

# Hospital to father: Do you want dead baby put in fridge?

**Sarah-Kate Templeton**  
HEALTH EDITOR

A PORTER at the hospital where Prince George and Princess Charlotte were born turned up to take a grieving couple's dead baby son to the chapel of rest with a box that looked like a "sports bag", they say. Another member of staff then asked the distraught father if he wanted his son "put in the fridge".

The anguish of the baby's father, John Quinn, was intensified when he was taken through the back entrance to the mortuary with his dead son rather than through the front entrance to the chapel at St Mary's Hospital in west London.

Earlier, a nurse kept referring to the baby as a job reference number and pinned a label with a code onto him.

Katherine Murphy, the chief executive of the Patients Association, who has been helping Quinn and his wife to get answers to why their "perfect" son died, said the hospital's treatment of the family had been one of the most "callous" she had experienced.

St Mary's, run by Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, has acknowledged it was insensitive and has pledged to review its procedures after the death of Ryan Quinn in May 2016.

Although born at full term weighing 9lb, Ryan had been starved of oxygen and died after eight hours.

Ryan's mother, Emma, 29, and her husband were able to spend some time with him before his death. After he had passed away they changed his nappy, dressed him and lay a brown toy rabbit on his arm.

Quinn, 35, an electrician, then asked for a Moses basket for Ryan to be taken to the chapel of rest.

"We were in shock and the nurse came in and she said, 'I need to give him a reference number,' and she was trying to pin this piece of paper onto him. I followed the nurse out and said, 'Can you call him Ryan?' He is not a reference number."

"When the porter did turn up, he had a blue NHS box. It looked like a sports bag. He just walked into the room. I had to take him out and say, 'Look, could we just have a Moses basket? I can take him down myself. I do not need a porter.'"

Eventually, a Moses basket was found and Quinn took his son to the chapel accompanied by two nurses. When they arrived, however, Quinn was led into the back entrance of the mortuary.

"There are two entrances. The rear entrance, where the fridges are, or the nice stained glass window where the chapel is," Quinn said. "They brought me through the rear entrance of the morgue."

Quinn was met by a different porter who asked: "Where do you want to put him? Do you want to put him in the fridge or do you want to put him in the chapel?"

Quinn said: "For someone to say something like that when you are carrying a Moses basket is just as though that person has no compassion. They don't care."

Murphy of the Patients Association said: "I feel angry at the lack of dignity. The father had to constantly ask for the basics, reminding staff their beautiful baby had a name and should not be referred to as a 'job reference number'. There was an appalling lack of compassion, insensitivity and lack of dignity."

The grief was compounded when, 10 days after their son's death, a midwife arrived at their home with equipment to weigh Ryan. They had to explain to her that their son was dead.

An investigation by St Mary's acknowledged the "insensitive reception" at the mortuary. A separate independent report, which was later withdrawn, found delays and inaccuracies in medical notes that the Patients Association claims could have enabled staff to act earlier to try to save Ryan.

The couple say they are still waiting, after two investigations, for "honest answers as to why Ryan died".

Prince George and Princess Charlotte were born in the private Lindo wing of St Mary's Hospital. Ryan was born in the NHS hospital.

Dr Julian Redhead, the medical director at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "We offer again our sincere condolences to Mr and Mrs Quinn.

"We fully accept there were significant failings in our dealings with the Quinn family and the way we managed the original investigation into

Ryan's death, for which we are very sorry.

"We are absolutely committed to understanding the circumstances of Ryan's death and the lessons to be learnt. In January we asked the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to conduct an independent investigation into the clinical care received by the Quinn family. This is now under way. This is alongside a full internal review of how the trust responded to Mr and Mrs Quinn following the loss of their son."

John and Emma Quinn still do not know why their son Ryan died



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## Hirst's shark gift 'worth £250,000'

**Sharon Feinstein**

IT HAS taken the artist Damien Hirst 10 years to prepare his new exhibition, which opens in Venice in April, but one of his most recent works is not included – it is hanging in a nearby restaurant.

Hirst visited Giovanni Fracassi's Da Ivo celebrity restaurant last week and left him a sketch the restaurateur values at £250,000.

Fracassi said that Hirst, enjoying a plate of duck pasta, asked for a pen and paper and drew him with a shark swimming across his face.

Five years ago an autograph book containing a shark sketch by Hirst was bought at a London auction for £4,664.

Fracassi, whose restaurant was the venue for George Clooney's stag night, insisted he had been offered much more. He said: "Venice is a small town, so people hear things in minutes.

"My top offer was £250,000 from a Japanese collector who even offered to

double it if he took both sketches Damien has done for me. I have one from four years ago when he ate here and drew me as a skull.

"You can't sell a gift – it's not correct and anyway I don't need the money at the moment and believe the value will increase."

Hirst's Venice exhibition will show works entitled Treasures from the Wreck of the Unbelievable at the linked art centres Palazzo Grassi and Punta della Dogana.

According to the New York Times, it "includes some 250 pieces in various sizes ranging in price from about \$400,000 (£328,000) for small jade objects to \$4m for a malachite head of Medusa".

Publicity for it shows divers working on the seabed, one of them apparently confronting a sea monster.

The exhibition is vital to Hirst's reputation, which has declined over the years. When he began showing figurative paintings, one critic said that "their lack of technical talent was staggering".

The picture Damien Hirst drew while eating duck pasta at Da Ivo restaurant



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