

Man accuses FCT hospital of mismanaging late wife's delivery

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Esther

Friday Olokor, Abuja

The discovery of a pad stitched to the vagina of a woman by doctors at the Nisa Garki Hospital in the Federal Capital Territory after being delivered of a baby is now a subject of litigation at the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria and a Federal High Court in Abuja.

A legal practitioner, Anthony Ejumejowo, has asked the MDCN to order an investigation into the death of his wife on October 5, 2019, following the alleged negligence of doctors and management of the Nisa Garki Hospital.

He also alleged in a petition by his counsel, Innocent Ukoha, to the Chairman of the MDCN that there was a deliberate attempt to cover up the incident.

But when contacted on Sunday, the Managing Director of the hospital, Dr Adamu Onu, confirmed to *PUNCH Metro* the death of the woman, saying, however, that “she received care according to the best ethical principles and practice of medicine.”

A copy of the petition was exclusively obtained by our correspondent. Copies were also sent to the Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehaniren, and the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Alhaji Musa Bello.

Esther Ejumejowo was said to be a patient of the Nisa Garki Hospital for about nine years and was sometime in January, 2019 registered for antenatal treatment and management.

She was said to be attending the antenatal clinic until she was delivered of a baby girl on September 12, 2019, around 2.13pm, and allowed to go through natural labour against medical advice by a senior registrar a day before the delivery.

The management of the Garki General Hospital was said to have entered into a Private-Public Partnership agreement for its management by the Nisa Premier Hospital during the administration of Nasir El-Rufai as the Minister of the FCT and had been operating under the name, Nisa Garki Hospital.

Ukoha said, “It is further our brief that the wife of our client died on October 5, 2019, from complications arising from her delivery as a result of the negligence of the doctors and the management of the Nisa Garki Hospital.

“We hereby formally demand the investigation of the circumstances surrounding the management of the health of our client’s deceased wife while in the care of the said Nisa Garki Hospital, Abuja. Our client undertakes to pay any expense related to the investigation and shall be available whenever his attention or attendance is required.”

The human rights activist said in the 61-paragraph affidavit deposed to at the Federal High Court in Abuja that the death was avoidable.

Anthony stated, “I observed that the delivery of the child was much more difficult for my wife than her last two pregnancies and that she complained of severe pains and that it was unknown to me why the hospital put my wife through natural labour against the advice of a senior female registrar the previous day.

“Some hours after the delivery of the baby, my wife complained of severe pains and discomfort in her vaginal resulting from the stitches of a tear from the delivery and on examination by Dr Onuh, it was discovered that a pad was stitched and left in her vagina by the doctor that took delivery of her baby, and after which the blood-stained pad was removed by the said Dr Onuh, and her vagina re-stitched.”

According to him, her last visit to the Garki Nisa Hospital for a follow-up check-up was on September 27, 2019.

He said, “Surprisingly, on October 5, 2019, around 4pm, my wife collapsed while sitting and feeding her baby shortly after her lunch and was rushed to the Federal Medical Centre, Abuja, being the nearest hospital, and was pronounced dead on arrival.

“I was issued a death certificate for my wife by the management of the Federal Medical Centre, Abuja, which placed the cause of death as pulmonary oedema, congestive cardiac failure and hypertensive heart disease, contrary to the medical report issued by the management of the Nisa Garki Hospital, Abuja.

“I strongly suspect that the death of my wife was avoidable and was caused by the negligence of the doctors of the Nisa Garki Hospital, Abuja.”

Anthony said his wife, during the third trimester of her pregnancy, had complained of shortness of breath and swollen feet, and reported to the doctors, who assured her that her life and that of the baby were under no threat when she repeatedly visited the hospital over six times.

He said, “My wife was not hypertensive, except for the time she was treated for high blood pressure shortly after the birth of our second child on October 3, 2014, and her blood pressure issue was resolved within weeks of her delivery and she was never treated for high blood pressure or any other sickness of great significance between October 2014 and after her delivery on September 12, 2019, by the Nisa Garki Hospital or any other hospital.”

When contacted, Onu said, “Thank you for hearing our own side of the story. We understand that Mr Ejumegowo is grieving the death of his wife at the FMC, Jabi. We respect the memory of his late wife and so we will not engage in sensationalising the issue in the media.

“She received care according to the best ethical principles and practice of medicine and we prefer to await the verdict of the MDCN, which he has petitioned to look into the matter. The wife had Peripartum Cardiomyopathy. Our doctors made the diagnosis and informed him and his wife that it was a serious life-threatening condition and instituted the necessary treatment.”