

Confidentiality: Former Employee Barred From Seeing Charts.

A hospice worker who had been working with a nursing home patient continued to visit the patient in the nursing home after she was fired from her job at the hospice.

When the nursing home's nursing director learned that the individual was no longer a hospice employee she circulated a memo to her staff to the effect the individual could visit the patient as a friend, but was no longer considered a professional caregiver and had no right to access the patient's medical chart.

The individual sued her former employer and the nursing home for defamation over the hospice director informing the nursing home she had been fired and over the nursing home's director circulating a memo to her staff. The Court of Appeals of Washington threw out the case. Vande Hey v. Walla Walla Community Hospice, 2008 WL 152595 (Wash. App., January 17, 2008).