

The Death of Gillian Astbury Death by Neglect Verdict

The inquest into the death of Mrs Gillian Astbury who died after falling into a diabetic coma at Stafford General Hospital, concluded today with a verdict of death by neglect.

Sarah Huntbach from Anthony Collins Solicitors, representing Mrs Astbury's family commented: The family are devastated by Gill's death. Three and a half years on they are still struggling to come to terms with her death and the horrific way in which she died. The verdict given by the jury was that there clearly was a gross failure to provide Mrs Astbury with basic care. This satisfies the legal definition of neglect.

Gill had only been admitted to hospital for bed rest following a simple fall, her condition was not fatal. The day before her admission Gill had enjoyed one of the many days she and Ron spent together enjoying a Spring day at Cannock Chase.

The inquest heard how Mrs Astbury, who was insulin-dependent and suffered with confusion and memory problems, died after slipping untreated into a diabetic coma after the staff failed to adhere to her comprehensive diabetic care plan.

The inquest was one of the first to be heard in front of an independent jury with Barrister, Simon Michael of No.5 Chambers, representing the family at the inquest.

The jury found that the standard of nursing fell well short of their professional code of conduct and that there were systemic failings which contributed to Mrs Astbury's death.

Sarah Huntbach continued: The coroner, Mr Haigh, has said that he will be requesting from the Hospital Trust reassurances that risk assessments will be completed as to patient safety during and as a result of any future budgetary constraints.

The public inquiry must now ask serious questions of the various regulatory bodies and all levels of the NHS as to why this appalling situation was allowed to happen at Stafford Hospital. Lessons must be learned and actions must be taken to ensure that this situation is not allowed to develop again here in Stafford or within any hospital across the country.

The family will continue to pursue a civil action and a Human Rights Act claim on behalf of Mrs Astbury's Grandson and we are considering submitting reports to the Nursing and Midwifery Council following the verdict that has been handed down.

Further information is available from the Anthony Collins Solicitors Press Office. For general enquiries contact Simeon Ling on 07841 499693 or for media enquiries contact Jo Garner on 07717 897991 or 01527 888992, email media@anthonycollins.com. www.anthonycollins.com.
Anthony Collins Solicitors

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