

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Mr. Michael Strofolino, President and CEO

PLACE OF WORK: The Hospital for Sick Children

DATE INTERVIEWED: September 6, 2000

INTERVIEWED BY: C. Flear, CNO Investigator

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY: In Person

RE: Anagaille Soriano, RN, and Ruth Doerksen, RN

Mr. Strofolino began this interview by stating that he believes that The Hospital for Sick Children (HSC) failed the Shore family in regard to the lack of care provided to Lisa during the night in question, and in the hospital's subsequent follow-up. He feels that the communication with the family was very poor. He has personally apologized to Mrs. Shore.

He explained that the hospital relied on the coroner's office to investigate the circumstances surrounding Lisa's death. The leadership in the hospital at the time included Dr. Jean Reeder, Chief of Nursing, and Dr. Alan Goldbloom, Vice President of Clinical and Academic Affairs, which included a risk management component and Dr. John Wedge, chief of Surgery and the President. There were a number of factors which contributed to or influenced the hospital's management of this situation. This was the first death on Unit 5A in 11 years. Lisa's death was unexpected. Therefore, staff on the unit did not seem to know how to manage the situation effectively.

Since Lisa's death, policies and procedures on all units have been reviewed so that staff know how to handle unexpected crises better. Also reviewed was the practice regarding the use of monitors.

At the time of this incident, there were two reporting streams for the nursing department. The Chief of Nursing, Jean Reeder, was responsible for the overall standards set for the nursing department. Concerns regarding the operations of the units and the actual care provided on the units, were reported to the Managers, who reported to the Program Directors. There are two Vice Presidents: one for Surgical Services, and one for Medicine. Cathy Seguin, is the current Vice President of Surgical Services, but she was a Director at the time of Lisa's death. Dr. John Wedge was the Chief of Surgery.

As President and CEO of the Hospital, Mr. Strofolino still has questions to this date regarding the care provided to Lisa. His first concern relates to the fact that the nurses on 5A accepted Lisa as an admission to their unit with no apparent doctor's orders. They needed to have orders to follow. Second, he has concerns regarding the kind of monitoring done for Lisa. In his opinion it might be possible that Lisa's death may have been prevented if procedures were properly followed. He is aware that the nurses claim that monitoring was done, but that parts of the monitoring were turned off due to false alarming.

Mr. Strofolino stated that he cannot believe that the monitor was brought in after Lisa had died. The nurses were very upset by her death. He believes that the nurses' sorrow after her death was genuine. The hospital defended the nurses' actions which may have

contributed to Mrs. Shore's view that there was a conspiracy surrounding her daughter's death at the hospital. He agreed that there was a lack of effective follow-up done by the hospital. There is no doubt that the admitting orders for Lisa were still suspended in the system several months after her death. Mr. Strofolino is willing to admit when mistakes were made.

Mr. Strofolino noted that Jean Reeder, Chief of Nursing, sincerely believed that the nurses made some honest mistakes. Mr. Strofolino has his own concerns. One of the nurses working that night was very inexperienced. As well, the Nurse Manager failed to debrief the nurses, and find out exactly what happened during the night. They did not go through any check list regarding the orders to determine why the orders were not opened. The hospital abdicated some of the responsibility of investigating this situation to the coroner. They assumed that the coroner would ask all of the right questions.

The hospital may have jumped to the conclusion that Lisa had died from a Morphine overdose. Mr. Strofolino still wonders why, if there had been a monitor in Lisa's room, did it not get collected after her death.

Mr. Strofolino stated that he could understand why the family thought there was a conspiracy surrounding the circumstances of Lisa's death. He indicated that there were a number of things not handled well by the hospital and the coroner's office. For example, at the time, Lisa had to be admitted under orthopaedics and not by the pain management team which did not have admitting rights at that time.

The hospital has no explanation as to why the orders were not opened and not followed. Jean Reeder believed that the nurses used professional judgement, and found no fault with the care provided by the nurses to Lisa. Mr. Strofolino believes that as CEO he had a responsibility to make a report to the College of Nurses regarding the nursing practice of the two nurses who provided direct care to Lisa that night. He wants to bring a balance to the situation.

He is not saying that Dr. Reeder was right or wrong. It is, however, unusual for a child to die in hospital for pain management. He still is unable to understand why admitting orders were not checked. Lisa arrived on 5A with hand-written orders from the emergency department. These orders said to check the kid com orders. The nurses already knew to check for admitting orders. They should have gone looking for them. It was a shock to discover several months later that the admitting orders had never been opened by the nurses caring for Lisa at the time of her admission to the unit.

Mr. Strofolino also indicated that there were some irregularities regarding the monitoring of Lisa's vital signs. Some vital signs were taken, but the protocols regarding pain and sedation assessment were not followed.

At the time of Lisa's death, Bill Kreutzweiser was the Manager of 5A. He did not have a nursing background. As well, he may have been distracted because his wife was dying of cancer. Mr. Kreutzweiser is no longer employed at the hospital.

Dr. Reeder had a 5 year contract at the hospital. She was very academic and research oriented. She helped to increase the educational standards of the nurses working at the hospital; the nurses must now be university educated as entry level nurses. The hospital now needs someone more focused on front line nursing by providing support to the nurses working on the units. Approximately 1400 nurses work at HSC. It just happened that her contract was about to run out around the time of Lisa's death and the inquest;

the hospital had to give Dr. Reeder 6 months notice that they would not be renewing her contract. Despite reports in the press, the termination of Dr. Reeder's contract was unrelated to Lisa's death.

Mr. Strofolino indicated that the hospital needs the college to determine if there was any professional incompetence or negligence on the part of Anagaile Soriano and Ruth Doerksen. They are currently on a paid leave of absence and are not working at the hospital in any capacity.

(Summary Reviewed October 19, 2000)