

Quadriplegia: Nurse Did Not Stabilize Neck After Fall.

The Appeals Court of Massachusetts did not see any reason to delve into the issue of assigning fault for the fact the patient fell out of bed in the hospital.

It was not clear whether the nurse who found the patient on the floor was the nurse who had been assigned to care for him. For the record, the Court stated it would be assumed that no nurse-patient relationship existed between the patient and the nurse before she went to his aid after he fell.

The malpractice lawsuit filed against the nurse by the probate estate of the deceased patient focused only on what happened after he was found on the floor.

Neck To Be Stabilized Before Moving Patient After Fall

The Court accepted the testimony of the estate's nursing expert that the standard of care required any registered nurse finding a patient on the floor to take the necessary precaution of stabilizing the neck with a neck brace before moving him.

In this case the patient became quadriplegic from a neck injury from improper handling after he fell and his quadriplegia, the Court said, contributed to his death. **Estate of Valda v. Raby, 2009 WL 3379069 (Mass. App., October 22, 2009).**