

## Shower Chair: Nursing Facility Settles For Patient's Death From Fall.

The seventy-three year-old patient was reportedly admitted to the nursing facility for what was supposed to be a short course of physical therapy before returning home to continue living independently.

The shower chair was only supposed to be used to seat the patient in the shower while the patient was showering. An aide, however, was using the shower chair to transport the patient. The aide lowered the back of the shower chair to roll the patient over a raised doorway threshold and dropped the patient.

The patient struck his head on the floor when he fell.

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***The patient, on Coumadin, suffered a subdural hematoma and died in the hospital two days later.***

SUPERIOR COURT, PIERCE COUNTY  
WASHINGTON  
May 23, 2007

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The nursing staff did phone the patient's physician right away to report that he had fallen. However, they did not mention that he had hit his head. The physician only ordered pain medication.

Two days later the patient was rushed to the hospital when he became unconscious. At the hospital it was discovered that he had sustained a subdural hematoma. He died later that day in the hospital.

It was not clear whether the patient's closed-head injury would have been treatable if he had been taken to the hospital right away. The nursing facility paid the family \$850,000 to settle their wrongful death lawsuit filed in the Superior Court, Pierce County, Washington. Quigley v. Tacoma Home, 2007 WL 4700969 (Sup. Ct. Pierce Co., Washington, May 23, 2007).