

Nursing Notes: Nurses Should Not Give Medical Opinions.

The patient received a blood transfusion during knee replacement surgery.

Soon he experienced chills, wheezing, headaches, shortness of breath and anxiety, signs and symptoms which could have indicated an adverse reaction was occurring to the transfusion.

Eleven months later he was hospitalized for pneumonia and died. His widow sued the first hospital for negligence for administering mismatched blood and for the nurses not monitoring him for signs and symptoms of a reaction afterward.

A hospital's nursing notes are considered business records and as such are routinely admitted into evidence in negligence cases.

However, a statement of opinion in a business record is not admissible as evidence unless the person who recorded the opinion is qualified to do so.

APPELLATE COURT OF CONNECTICUT
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The Appellate Court of Connecticut opted for dismissal of the case.

The widow's attorneys tried to base the case on a nursing note from the second hospital, written in cryptic hospital abbreviation jargon, that the patient had a history of pulmonary signs and symptoms that was secondary to a transfusion reaction at the first hospital.

The court ruled that a medical opinion contained in nursing notes written by someone who does not have the medical credentials to render an opinion will not support a malpractice case. **Cavallaro v. Hospital of Saint Raphael**, 882 A. 2d 1254 (Conn. App., October 18, 2005).