

Nurse As Patient Advocate: Nurses Faulted For Patient's Death.

The patient had another stroke while she was at home recovering from a previous stroke.

She was taken by ambulance to the hospital's E.R. The E.R. physician saw her right away and ordered a head CT scan. The CT scan, done one hour after she arrived, showed severe brain damage from the recent stroke.

The patient was sent back to the E.R. She stayed there four and one-half hours before being moved to a telemetry unit.

She was not seen and treated by her own physician until fourteen hours after she first arrived in the E.R.

Family members repeatedly asked the E.R. nurses and the E.R. physician to notify the patient's treating physician that she was in the hospital.

The jury did not believe a nurse from the telemetry unit actually called the physician's office as she said.

The physician's partner who was on call was finally notified twelve hours after the patient came in.

COURT OF APPEAL OF LOUISIANA
March 26, 2010

The Court of Appeal of Louisiana endorsed the jury's verdict in the family's favor, agreeing that the hospital's nurses' failure to advocate for their patient caused crucial delay in treatment being started for her new stroke and was to some extent a factor leading to her death late in the afternoon the day after she came to the hospital.

Although the patient's health admittedly was very poor before her second stroke, the court said, the nurses' failure to advocate deprived the patient of some chance of surviving her second stroke. ***Norwood v. Medina***, 2010 WL 1170452 (La. App., March 26, 2010).