



March 3, 2014

Attorney General Kamala Harris  
1300 I Street Ste 1740  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sharon Levine  
President California Medical Board  
2005 Evergreen Street, Ste 1200  
Sacramento, C 95815

Dear Attorney General Harris and President Levine,

I am writing to bring to your attention the shocking events in Fresno surrounding Dr. Pervaiz Chaudhry, a heart surgeon who the Department of Public Health documented walking out on an open heart surgery patient, allowing a physician assistant to close the surgical site without supervision, and leaving the patient in a persistent vegetative state.

The case at Community Regional Medical Center briefly became a subject for debate on national television over allegations that the surgeon left the surgery to attend lunch. This Sunday's Fresno Bee revealed new shocking allegations from a hospital whistleblower that Chaudhry had a pattern of leaving heart surgeries before they were finished and that the hospital has covered up his negligence because he performs so many heart surgeries.

The former administrator Valerie Villalobos alleged in a new lawsuit that the hospital "aimed at removing any persons that would interfere with Dr. Chaudhry continuing to bring an unusually high number of patients and corresponding revenue to Fresno Heart."

The article also goes on to report that Dr. Chaudhry was suspended only for 14 days, following the Department of Public Health report, which would mean the peer review report would not be forwarded to the medical board.

We call upon both your offices to open investigations into the conduct of Dr. Chaudhry and Community Regional Medical Center. In Sunday's Fresno Bee, the hospital continues to maintain publicly that Chaudhry did nothing wrong and did not abandon his patient, despite the Department of Public Health report that could not be clearer on the matter.

The allegations paint a troubling portrait of a dangerous doctor and a hospital colluding to cover up his conduct. The amended complaint by the family of Silvino Perez also alleges that Dr. Chaudhry was known to abuse alcohol.

These allegations, which seem corroborated and appear credible, should lead to an interim suspension order suspending Dr. Chaudhry's license. In addition, Community Regional Medical Center should be investigated for its role in what appears to be a cover-up to protect a profitable doctor who repeatedly has disregarded the safety of his patients.

The physician peer review system has failed to discipline Dr. Chaudhry and even to report him to proper authorities. The hospital is unwilling to acknowledge a deficiency documented by the state that led to the tragic fate of one patient. Only due to a whistleblower, a patient lawsuit (rare in this state due to severe restrictions) and other hospital staff's courage in coming forward are we beginning to have a view of what appears to be a poster child case for the failure of doctor discipline in California. It deserves the full attention of investigators and prosecutors in both your offices.

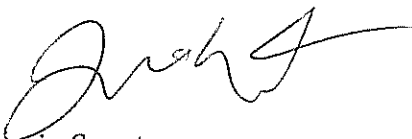
Thank you for considering this request. I don't need to tell you that the California public cannot feel safe about their medical care if heart surgeons are free to go to lunch before finishing open heart surgeries, then face no significant consequences when caught.

A report from still another whistleblower at the hospital alleges that when Silvino Perez was struggling for his life on the operating table on April 2, 2012, Dr Chaudhry was dining at the elegant Campagna restaurant in Fresno with members of the leadership team at the hospital.

The public deserves answers about these corroborated reports about Dr. Chaurdy's shocking conduct – who he was with that April day, what he was drinking and eating, and his alleged pattern of abandoning patients before his surgeries were complete. We request that both of your offices act immediately.

Please let me know if I can provide more information.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Court', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jamie Court  
President  
Consumer Watchdog