

To: Attorney Smith

From: Christie Register

Date: Dec. 11, 2017

Re: John Q. Patient

Memo

[Sample]

After major surgery, and in particular following abdominal surgery, an ileus is a big concern, and the patient should be observed for this. Mr. John Q. Patient had many signs and symptoms on November 26, 2017, that were suggestive of an ileum or at least a significant change in condition that should've been called by the nurse to the physician.

Mr. Patient appeared to be getting better each day after his surgery on November 20, 2017. His NG tube was removed on the 22rd. His pain was decreasing, and he was getting out of bed and tolerating a liquid diet. He received 6 doses of pain medicine on the 24th and only 3 on the 25th. On the 25th, his pain level was 0, 3 and 4. His pain became drastically worse around 4:00 a.m. on the 26th, and he reported that his pain was a level 9 on the 0-10 scale. His pain did not alleviate with IV pain medication. On the 26th, from 4:20 a.m. until 4:20 p.m., he received 6 doses of pain medicine in only 12 hours which was a big increase. He was also more nauseated on the 26th than he was on the 25th and got 6 doses of nausea medication in only 12 hours (3/26/16).

Dr. Apple was on call for Dr. Orange. November 26, 2017, was a Sunday.

These symptoms were indicative of an ileus or an acute problem and should have been called to the physician on call for Dr. Orange:

Pain significantly worse than the day before.

Pain not relieved by IV pain medicine.

Nausea worse than the day before.

BP and heart rate dropped at 12 p.m. 83/50 70 (Leg/Med p. 315)
then increased at 4 p.m. 132/80 146 (p. 323)

[The VS changes happened after Dr. Apple's visit.]

He lost his appetite on 11/26/17- did not eat breakfast or lunch.

He had an episode of diarrhea at 6 a.m.

Hypoactive bowel sounds.

Did Jack Johnson, RN (Leg/Med pp. 322) call any of this to Dr. Apple? It is not documented. Mr. Johnson is a seasoned nurse and has held his

Michigan nursing license since 1982. I am not sure why he didn't recognize that Mr. Patient's condition was deteriorating. The narrative nursing notes are at the back of the binder in pages 411-416. There is no narrative note by Nurse Johnson about anything that occurred on the 26th, including the code, which is odd.

I'd like to know what the patient's wife recalls from that day. Pain increase? Nausea and vomiting? Dr. Apple's visit- what did he do? How long was he there? Was Nurse Johnson attentive and responsive?

Thank you for the opportunity to review this case. I am available for a meeting to discuss at your convenience.