

Post Surgical Care: Settlement Paid To Patient's Family.

The twenty-nine year-old patient was transferred to a med/surg floor four hours after thyroidectomy surgery.

She began having shortness of breath. Her condition worsened from inability to breathe to respiratory arrest, cardiac arrest, hypoxic encephalopathy and death.

The family's lawsuit filed in the Superior Court, Pierce County, Washington faulted the surgeon for the post-operative bleeding into the patient's airway.

The lawsuit also faulted the nurses for requesting the E.R. physician to come to the room rather than calling a code.

The nurses reportedly waited to call the E.R. physician for help until they had completed a full patient assessment while the patient was already in acute respiratory distress from a known possible complication of the surgery she had just had. **Hayward v. Multicare, 2010 WL 5691874 (Sup. Ct. Pierce Co., Washington, September 3, 2010).**