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# MailOnline

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## Husband tells of agony over death of Jehovah's Witness wife who refused blood transfusion after C-section

- Adeline Keh infected after birth of her son at London's Homerton Hospital
- She was transferred to Papworth Hospital in Cambridge but later died
- Her widower Kwaku said 40-year-old had refused a blood transfusion
- Hospital has ordered a review and said: 'Mrs Keh's was a very sad case'

By [Dan Bloom for MailOnline](#)

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A husband has told of his grief for his Jehovah's Witness wife who reportedly died after refusing a blood transfusion.

Adeline Keh, 40, suffered a fatal infection after giving birth by Caesarean section to her son at Homerton Hospital in east London, her distraught husband Kwaku said.

She was transferred to the Papworth heart and lung hospital in Cambridge, where she is said to have refused a blood transfusion and died a month after the birth.



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**Distraught: Kwaku Keh (left) has told of his grief for his wife Adeline (right). The new mother, a Jehovah's Witness, reportedly died after refusing a blood transfusion when she developed an infection**

Homerton chiefs have launched an independent review of the tragic case, which was one of four new mothers' deaths at the hospital in nine months.

The inquest into Mrs Keh's death found her decision to refuse blood 'may have compromised the final medical intervention', according to a report in the [Evening Standard](#).

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It was also listed as a cause of death alongside acute respiratory distress syndrome, sepsis and an infection of the Caesarean wound.

Mr Keh, a lawyer from Walthamstow, east London, told the Standard he was devastated that 'we never got to come home as a family'.



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**Close: Lawyer Mr Keh told the Evening Standard he and his 40-year-old wife were 'best friends'**

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He added: 'My wife and I were best friends... I was overjoyed and could not wait for them to come home.'

'Each time I went to pick her up [from the Homerton] I was told that she could not come home. Eventually my wife lost her fight and passed away.'

Jehovah's Witnesses refuse to accept blood transfusions because they say blood represents life, and only God is the giver of life.

That belief has led to scores of controversies, many of which have ended up before judges.

Last year an Australian cancer patient who was just four months from turning 18 lost a court bid to refuse blood because he was still underage.

And in March an English High Court judge gave permission for a baby heart disease sufferer to undergo blood transfusions despite the objections of his parents.

A specialist told Mr Justice Keehan the cardiac patient, just a few weeks old, had no 'long-term prospect of survival' without the procedure.

Yet the religious movement insists it is 'totally unfounded' to say many Witnesses, including children, die each year after refusing blood.

A statement added: 'Surgeons regularly perform such complex procedures as heart operations, orthopaedic surgery, and organ transplants without the use of blood transfusions.

'Patients, including children, who do not receive transfusions usually fare as well as or better than those who do accept transfusions.

'No one can say for certain that a patient will die because of refusing blood or will live because of accepting it.'

Mrs Keh's case has prompted a review at Homerton Hospital because it was one of four deaths of new mothers in a nine-month period.

'Mrs Keh's was a very sad case and our thoughts are with her family,' a spokesman told MailOnline. 'Each case was different and there were no obvious similarities, and each was reported to the Coroner's office for review as is routine in these circumstances.

'As well as being reviewed internally, two of the cases have also been the subject of review by the Care Quality Commission inspectors during their visit to the hospital earlier this year and nothing remiss was found.





© Keh family

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**Reivew: NHS England is independently reviewing the circumstances which led to the death of Mrs Keh**

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'We are now working with NHS England to seek a further independent review of the cases to see if any further lessons can be learnt.'

'Over 6,000 babies are now born at Homerton Hospital. We are seeing more high risk mothers due to a number of factors including: the increase in women having babies who have other clinical complications or conditions; and the fact that high risk women are referred to Homerton as it has a tertiary level neonatal intensive care unit.'

'The message to mothers is that we offer a top quality service with one of the biggest throughputs of mothers and babies in the capital.'