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Toft Report

HL Deb 22 June 2004 vol 662 c58WS58WS

§The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Lord Warner)

My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health (Miss Melanie Johnson) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement today.

In July 2002, the Government's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, commissioned Professor Brian Toft to investigate the circumstances surrounding four adverse events that had occurred in the reproductive medicine units at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. This followed reports of a mix-up in treatment that led to mixed-race twins being born to a white couple.

Professor Toft's report is published today. He concludes that a mixture of inadvertent human error and systems failure was involved.

He makes a number of recommendations for the trust, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the department. He also recognises that significant progress has already been made to address the issues his recommendations raise.

Responses by the trust, the HFEA and the department to the recommendations directed specifically at them are also published today.

The Government recognise fully the distress that these mistakes and failings have caused to patients and their families, and the importance of ensuring that lessons are learnt to minimise the likelihood of them happening again. We are grateful to Professor Tort for a thorough investigation, and welcome his report.

Copies of Professor Toft's report and the responses to it by the trust, the HFEA and the department have been placed in the Library.

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