

Pediatric Intensive Care: Inexperienced Nurse Ignored Her Pager.

The five month-old had been diagnosed at birth with tetralogy of Fallot and was a frequent patient at the hospital for heart and kidney problems.

The child's mother brought her to the hospital's renal clinic because she was vomiting. The child's oxygen saturation was low and she was having respiratory difficulty, so she was admitted to the hospital.

Her care was assigned to a team consisting of a third-year resident physician, two interns and a recent nursing school graduate who was still orienting.

The nurse was a recent nursing school graduate who was still in the orientation phase of her employment at the hospital.

She was assigned to carry the alarm pager but never responded to the alarm when the patient's mother noticed that the child had stopped breathing.

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
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The parents' lawsuit alleged the hospital was negligent to assign inexperienced personnel to care for an infant with complicated congenital medical issues who was in acute respiratory distress.

The jury in the Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania returned a verdict of \$1,223,750. The verdict expressly assigned 15% of the liability for the child's death to the graduate nurse who failed to respond to the page and split the rest of the verdict among the three physicians. ***Kyei v. Copelovitch, 2009 WL 5207357 (Ct. Comm. Pl. Philadelphia Co., Pennsylvania, November 10, 2009).***