

Neglect: Nurse Forcibly Gave Enema, Name Placed In Abuse Registry.

A resident of a long-term care facility had not had a bowel movement for several days. Facility policy called for a nurse to give him an enema.

His nurse asked him to lie in bed on his left side so she could proceed with his enema, but he got out of bed, refused to get back into bed and sat on the side of the bed with his feet firmly planted on the floor.

The nurse went out and told an aide to go to the room to help her. When the nurse returned the resident had wheeled himself to the bathroom in his wheelchair and the aide was helping him take down his pants so he could sit on the toilet and have a bowel movement on his own. The nurse chased him around the room, caught him and gave the enema while he was standing over the toilet. When he sat down and had his bowel movement blood dripped out of his rectum. The nurse went back to the nurses station and reportedly bragged that the patient had “fought like a bull.”

The patient had to be taken to the hospital. His physician’s assessment was that he was not injured but bled because he was on Coumadin and passed a hard stool.

Neglect means inattention to the physical needs of a patient or resident, including but not limited to toiletting, bathing, meals and safety.

SUPERIOR COURT
SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE
June 29, 2010

Although there was no evidence the enema injured the patient, the Superior Court, Sussex County, Delaware upheld the decision of the state Division of Long Term Care Residents Protection to place the nurse’s name in the registry of persons found guilty of neglect of a vulnerable person in their care. **Sauers v. State of Delaware**, 2010 WL 2625549 (Del. Super., June 29, 2010).