

Witness statement of SUSAN BROOKS (read)

MR DRIVER: I wonder if I can invite Mr Murphy to put on screen the nursing notes that Mr Astbury sent him earlier this morning during the course of the reading of this statement, because the maker of this statement is the author of those notes.

Her statement is dated 2 April 2019. It reads as follows:

"I qualified from Chester University in 2008 as a registered midwife with a diploma in midwifery. Prior to this date I had been a student between 2005 and 2008 at Chester, and I have worked there since this time.

"In 2015 I was on my rotation to the antenatal and post-natal ward, which is ward 32, and at this point I was a band 6 midwife. I have been asked to provide an account detailing my involvement on 3 August 2015 with a patient named [Mother of Babies E & F].

"Prior to my interview, I have accessed the relevant medical records for this patient. These notes have assisted with my recollection of events during that time.

"There would have been two midwives working the night shift, which commenced on 3 August 2015, and I would have been the shift leader. I would have started my shift at 20.00 hours and this would have

ended at 8.30 hours the following morning. [Mother of Babies E & F] was one of the patients I was allocated to look after during this night shift.

"My responsibilities in my working role include ensuring that the patients are post-natally well, both physically and providing any emotional support that is needed.

"On 3 August 2015, in my patient care notes, I have written..."

And I'm now going to read from her statement which reflects the contents of those patient care notes that you can see on screen, members of the jury.

So the notes read:

"Care since 2000 hours. [Mother of Babies E & F] was post-natally well. I had given her some medication and she asked me to let her know if there was any contact overnight from neonatal unit as one of the twins had deteriorated slightly at that time.

"Then at 23.30, I have recorded in my notes that I had a call from the neonatal unit to ask if [Mother of Babies E & F] could go down in 30 minutes as [Baby E] had a bleed and required intubating and that he was very poorly.

"At 23.50 I have recorded that [Mother of Babies E & F] was obviously very distressed and wanted to go to the NNU straightaway. So I asked Stephanie to ring to see if that was okay whilst I continued providing support to [Mother of Babies E & F]."

MR JUSTICE GOSS: Just pausing there, that Stephanie was a midwife colleague.

MR DRIVER: Yes?

MR JUSTICE GOSS: That part hasn't been read from the statement, but just so you know who Stephanie is.

MR DRIVER: I'm grateful, my Lord:

"[She] asked her colleague Stephanie to ring to see if it was okay for [Mother of Babies E & F] to go down immediately whilst I continued providing support to [Mother of Babies E & F]. I felt that she needed to go down straightaway and be with her baby. She was crying and was desperately upset. I thought this 30-minute wait was unreasonable and I made the decision to take [Mother of Babies E & F] to the NNU as it didn't sit comfortably with me.

"I have recorded that at midnight I took [Mother of Babies E & F] down to the neonatal unit and I do remember doing this and that her husband, [Father of Babies E & F], was on his way to the hospital. I think that I spoke to [Father of Babies E & F] during a phone call as [Mother of Babies E & F] was so upset, but I can't recall any more detail in relation to the content of that call.

"The neonatal unit is only a five-minute walk from the labour unit and presumably [Mother of Babies E & F] and I would have taken the lift and I would have used my pass to gain access to the NNU. When we arrived at the neonatal unit, they made us wait in the corridor and [Mother of Babies E & F] sat on a chair opposite nursery 1 where the twins were.

"A female nurse approached us and told us we had to wait and I just remember trying to get [Mother of Babies E & F] through those minutes before she was allowed to see [Baby E]. After spending around 10 minutes with [Mother of Babies E & F], she was allowed into the nursery and I handed over her care to my NNU colleagues. I then returned to the labour ward where I continued to care for my other patients.

"I have been read a small extract from a statement provided by [Mother of Babies E & F], whereby [Mother of Babies E & F] describes being upset following her visit to the NNU and her telling me what had happened when she returned to my ward. I cannot recall any specific conversation taking place and I have not been provided with any details by [the relevant police officer] as to any event which took place while [Mother of Babies E & F] was in the NNU.

"My only reference to this entry is in my notes documented at 20.00 hours when [Mother of Babies E & F] has asked to be notified of any contact overnight from the NNU due to the deterioration of one of the twins."

That concludes the relevant parts of that midwife's notes and statement.

MR JUSTICE GOSS: Yes, thank you.