

**Dr Colin Northcote**  
**Consultant Anaesthetist (in theatre)**

“I was the consultant anaesthetist doing the case on that fateful day. As usual I was there in plenty of time to see the patient. Also as usual, however, the notes weren’t there on time. It’s typical for this hospital. And I know there is no point in waiting on them so I just had a quick chat with the patient and decided I was happy to proceed. We always do moan about not getting the notes on time, and no-one seems to listen, and nothing seems to change, so most of us have decided that if the patient has gone through pre-op were probably just okay to crack on.

Paul was running late again, and so I just got the patient into the anaesthetic room and put them to sleep. Abbie had been moaning about not over-running again, and she had to pick up her kids from school or something, so.... And Paul seemed to have a new registrar and she positioned the patient on the table – so she was really responsible for checking the side. I suspect Paul will get the blame though.

I had to chide her on a bit [*tell her harshly*] to get going, but we had the patient positioned when eventually Paul did appear. The patient had desaturated when the drapes were putting on, so I had to attend to that while the surgical team did their checklist thing. Obviously, someone wasn’t paying attention, or surely they would have noticed they were meant to be taking out the other kidney.

The operation itself seemed fine and the anaesthesia was second to none – just a pity it was the wrong side.”

Notes:

- **Desaturation** refers to a decrease in the level of oxygen saturation in the blood.