

Mr Paul Black
Surgeon (in theatre)

“I’m still really struggling to come to terms with this to be honest. I have read about wrong side surgery being carried out in other hospitals. But you always think it can’t happen to you. And then it does.

I’m usually so careful. I was running late. We were under pressure to get the case finished. We had a lack of staff in theatres as well. The patient was on the table when I got into theatre. The checklist had been done and we were good to go.

I usually check the images in theatre. I wasn’t able to. The computer system was down. I checked the clinic note. That said left hand side. I checked the radiology report. That said left hand side. And I checked the consent for operation and it also said left hand side. And the patient was positioned for the left hand side. And I just...it didn’t occur to me at all that it wouldn’t be. I just thought that sort of colossal mistake would have been noticed by someone...but obviously not.”

Notes:

- In the UK and some other Commonwealth countries, surgeons are traditionally addressed as "Mr" or "Miss" rather than "Dr," as is the case in many other parts of the world. This tradition dates back several centuries and has historical roots in the development of the medical profession.