

STATEMENT OF JANICE JOYCE WILLIAMS of address known to the
Queensland Nurses' Union of Employees

Janice Joyce Williams states:

1. I am a Medications Endorsed Enrolled Nurse having obtained my diploma in Enrolled Nursing from the Bremer Institute in South Australia in 2000. Prior to that I worked as an Assistant in Nursing, and I have worked as nurse for 25 years. I currently work as an Advanced Practice Enrolled Nurse in a Specialist Outpatients Department of the Bundaberg Base Hospital. I have been employed in that position for the past 3 years.
2. I have had the following parts of the Statement of P99 drawn to my attention:
 - "9. *On 21 March 2004 I went to the Specialist Centre at the Hospital to have the staples removed. The nurse took out my staples and then she just put one strip across the wound. It was almost comical. The wound went vertically for about 12 cm and she put a tiny strip across the wound horizontally. Although, as I mention above, I have considerable experience as an AIN, I can think of no good purpose served by such a bandage.*
 10. *I went home with my husband. Just after I arrived home, I thought I had wet myself but it turned out that the top of the wound had opened and there was blood running down my legs. I called the Hospital and they told me to come back to the Specialist Centre. I placed a towel on the wound and my husband drove.*
 11. *When we arrived at the Hospital, there was a wait of about 25 minutes before I could be seen. During that time, I hobbled over to the toilet and I remember that as I came back I lost another clot from the wound. The Hospital staff called my name then and then they helped me onto a table. A doctor who introduced himself as James Boyd came out to see me. He looked at the wound and said words to the effect, "we can pack that". I was surprised because I was expecting that the doctor would take me into theatre and treat the wound afresh. I could see that the nurse, Janice Williams (who I had worked with previously in a nursing home), raised her eyebrows when Dr Boyd made his comment.*
 12. *Janice went and obtained the gauze for packing and the doctor went away. Whilst Janice was busy, I felt really sick. I had an awful sensation. I looked down and saw that there was now complete dehiscence around the wound. That is, it had completely re-opened. It was a horrible sight. I called out "Hey Jan". She came in and said,*

JAW

"What, mate?". She looked at the wound and said, "I hope you didn't have a look" and I said that I was afraid I had.

13. Dr Body came back in. He said words to the effect "We can still pack that" and he got Janice to do that. The result looked bizarre. The bandaging protruded way out like a belly. Janice told me to come back at 9.00am on the next day and I assumed that was so I could have further surgery. My husband and I drove home and when we arrived there was a message from the Hospital that we shouldn't return until 1.00pm on the following day.
14. I woke up in the morning with a migraine and I called the Hospital to make sure (assuming, as I was, that I was having surgery that day) that it was okay to take some pain relief. The nurse with whom I spoke said that was fine. When we arrived back in the day surgery ward, Dr Patel was there. He looked at the wound with Dr Boyd and said that it would just need holding stitches for 14 days. Dr Patel went away and Dr Boyd then attended to the wound. He only used a local anaesthetic and it didn't have any effect. He started putting in stitches (there were six in all) and I could feel everything: the needle, the thread going through, and his hand. It was extremely painful, especially on top of the migraine, and I couldn't even vomit because I was worried how the upheaval might affect my wound.
15. I begged Dr Boyd to stop but he wouldn't. The pain was excruciating; I was screaming and I was in tears. I could feel people holding me down. I have worked with dementia patients and I have been taught that you can place your hand on someone by way of reassurance or support but you don't restrain them. These people were holding me down by the shoulders and the ankles. I kept yelling and Dr Boyd kept saying that he was almost done. Janice kept leaving the room to get cold towels.
16. When it was over, Janice was very firm and pointed with Dr Boyd. She said, "Do you think we could possibly get her some pain relief now?" She is from the old school like me. You don't question a registered nurse, let alone a doctor, but she was very clear and pointed with Dr Boyd. The staff gave me pethidine after that. If they had given it to me before, I would have been on cloud nine for the operation. I don't know why they didn't do it before hand, except perhaps that, at least initially, Dr Boyd thought the local anaesthetic would work.
17. Janice and my husband helped me to leave. In the middle of the night, I woke up yelling that someone was trying to set fire to me. I realise now that the pethidine had worn off and an infection had taken hold. On the next day, I went to see my G.P., Dr Venoo Ramunnan. She prescribed an antibiotic called Keflex but she said not to fill it because I really needed an intravenous antibiotic. My Husband took me back to Hospital but I had to wait five and a half hours. When they saw me they said that they wouldn't put me on a drip because I didn't have a

J.J.M.

temperature (which, in my view, was entirely due to the fact that it was very cold that day). As I was about to leave, the man said that he supposed he should take a swab. He did that and it revealed, subsequently, that I had golden staph. He told me to get the Keflex prescription filled and I did that but it made me throw up. I came back to the Hospital on the following day and was prescribed a different antibiotic but it didn't change things. I was still red raw. The area was burning up and I was in horrible pain."

3. I only have a vague recollection of P99 attending the clinic. I recall that when she attended, it was to have her sutures removed and that when she attended, it was a very busy clinic in terms of the number of patients who had to be seen. I recall her name was on the appointment schedule for a post operative surgical ward review.
4. I recall P99 calling out to me to go into a room where she had had her sutures taken out by a Registered Nurse. P99 knew me because we had worked together many years (roughly about 6 or 7 years) previously at a nursing home. We are not friends socially. I usually avoid attending any patients who are known to me for their own comfort and confidentiality. I recall that when she called me in, the sutures on her wound had been taken out and she had a superficial wound dehiscence. I do not know where the Registered Nurse who had taken the sutures out was at that time. I have a memory of applying a normal saline packing. The procedure I adopt for applying a normal saline packing is to proceed by soaking a sterile gauze in normal saline solution and then applying it to the wound, then covering it with a Telfa non-adhesive dressing and a combine dressing. This is then fixed in place with Fixomoll tape.
5. It is my practice to call a doctor to inspect a wound if it has dehisced after removal of sutures. It is also my practice to obtain a doctor's order before packing a wound. I am therefore confident that I called a doctor in to inspect

J.J.M.

the wound before I packed it, although I do not now have any specific memory of the doctor inspecting the wound.

6. The doctor may well have been Dr Boyd and he may well have said "we can pack that". Such a comment would be commonly made. It is a common occurrence for wounds to be packed and left to heal by secondary intention if possible.
7. I do not recall the dehiscence as being a deep wound dehiscence and I was not required to document a full assessment and fill out appropriate wound care charts before starting the dressing.
8. I also recall that on this occasion or on the occasion that she was resutured that I held her hand at one stage and settled her down because she crying and appeared to be frightened and upset.
9. P99 subsequently attended the Specialists Outpatients department to have her wound resutured. I do not recall the procedure undertaken by Dr Boyd to resuture P99's wound. I can only think that if I was present then the course taken by the doctor in suturing her was unremarkable and similar to the way in which I had seen other patients resutured on numerous occasions.
5. In particular, I do not recall P99 screaming, or that anyone was required to hold her down to restrain her. If that had have happened, I would have stepped in to stop the procedure continuing and I would have reported it to my Nurse Unit Manager. There was nothing which occurred which caused me to make any such report to my Nurse Unit Manager.
6. Similarly I did not hear P99 begging Dr Boyd to stop her procedure.

- 7. As regards the allegation that I was very firm and pointed with Dr Boyd when asking for pain relief, I deny that I was firm and pointed with Dr Boyd, and it is very usual for me to ask a doctor to order pain relief for a patient.
- 8. I recall a post operative wound infection form being implemented in the Specialists Outpatients Department at the request of Gail Aylmer, the Infection Control Officer. About two weeks after these forms came in, I recall saying to Dr Patel, "Doctor, we've been asked to implement these forms by the Infection Control Officer to keep a track of post operative wound infections and is it possible that you could fill them out?" I recall he scoffed at me as if to say "who are you, an Enrolled Nurse, to tell me to fill out forms".
- 6. I have considered whether I have any recollection of incidents which may be of interest to the Bundaberg Hospital Commission of Inquiry, and I do not believe that I have any evidence to give which may prove useful to that Inquiry.

J. J. Williams.....

Janice Joyce Williams

22/06/2005

I, Janice Joyce Williams, do solemnly and sincerely declare that the content of this my statement for the Bundaberg Hospital Commission of Inquiry (this declaration being at the foot of the last page of the statement comprising 5 pages) is true and correct to my knowledge and belief and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the *Oaths Act 1867*.

J. J. Williams.....
Janice Joyce Williams

Declaration Taken By:

[Signature].....
Lawyer

Date: 22/6/05