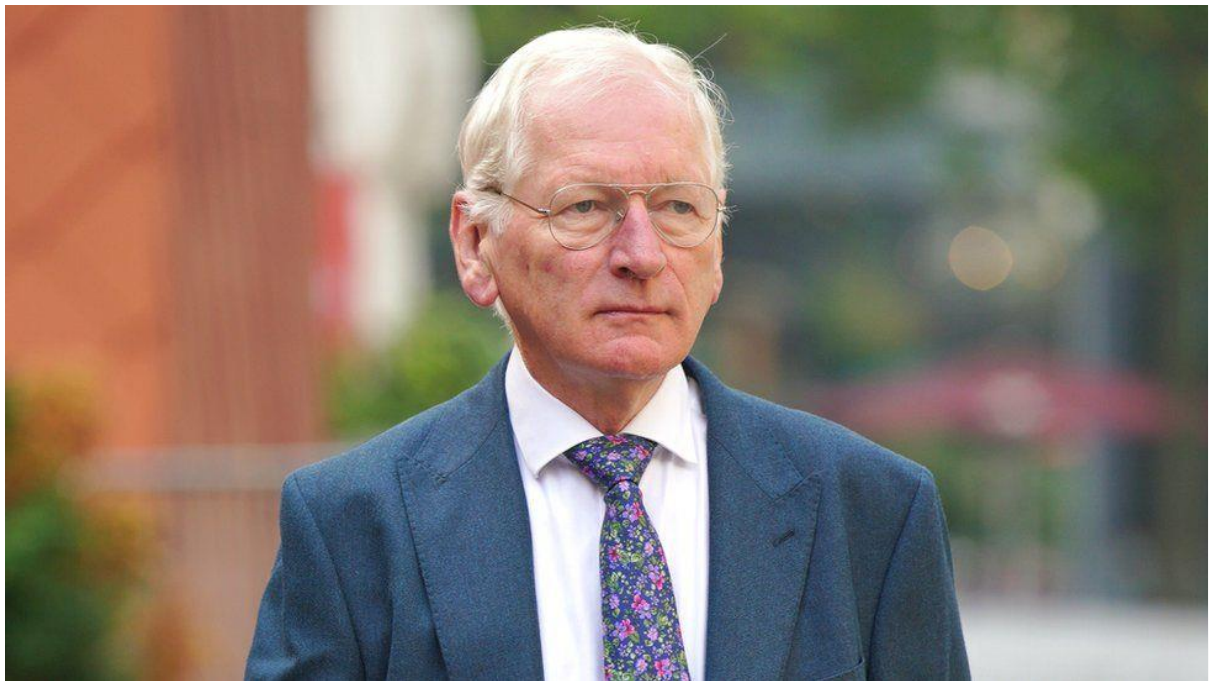


'I still can't believe it': The Welshman at the center of the Letby case

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On Monday, 21 August, a 33-year-old nurse was sentenced to prison for the rest of her life for murdering seven babies in her care at a hospital in Chester.

Lucy Letby is also guilty of attempting to murder six other babies at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

One of the prosecution's main witnesses in the case was the specialist pediatrician from Wales, Dr Dewi Evans, who has been a consultant in the field since 1980. Dr Evans had been working on the Letby case for six years, and he spoke about his experience on the **Over Breakfast program on BBC Radio Cymru on Tuesday morning, 22 August** .

"I met with the Chester Police in May, 2017, and at the time no one had told me that they had named anyone in the case," he said. "And even more of a challenge, no one had seen someone do something outrageous. So, all the police had was hearing that a number of babies had died or become ill very quickly without any explanation. "So, what I did was to say to the police 'bring the clinical information about every baby that died from January 2015 and June 2016', and [I] looked at the notes.

"Obviously there was an explanation for a number of the deaths because unfortunately you have to lose a few babies in a hospital, but there were 15 babies where there were doubts about what had happened."

'Insulin poisoning'

"Some months later I discovered that two of the babies had been poisoned by insulin. No one had noticed this before I saw these notes.

"So, after doing that the police had 15 and then 17 cases. I told the police that they had to look at the rota of which nurse and which doctor was on duty the minute this happened - because if you create an injury for a baby the baby is going to deteriorate very quickly.

"After looking at the first four cases, there was only one nurse on duty for the four cases, namely Lucy Letby, and she was on duty on 17 of the cases. So, for the first time we had contact between a baby deteriorating or dying, and one individual.

"And from then on Chester Police questioned her and got more and more evidence until the case came to court last year.

"It's impossible to believe it, and I still can't believe it. I have no explanation why she would have done something like that, other than that she claimed total control of some sort, and that she as we say in Sir Gâr, 'off her head'."

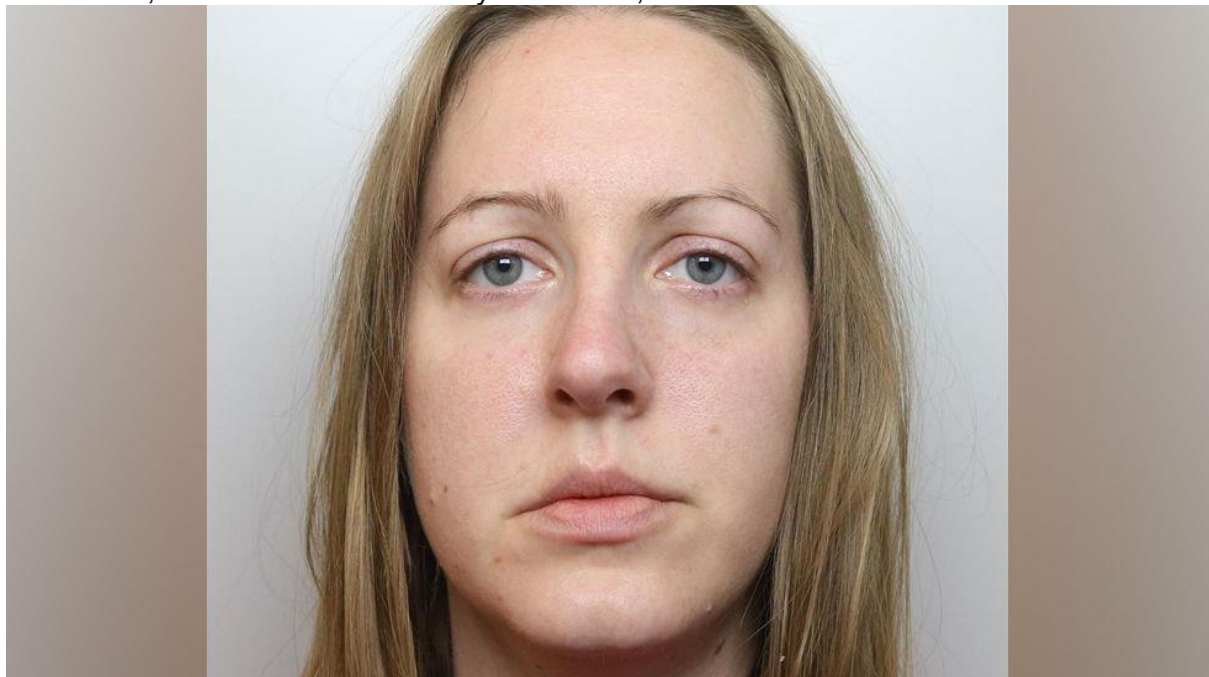


IMAGE SOURCE, CHESHIRE POLICE

Description of the picture,

Lucy Letby heard on Monday, 21 August, that she will be jailed for the rest of her life. When discussing Letby's colleagues, Dr Evans acknowledges that the case is likely to have affected them, but he is also full of admiration.

"I'm sure it (has affected them), but my experience of working from such a unit over 30 years is that the staff you have in a baby unit are of the highest possible standard.

And in this hospital in Chester it was clear that the doctors and nurses and the service in general were of a high standard, missing out on almost any baby. "The treatment the babies were receiving, before Lucy Letby disrupted everything, was of a high standard. The standard of service for newborns in Britain is generally very high, it is important to say that."

'Completely negligent managers'

Dr Evans believes that changes are needed to the health systems, and that there are big questions that need to be answered after the events in Chester.

"Without a doubt the managers have been completely negligent in this case, and without a doubt because of their failures it has led to more deaths that would not have happened. I believe that this is something that is more than just being negligent - I believe it rises to the level of a crime.

"There is something called *corporate manslaughter*, now existing in England and Wales. I am not a lawyer of course, and this is a matter for the police and the criminal system, but if any organization is so negligent and doesn't take notice of something dangerous and causing trouble, and that leads to death, I believe you should then look at that system and the people who work in it on a criminal level."



IMAGE SOURCE,PA MEDIA

Description of the picture,

The hospital and the local health board are facing questions as to why Letby was not suspected sooner

Is it necessary to regulate Health Service managers as a result of this? "Without a doubt," said Dr Evans.

"The managers of the Health Service in England and Wales have also been controlling for years. They are very autocratic and behave like little *dictators* , they ignore medical opinion."

Like 'living in the Soviet Union'

So, why does Dr Evans believe that managers like this work in the health service? "Because they can, it's that simple."

"What you have in the health service is a dictatorial system where the chairman of the health board is appointed by politicians. The chairman then appoints other members of the board, which are political appointments, who then appoint a chief executive , and all the way down."

"So, the system is something I believe anyone who lived in the Soviet Union would understand very well."

"That's what's happening - they're completely out of control, and I'm sorry to say that people I know, like doctors and consultants, have lost their jobs because they challenged our management, and of course the health service is a monopoly so if you lose your jobs in Wales or Britain, that's the end of your career unless you're willing to go work abroad."

"How in heaven can something like this happen? This is something very unusual. But in terms of system, things don't work and there are problems in every department, in every hospital where there is a lack and negligence in terms of how we are looking after patients."

"And if you make a complaint and say that the system is not good enough (the *whistleblowers*) there is a risk of losing jobs, as their feelings are a threat to the managers who want to keep things quiet."



IMAGE SOURCE, CHESHIRE POLICE

Description of the picture,

Inside the neonatal unit at the Countess of Chester Hospital

A system to look at complaints

Dr Evans believes that there should be a clear and definite structure to be able to make complaints about defects in the system.

"The message here for me is that the health service systems are not effective. There are some dangers because everyone in a hospital is sick, for one reason or another, and I believe we recognize that if someone makes a complaint about an individual there is a system in place to look at it in more detail. My concern about the health service is that there is no way for the public to look into something they I think you've gone wrong.

"I'm very sorry to hear that this year Senedd Cymru got rid of our health community councils - at least those had some kind of authority, and getting rid of them is a bad move in my opinion."

But despite any shortcomings, when discussing the care that doctors and nurses give to children, Dr Evans is proud that the specialty is better than ever.

"I started as a consultant in 1980, and had to build an intensive care service from scratch because the resources weren't available, and the experience wasn't available, not just in Swansea but rather anywhere to tell the truth, so things are has improved over a period of decades. These units we have are safe and with very good quality nurses and doctors."

Acting chief executive of the Countess of Chester Hospital, Jane Tomkinson, said the trust "welcomes the announcement of an independent investigation by the Department of Health and Social Care."

"Also, the trust will support an ongoing investigation by Cheshire Police," said Ms Tomkinson.

"Due to legal issues that are currently going on, it would not be appropriate for the trust to make any further comment at this time."

- **Lucy Letby jailed for life for murdering seven babies**
- **Nurse Lucy Letby convicted of murdering seven babies**