identity of the person who called me.

(d) Describe and explain your responsibilities at the end of the surgery, including in terms of the equipment and the theatre

My responsibilities would have been to clean and check all the machinery and generally make sure that the machinery is ready for the next operation. The entire operating theatre would be cleaned exhaustively and the machines checked and replenished and left in full working order.

(e) State the time at which you left the operating theatre

I do not know when I left the operating theatre. Typically it would have been between one and two hours after the operation concluded.

(f) State if, at any time during the procedure, there was any other MTO in attendance and if so, identify them

I cannot recall if any other MTO was in attendance but it would be usual for only one MTO to be in attendance during an operation.

(g) Describe the atmosphere amongst the staff in the operating theatre at the end of the surgery

I cannot recall anything of Adam's operation but typically the staff would have been exhausted after a long and complex operation.

(3) "I can recall one or two transducers being discarded at the zeroing stage and very infrequently during the operation. In these cases I installed a new transducer. It was correct practice in such cases to send a faulty transducer back to the manufacturer, and to inform your line manager"

(a) State the number of transducers that were discarded during Adam's transplant operation, when that happened, why and confirm the number of new transducers

I cannot recall if any transducers were discarded during Adam's operation.

(b) State who took the decision to replace the transducer(s)

In ordinary procedures the decision to replace a transducer is taken by the anaesthetist.

(c) State whether you informed your line manager of the discarding of transducers and the installation of new transducers and if so:

- when and
- by what means

I cannot recall if any transducers were discarded

(d) State whether you sent any of those "faulty" transducers (in relation to Adam's transplant surgery) back to the manufacturer and if so:

- identify the manufacturer concerned
- state when and how many "faulty" transducers were sent back to the manufacturer and where that would be recorded

I cannot recall if any transducers were discarded by me. As a matter of routine procedure, the discarding of transducers would have been reported to Tommy Ryan, my line manager (verbally) but I cannot say if any such report was made following Adam's operation.

II ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

(4) Identify any 'Protocols' and/or 'Guidelines' which governed your conduct in relation to Adam's renal transplant surgery

I have set out the usual procedure in my police statement but I cannot recall specific detail of Adam's operation.

(5) Provide any further points and comments that you wish to make, together with any documents, in relation to:

(a) The care and treatment of Adam from his admission for the renal transplant surgery on 26th November 1995 to his death on 28th November 1995

(b) Record keeping

(c) Lessons learned from Adam's death and its effect on your work

(d) Any other relevant matter

I have been retired since 2005. I regret to say that I cannot add anything further in respect of Adam's operation.


(6) Identify precisely any entries in notes/records that you made or signed in relation to Adam and state below:

(a) when you made/signed them

(b) the source of the information recorded in any entry you made

I am not aware that I made or signed any notes or records in relation to Adam.

THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

Signed: 

Dated: 8-4-2011