

The Strategy May 2008

## A SAD LOSS

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9. Ungraded Talc known to be connected to Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (which Don developed) was used. Since his death, they no longer use this. They were aware it was linked to Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). Why was it used? Was it cheaper?

10. My husband's right lung was meant to be suctioned until all the fluid was removed at the gentle suction of 3KPA. RNSH admit that a transcription error caused his lung to be suctioned (vacuumed) at 10 times that value at 31KPA. This was left like that for almost 24 hours and was not spotted by Cardiothoracic Doctors, and the Spinal Unit's nurses till 8am the next day. All RNSH staff involved are culpable.

11. Cardiothoracic were ignorant of "Quadriplegic breathing" which makes it harder to breathe while sitting up when there are problems. They ordered him sat up in his wheelchair. He rapidly deteriorated. I begged the Spinal Nurse to return him to bed she refused. He suffered three hours of extreme torture trying to breathe against gravity. He had a Respiratory arrest that night. Why were they all so ignorant of his condition?

12. Cardiothoracic should have known not to sit up someone with suctioning of the lungs in progress as this can cause the Pleurodesis surgery to fail and can lead to Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome. This happened. Why did they allow this?

13. It is the responsibility of the surgeon to see that all procedures pre and post surgery are followed. Almost none of the regular procedures were followed. There is no excuse for this?

14. Spinal nurses, Doctors, and Cardiothoracic were grossly negligent over the next days. He was treated badly as his condition became dangerous. He began to hallucinate and gasp for breath. This was extreme cruelty and shocking for him to experience.

15. On the night of the first of his respiratory arrests, he called my name for three hours according to his roommate and THEY DID NOTHING. I was five minutes away and had given them instructions

to call me at any time if he needed me or things got worse.

The next five weeks in RNSH's Intensive Care Unit were horror-filled. I cannot get these dreadful images out of my head. I try to see him as he was before their negligence allowed him to be filled with infection, sepsis, fluid and God knows what. I cannot. I see my beloved husband tied and gagged by tubes. Both lungs drowning and full of fluid. MRSA and Klebsiellia Pneumoniae filled them with bloody mucus. I still see him with his tongue being forced painfully in and out, as he reached yet another respiratory arrest. One time he was breathing 50 breaths per minute. He was so frightened and I could not help him. An ICU nurse stood and did nothing. "I think he's trying to talk", she said blithely. AN ICU NURSE! It went on like this for five weeks. I feel like I have been in a war zone.

What I have relayed here is just the tip of the iceberg as to the dreadful suffering inflicted upon Don. Finally, he was allowed his wish, which was simply to get out of the filth and chaos, go home and die. Even then, after all they had done to him, it depended on conforming to their demand that the home respirator be taken away as soon as he got home. Apparently, there was not one other home respirator in RNSH or at Port Macquarie or anywhere else in the Northern Areas' Health Service. Why was this?

It was a death caused by gross negligence, ignorance, stupidity, arrogance, filth and cost cutting. I should not have to be chasing justice on behalf of my husband, daughters and myself. Those responsible should be prosecuted and or receiving disciplinary action for killing my husband Don Mackay and robbing our daughters of their wonderful Dad. Those most responsible should not be still practising inside Royal North Shore Hospital. It would be better for NSW residents if they were not in the health system at all.

Royal North Shore Hospital buries its mistakes.

The Mackay Family. PO Box 248 Port Macquarie 2444 NSW. Mob 0417 279 602 Ph. 02 6583 9622.