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Family Faults Evercare Hospital, LASUTH for Death of Lagos Lawyer

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The family of a Lagos-based company Lawyer, has blamed her death on alleged negligence by Evercare Hospital, Lekki, Lagos and the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

The 40-year-old Lawyer, Mrs Ijeoma Oparanozie, and her niece were wounded, when their car was hit by a somersaulting vehicle penultimate Sunday night around ELF axis in Lekki, Lagos. The six-year-old son of the deceased Lawyer narrowly escaped death, but sustained head injuries.

According to Mrs Chinwe Chiazor, the elder sister of the deceased, first responders used a crane to remove her and other occupants from the accidented car. She was rushed to Evercare Hospital in Lekki, alongside her niece.

Mrs Chiazor said that though the hospital stabilised Oparanozie, who is also a member of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Lagos Branch, and did a medical investigation which indicated that she needed urgent surgery, it took hours deliberating on payment, and they refused to perform the surgery without receiving a N10 million fee for both patients.

"The accident happened around 8pm", she said. "I would also have been in that car. That I'm alive today, is God's grace. Ijeoma was unconscious, and was bleeding internally.

"She was stabilised at Evercare Hospital. They sent for CTI scan, and the result came out. They then told us that, she needed to be moved into ICU for surgery. I deposited N300,000. They however, insisted that we must pay N5 million each for Ijeoma and my niece, and that unless they receive the money, they would not commence the surgery.

"I noticed that my sister's head was beginning to swell and they told me it was because of internal bleeding, that blood was being sucked into her head.

"I was crying; I was begging them to start the surgery. They asked, 'What of the N2 million you said you and your husband will transfer?' I told them that I can transfer N1 million to them immediately, while my husband will transfer another N1 million first thing in the morning, as he does not operate the banking App. This was around 12 midnight.

"Ijeoma's company doctor, Dr Nwogu, came around 3am and assured them that the company would take full responsibility and pay the bill immediately they resume work in the morning. They refused to do the surgery, notwithstanding the guarantee given by their professional colleague and the company.

"As promised, the company transferred N10 million to Evercare in the morning. They now jerked the figure up to N30 million! They insisted on the N30 million, or they would do a referral. I do not know whether it was because they felt the company could pay more. They referred us to LASUTH."

According to Mrs Chiazor, her sister and niece were in a very bad shape by this time. "Our nightmare did not end with the referral, as Ijeoma was not attended to for four hours at LASUTH. They told us that there were no doctors on duty. They wanted to use a fibrator to resuscitate her but had to rely on CPR instead, as they said they did not have the equipment.

"My sister was in the ambulance for over four hours without any medical attention. It was only the nurse from the ambulance company that was attending to her, until she died. What will I tell her six-year-old son? She fought; she wanted to live for her son!"

Both LASUTH and Evercare Hospital, are yet to respond to the claims at press time.