

**SHERIFFDOM OF GRAMPIAN, HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS AT
ABERDEEN**

**UNDER THE FATAL ACCIDENTS AND SUDDEN DEATHS INQUIRY
(SCOTLAND) ACT 1976**

DETERMINATION

By

Sheriff J.K. Tierney

**Sheriff of Grampian, Highland and
Islands**

At Dingwall

In

FATAL ACCIDENT INQUIRY

into the death of

ROBERT SHEARER CAMPBELL

On 13th September 2005 Mr Robert Shearer Campbell who was born on the 28th May 1942 was involved in an accident in the course of his employment with ASCO at their base in Minto Avenue, Aberdeen at approximately 0830 hours when he fell from the steps of a forklift truck landing on his coccyx, falling backwards and striking the back of his head on the ground. Following intervention by the first-aider he was offered transportation to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary on more than one occasion but declined this as he did not feel it necessary. His concern at that time was pain in his lower back and it is likely at that time that he was unaware that he had suffered any significant injury to his head. In due course he went home but later that morning became unwell and his family phoned the emergency services. They responded promptly and Mr Campbell was taken to Accident and Emergency Department at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. It was quickly ascertained that Mr Campbell was gravely ill with a significant brain injury. He received prompt and appropriate medical treatment including surgery to his brain. Following that surgery Mr Campbell did not regain consciousness and it became clear that he would not recover from what was a catastrophic injury. The family were advised and active intervention in the support of Mr Campbell's life was terminated. He died at about 1310 hours on the 19th

September 2005 from cerebral herniation and acute subdural haematoma following his head injury. A contributory factor in Mr Campbell's death was that he was taking the prescription drug warfarin. This drug operates to increase the time it takes for blood to clot. In Mr Campbell's case it probably meant that a small rupture of a blood vessel or vessels in his brain gave rise to a significantly greater loss of blood into the brain than would have happened if he was not taking warfarin. This blood loss caused the conditions from which he died. The potential problem of increased blood loss in the context of injuries to the brain was not specifically addressed in the information documents which the medical practice attended by Mr Campbell provided to those of its patients who are prescribed warfarin. I cannot say on the evidence which I have heard whether it should or should not be so addressed. That it seems to me is a matter for consideration by those prescribing the drug. The evidence disclosed no reasonable precautions whereby the accident or the death might have been avoided nor did it disclose any defect in any system of work.

In concluding my determination I would like to express the sympathy of all concerned in this inquiry to Mr Campbell's son and daughter who have attended throughout the inquiry. I hope that they have found that the thoughtful and careful presentation of the evidence by Miss Morrison and Miss Jamieson has been helpful to them.

Thank you very much. That concludes the inquiry.