

Fresenius Medical Care
Nephrocare West
362 4th Avenue
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215

July 18, 2014

Attn: April Shannon

Dear Ms. Shannon,

Please accept this letter as my formal complaint to Fresenius Nephrocare West Dialysis Center for the pattern of abuse and neglect I received at the hands of a "rogue" and incompetent Nursing staff over the past few months and specifically on July 7, 2014, when I was diagnosed with Congestive Heart Failure and Pulmonary Edema.

As I sat in my dialysis chair on July 7, 2014, losing consciousness, heaving, choking on my vomit, basically dying, only one question kept me awake and determined to survive. The question that I will not stop searching for its answer until each and every perpetrator is identified and severely disciplined.

The question for which this formal letter was written is " If a Nurse or Doctor intentionally agitates, aggravates, intimidates or neglects a patient with a known medical history of Hypertension, causing a dangerous elevation in said patient's blood pressure, subsequently causing that patient's injury or death, should this be ruled as attempted murder, criminally negligent homicide, involuntary manslaughter or murder in the 2nd degree?"

Only one week earlier, I had been approached by one of these "so called" nurses (actually the main culprit in my traumatic incident) and told that she was aware that various patients were going into "the back" (administration) and making complaints against her. I assured this "nurse" that "if you've done nothing wrong, you should have nothing to worry about". However, this "nurse" went on railing against these "disloyal" patients and stated that "nobody better mess with my money".

The "nurse" in question stated that she believed that patients should be called to their dialysis chairs based on appointments with designated "Technicians", however, I suggested that under normal conditions, that would be prudent, however, the last couple of months at Fresenius have been anything but "normal". So, I suggested that a list be created where patients would sign their names in the order of their arrival and be called in for their treatment accordingly.

The "nurse" in question became visibly upset, said that my suggestion would never work and abruptly walked away.

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The following Monday (July 7, 2014), I arrived at the dialysis center between 3:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. and noticed that management had implemented the “sign-in sheet” suggested by the patients. I was pleased that finally, something was being done to bring a little order to the chaos that had become the “normal way of doing business” at Fresenius.

However, that good feeling was very short-lived and was soon replaced with anxiety and stress when the previously mentioned “nurse” entered the patient waiting area between 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., slapped the pages of the waiting list up in the air with disgust, and hissed the following words sarcastically while, glaring at me “I hope that you are happy now” “I hope that you got what you want” “It’s never going to work!” and then stormed out of the waiting area like a “Boxer” getting into the ring for a championship fight.

All of the patients and caregivers within the waiting area had their mouths wide open and were completely aghast. We knew that there would be some form of retaliation against us (as usual) but no one could imagine what would come next. Over the next hour, the waiting area began filling up with patients, because none of us were being called inside to receive treatment.

At approximately 5:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., I was approached by no less than two (2) Fresenius employees (one with tears in their eyes) and informed that there had been a couple of chairs available for treatment since 4:00 p.m., however, the irate “nurse”, instructed her co-workers not to call me (I was first person on the sign-in sheet) or any other patient until 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. !

Now I realized what form the punishment and retaliation would take for getting the “sign-in sheet” implemented. I was finally called inside at 6:15 p.m., after waiting 2 and a half hours. The 2nd nurse to enter this story placed my blood pressure cuff on my arm and coldly asked me how I was doing today. I said “horrible”, because there were chairs available since 4:00 p.m. and we were intentionally made to wait. The 2nd nurse stated that this was not true and that a new rule had been implemented to call patients between 6:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

My blood pressure reading spiked to 218/140. I demanded that the 2nd nurse call the Doctor immediately, because of my blood pressure reading and I was having shortness of breath. However, she said that he was not available. I told the 2nd “nurse” that that was not true, because he just held the door for me to come into the dialysis unit.

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The 2nd nurse reluctantly walked to the nursing station (slowly) picked up the telephone and walked back, stating "The Doctor is busy, so he'll see you when he gets the time". The 2nd "nurse" then proceeded to tell me that she was not going to start my dialysis because I was too excited and my blood pressure reading was dangerously high.

I started feeling light-headed, having more pronounced shortness of breath and felt fluids building up in my upper chest and throat area. I felt like I was "going to die". So I ripped off my blood pressure cuff, raced to the nursing station and yelled "call 911, I need to get to a hospital immediately". The 1st and 2nd nurses and other front desk personnel did not move or pick up the telephone.

The 2nd nurse, rather than calling 911, ran out of the dialysis unit, and physically brought back the Doctor I had originally asked for. I was back at my dialysis chair by this time and saw his eyes "bug out" upon seeing my blood pressure reading. I then yelled out "Doctor, this is the 2nd time I am asking for an ambulance to take me to the hospital. However, the Doctor refused to call 911 and stated "Mr. Williams, we need to get your blood pressure down". I replied "Doctor, this is now the 3rd time I am demanding that you call 911 so I can go to the hospital, because I feel like I am going to die!" and I proceeded to vomit all over the floor and was choking on fluids.

None of the nursing staff offered any assistance to me during this time.

The Doctor politely ignored my plea, and told his staff to put in my needles and start dialysis. Realizing that I was not going to be transported to the hospital and was pretty much alive due only "by the grace of God". I asked for oxygen to be administered and blood pressure reducing medication.

I then called my Mother because I felt that the one person, who witnessed me come into this world, should witness me die. I also wanted to give her a detailed description of my "killers" and what part everyone played in my demise. The fright in my Mother's eyes upon seeing me on oxygen, unable to breathe, and convulsing while vomiting, still haunts me to this day.

The final insult to this long and agonizing evening was the letter I received from the 2nd nurse, instructing me to "go" to the hospital after my treatment was complete. The nursing staff actually instructed me to "go" to the hospital on my own power without any "continuity of care" via ambulance transport.

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I almost passed out twice driving home after my dialysis treatment, fell on my living room couch and begged my wife to call 911, at which time I was taken to Methodist Hospital where I received appropriate health care services.

Animals are treated better than I was at Fresenius Nephrocare West. There is a “rogue” and dangerous nursing staff operating at this location, which is causing stress, agitation, aggravation, intimidation and neglect to the patient population.

There have been at least three deaths at the facility since I have been coming there and I am beginning to believe that maybe one or all of these occurrences were caused by the actions of this nursing staff. This should be investigated.

I should be clear and state for the record that a few of the nurses at Fresenius Nephrocare West are competent and professional, but they are overshadowed by the incompetent, uncompassionate and “rogue” nursing staff.

I am not leaving Fresenius Nephrocare West until an investigation is completed, the perpetrators are identified and severely disciplined and permanent changes are made.

For the record, the Doctor previously mentioned in my letter recently asked me Why was I so insistent on calling 911 and going to the hospital, when he offered the most viable solution, by putting me on the dialysis machine that evening.

I responded by asking him the following questions.

Question: “Doctor, If I had gone into Cardiac arrest during my treatment and fell unconscious, could you have resuscitated me by yourself?”

Answer: No!

Question: “Doctor, would you have to have depended on the present nursing staff to assist you in resuscitating me?”

Answer: Yes, Mr. Williams!

Question: “Doctor, you mean the same Nursing staff that caused my crisis in the first place?”

Answer: Oh!

The Doctor did elaborate on his response. I should not have to explain to a medical professional why they should have called an ambulance the very first time I requested 911 , much less, the 2nd and 3rd time. It became obvious that your medical staff went into “containment” mode and would have done just about anything to prevent documentation of an emergency response vehicle transporting me from Fresenius.

Which brings me to my 2nd question. What is the protocol at Fresenius for their Nurses, Doctors and medical personnel when a patient request that 911 be called ? What is the punishment for Fresenius medical personnel that refuse to call 911 for a patient that makes such a request numerous times?

I demand an answer to these questions ASAP. I have provided the names of the Nurses and Doctor involved in these occurrences to you verbally at the “emergency meeting” held on July 9, 2014. However, if you require these names in writing, I will be happy to oblige you.

The Technicians at Fresenius Nephrocare West were instrumental in providing me with quality medical care and emotional support throughout these past few months, and specifically during the crisis incident on July 7, 2014. I would like to personally thank Darlene, Mercy, Antwan, George, Tito, Brandon, Tome, Caesar, Paulette, Junior and Nikki for their genuine compassion, empathy and professionalism. I will interpret any “retaliation” or “reprimand” towards these subordinate personnel as a veiled affront towards me. I will testify at any hearings that they may be subjected to in the future.

Lastly, it should be known that I sustained damage to my heart and pulmonary edema (fluid in the lungs) as a result of this travesty. I am now required to take heart medication to prevent any further deterioration of my condition. I have anxiety, nightmares and have scheduled an appointment to visit a psychiatrist for possible depression. I haven’t trained in martial arts since the incident on July 7, 2014, and anyone that knows me, knows that after 40 years of training, this is unheard of. My family says I have changed since this incident, that I am kind of “detached” from them. It is true.

Ms. Shannon, I implore you to investigate this incident to the fullest extent of the law and I will provide whatever documentation or testimony you need to bring those responsible for this crime to justice. As I mentioned previously, I will only leave Fresenius when justice is served or in a casket. At least my story will be known.

Respectfully,

Brian Williams

