

Misconduct: Court Rules Nurse Abused Patients.

The Court of Appeal of Louisiana ruled that a psychiatric hospital had just cause to terminate a licensed practical nurse for conduct involving two patients that was unprofessional, inappropriate, abusive and neglectful.

Cause exists to terminate a civil service employee when the employee's conduct is detrimental to the efficient and orderly operation the public service entity that employed him or her.

COURT OF APPEALS OF LOUISIANA
November 4, 2005

Asthma Medication Withheld

When a patient asked for her albuterol inhaler, the nurse called her a “fat ass,” refused to give her her medication and basically ignored her.

The court noted the inhaler, per the physician's orders, was to be kept by the nurses and given to the patient per the nurse's professional discretion like any other prn medication. The nurse, however, did not do her job, which was to make a professional assessment of the patient's need for the medication and to dispense it as prescribed and as warranted; she just ignored her patient.

Dirty Clothes

The nurse had another patient put her dirty clothes back on after a shower. Then the nurse put on rubber gloves before personally escorting the patient back to her room. Then she took away the patient's clothes and threatened to burn them. The patient was seen walking naked in the hallway. ***Brown v. Dept. of Health & Hospitals***, ___ So. 2d ___, 2005 WL 2898059 (La. App., November 4, 2005).