

Transport: Nurse Correctly Assessed Patient's Needs.

A patient-transport company faced a lawsuit in the Superior Court, San Diego County, California for mistreating an elderly dementia patient during transport from a hospital to a skilled nursing facility.

Hospital Discharge Nurse's Assessment

The hospital discharge nurse saw the patient's dementia as justification for transport on a gurney in the back of an ambulance, with at least one person besides the driver in attendance, rather than in a wheelchair unattended in the back of a wheelchair van. The patient could walk with some assistance but could not sit very long. He also had a tendency to try to stand up on his own when he should not.

Transporter Disregarded Nurse's Assessment

The ambulance crew spoke with their dispatcher. They were worried that Medicare would not pay for an ambulance for a patient who could walk. They sent for a driver-only wheelchair van. On an off-ramp the patient fell out of the chair and was badly injured. **Eichenberg v. San Diego Medical Services**, 2007 WL 4480735 (Cal. App., December 21, 2007).