

Extravasation: Hospital Pays Settlement For Poor Nursing Documentation.

A one month-old premature infant was still in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit. She had fluid infusing through an IV site on her right calf.

The night nurse came on duty at midnight. Her first progress note mentioned that all was well with the IV. The nurse wrote another progress note at 1:00 a.m. which mentioned nothing about the IV site.

At 2:30 a.m. the nurse found the IV site swollen and discolored from infiltration of fluid into the surrounding tissue. The nurse stopped the IV, but not before a permanent residual cosmetic deformity was created on the baby's right lower leg.

There was a 2 1/2 hour gap in the nursing progress notes while the patient's IV fluid extravasated.

The site should have been checked, perhaps actually was checked every 30 minutes, but the proof it was checked was spotty at best.

NEW YORK COURT OF CLAIMS
May 9, 2007

The hospital's lawyers offered a \$650,000 settlement right before the case was to go to trial in the New York Court of Claims, and the parents accepted.

The parents' lawyers were prepared to point a finger of blame at the fact there were no nursing progress notes to prove the IV site was checked q 30 minutes per hospital policy, or at least every hour as the experts were going to testify is the national standard of care, notwithstanding the fact the nurse's initials were marked for the IV every 30 minutes on the ICU nursing flow sheet. **Sam v. State of New York, 2007 WL 2175371 (N.Y. Ct. Claims, May 9, 2007).**