

Lagos orders probe as Nigerians tackle hospitals over businesswoman, call agent's deaths

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• Omolara



• Peju

Nigerians are demanding justice for a businesswoman, Peju Ugboma, and a Lagos State Emergency Management Agency call centre agent, Omolara Omoyajowo, who both died due to alleged negligence by doctors and nurses at two different private hospitals in Lagos and Ogun states.

However, the Lagos State Health Facility Monitoring and Accreditation Agency said an order had been given for a probe into the circumstances surrounding the death of Peju.

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HEFAMAA_LASG tweeted, "The Honorable Commissioner @LSMOH, @ProfAkinAbayomi, had directed @HEFAMMA_LASG; the agency charged with the responsibility of accrediting, monitoring, and inspecting all public and private health facilities in the State, to conduct a proper investigation on the occurrence to establish the facts of the matter and ensure #JusticeForPeju with a view to preventing such unfortunate incidents in the future."

PUNCH Metro gathered that Peju died after she underwent a botched surgery for fibroid related ailment at the Premier Specialists' Medical Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos.

A letter purportedly from Peju's family, which trended online, explained the circumstances surrounding the pastry chef's death.

According to the letter posted on Twitter by @aderonkeige, Peju suffered internal bleeding after the surgery.

The letter read in part, *"An independent autopsy carried out by pathologists at LASUTH with credible observers and Premier Hospital in attendance revealed that Peju suffered internal bleeding. It was discovered that she had about two litres of blood in her abdomen and pelvic area.*

"The family revealed that Peju was admitted to Premier Specialists' Hospital on Thursday, April 22, 2021, to carry out an elective surgery for a fibroid issue...She had concluded all the necessary tests required before the surgery, including ECG, PCV, and COVID-19 tests. Her vitals were okay and she had no pre-existing conditions prior to surgery."

The deceased's family reportedly made an advance payment of N1m for the surgery before four doctors, identified as Akinsiku, Iwuh, Asemota and Renner, and other medical personnel at the hospital operated on the mother of two on Friday, April 23, 2021.

"Peju's husband saw her after the surgery on Friday and she complained about severe abdominal pain and discomfort, which he felt was not unusual for someone, who had just come out of surgery," the letter read.

It was learnt that when Peju's condition deteriorated, she was admitted to the intensive care unit of the hospital after her husband paid an additional N1.5m.

"Peju kept complaining of severe pain, and her eyes had turned yellowish. At about midnight that Saturday, she was sedated intravenously. By 6.30am on Sunday, her husband was surprised to find out that his wife had been placed on a respirator. Dr. Renner told him that her condition had deteriorated through the night," the letter read.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the management of Premier Specialists' Medical Centre moved Peju to Evercare Hospital in Lekki Phase 1 for CT scan and dialysis.

The letter added, *"Immediately she arrived there, she was met by their medical team and taken to the ICU. Her husband was asked to pay another N1m at Evercare, and he made the payment immediately.*

"The head of the ICU detected that Peju did not have a pulse and emergency CPR commenced immediately. This failed and she was pronounced dead by 2.20pm on Sunday. It is clear that Peju bled internally from Friday after the surgery till Sunday when she died."

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When contacted, a representative of the hospital whose name Truecaller revealed as Eghonghon Olawepo-Adeoti (Dr Onyebuchi Nse), said, "I am sorry, I have no comment in respect of that particular incident. I have no information for you. I do not have any information to discuss with you on that."

In a similar development, Omolara, a peptic ulcer patient, was said to have been feeling severe pain when she rushed to the Beachland Specialist Hospital, Arepo, Obafemi Owode Local Government area of Ogun State, for treatment.

Omolara's friend, identified simply as Ayomide, lamented the lack of ambulance and alleged shoddy treatment by doctors and nurses at the hospital.

She tweeted, "My friend Lara had an ulcer attack...Her condition worsened in the evening...The doctor opted to put her on admission, so, I dashed back to her place to pick stuff that she'd be needing. When I returned, I met her and a nurse administering injections to her in the hospital ward."

"Lara insisted that she couldn't breathe well. Her conditions continued to worsen... Lara had lost consciousness when another doctor came in declaring that she is in a critical state."

"She was asked to be placed on oxygen but they were reluctant to get it, I went to the emergency room to get the oxygen...Lara was placed on oxygen..."

"They said the oxygen they have can't last up to 3 hours...The hospital had to refer her. They told me to get someone to pick us because the hospital's ambulance isn't available. We eventually got someone at about 2:30am."

"I thought they would let us go with the oxygen, a nurse only brought it to the car door and put it in her nostrils for a while, I even thought she was gonna go with us. They left us and told Lara's neighbor to move with the 'highest speed'."

"When we got to LASUTH, the doctors at the medical emergency announced Lara dead and they filled a form 'BID' (Brought in dead). Lara died! She died on my laps and in my arms."

When PUNCH Metro visited Beachland Specialist Hospital on Sunday, the Chief Medical Director, Dr Abdul-Lateef Ademola said, "After receiving treatment for ulcer and malaria, she returned home healthy. When she returned with difficulty in breathing, she was placed on oxygen and given medication. The persistent breathing difficulty indicated that ulcer wasn't the problem."

"We referred her to LASUTH for specialist care immediately and we confirmed that she might be having myocardial infarction or pulmonary embolism. Our ambulance driver was unreachable; so, her friend arranged an alternative means of transportation."

"We couldn't let them go with the oxygen because we had already exhausted our oxygen while treating her. We await an autopsy report."

Reacting to the incidents, @deejayneptune tweeted, "Nothing seems to be working perfectly in Nigeria anymore, it's not making sense at all. There is no assurance of making it to the next day, very sad. #JusticeForPeju #JusticeForOmolara."

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