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A surgeon was flagged as dangerous — she kept operating for ten years

Despite a 2016 review that identified problems with the work of Kuldeep Stohr, a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon, a manager denied there was anything wrong



Kuldeep Stohr was a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon at Addenbrooke's Hospital

Shaun Lintern, Health Editor

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Hospital bosses were warned about an NHS surgeon almost nine years before she was eventually suspended over botched operations on children.

A joint investigation by The Sunday Times and Sky News has discovered a confidential report written for managers at Cambridge University Hospitals Trust in 2016 that identified problems with the surgical technique and practice of Kuldeep Stohr, a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon.

A series of recommendations were made in the report but Stohr was allowed to continue operating. Managers at the hospital told staff the investigation into Stohr had not raised any concerns.

Almost a decade on, Stohr has been suspended by the trust after a new review identified at least nine children whose care “fell below the standard” expected. The trust has begun a review of 800 other patients, including around 560 children, 140 adults and 100 emergency patients, who were operated on by Stohr. It has also commissioned an investigation into what action was taken after the 2016 report.

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Work on the that report began in 2015 when colleagues working with Stohr in the trust’s orthopaedic department raised serious concerns about her safety and practice. These included allegations of causing serious harm to children by carrying out operations incorrectly. The trust asked [Rob Hill](#), a specialist child orthopaedic surgeon at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, to examine the claims.

In his final report, seen by The Sunday Times, Hill highlights a number of areas of concern. In one case he describes a “technical error” with a pelvic osteotomy — in which the pelvic bone is cut to reshape the hip socket.

He also highlighted the fact that Stohr was not ordering CT scans of patients after surgery to check the bone positions. He found one case where a child who had been injured in a car accident was left with a broken arm for 11 days after Stohr failed to spot it. And he questioned some decisions Stohr had made and told bosses he was concerned about a “divided department”.

While he did accept some of the cases were difficult and complex, he said there were “issues to be addressed”.

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After the review a letter sent by the deputy medical director, John Firth, and since shared between staff at the trust, said: “I consider that these cases have been

properly investigated and am reassured that there is no concern about Kuldeep's practice."

Last year, after Stohr was absent from the trust for "personal reasons", colleagues began treating some of her patients and realised fresh concerns.

A new review by James Hunter, a surgeon and the national clinical leader for paediatric trauma and orthopaedics at NHS England, found "issues with technical performance of procedures, practice pathways and judgment" by Stohr. He also found she was not ordering scans and imaging of some patients after surgery. Hunter recommended "formal retraining" for Stohr, particularly regarding pelvic osteotomy procedures which he said "she appears to find difficult".

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Nicola Mulhausen complained to the trust about her son Oliver's care in April 2019, three years after Stohr had been cleared by the hospital, claiming he had been left in constant pain for 20 months.

Oliver, now seven, was born in August 2017 with severe deformities of both feet. But his mother claims Stohr would not operate and that the surgeon told her a year after Oliver's birth to "leave it in the hands of God".



Oliver Mulhausen was left with deformed feet after Kuldeep Stohr allegedly told his mother to “leave it in the hands of God”

In response to her complaint, documents show Stohr offered the family an apology for failures in communication and while she said she did not remember saying those words she accepted using similar phrases with families. The trust said Stohr

apologised for any offence her comment caused, was not aware it could be taken in a negative way and would look for a new phrase in the future.

Mulhausen said: “I’ve been told that if she had done something sooner or even attempted to do something sooner then he probably would have stood a bit better chance than what he’s currently going through.”

She feels her complaint was “brushed under the carpet”, adding the hospital trust “needs to be held accountable because they have also failed everyone as well — for not listening to the people that were making the complaints in the first place.”

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[Catherine Slattery](#) of Irwin Mitchell, the law firm representing several patients who have been operated on by Stohr, said there were serious questions about the hospital’s response to the earlier warnings made in 2016.

She said: “Clearly things have got much worse in 2025. So the question is, ‘What could have been done in 2016 to have prevented this from happening?’ It strikes me at the moment that the trust seems to be playing catch-up on everyone else and only seems to be taking steps when they are being prompted to do so by people like me, or journalists, or other people asking difficult questions.”

She said the trust needed to involve patients in its review and not rely on medical records that might be inaccurate. She said this was a requirement included in NHS England’s framework for recalls.

Dr Susan Broster, chief medical officer at Cambridge University Hospitals Trust said: “This should not have happened and we apologise unreservedly to all the patients and families we have let down. There are around 700 patients in scope of the review and very sadly it is identifying some cases where the level of care has been below the expected standard.”

She added that an independent investigation was taking place to establish whether the 2016 review was acted upon appropriately.

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Broster said: “Where the review has identified that harm has occurred, patients and families will be offered in-person meetings with a senior clinician to go through

the review findings of their case and to allow families to ask any questions as well as receiving a letter.”

In a statement Stohr said: “I always strive to provide the highest standards of care to all my patients. I am co-operating fully with the trust investigation and it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time.”

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