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Out-of-hours doctors gave 'dangerous' doses of drugs

Same care company employed German locum whose patient died after injection

By Caroline Gammell

TWO patients treated by the same out-of-hours service as a pensioner injected with a fatal overdose of painkillers were given "dangerous and inappropriate" doses, an inquest heard yesterday.

Take Care Now was responsible for employing Dr Daniel Ubani, a German doctor who injected David Gray with 100mg of diamorphine in February 2008.

The 70 year-old, who was treated for renal pain, was given up to 20 times the recommended dose. He died soon after the doctor left his home in Manea, Cambs.

At the inquest into his death, it was disclosed that two other patients were also given large doses of the drug by doctors

working for Take Care Now in the months leading up to Mr Gray's death.

An ambulance had to be called after the first incident, in April 2007, when a patient with severe back pain received 30mg of diamorphine.

In the second incident, in August of that year, a patient was given 30mg of the drug when the correct dose was between 2.5 and 5mg.

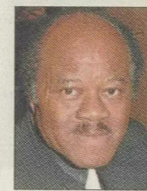
In both cases the injections were "thought to be dangerous and inappropriate", the hearing was told.

Dr Ubani, 67, was working on his first shift in Britain when he administered the painkiller to Mr Gray.

The inquest heard how the Nigerian-born doctor, from Witten, near Düsseldorf, was "exhausted" by the time he

saw any patients. He had flown to Britain the night before and was given a four-hour induction. He previously admitted tiredness led to the death.

The inquest is also investigating his treatment of two



Dr Daniel Ubani did not attend the hearing into the death of David Gray, despite being summoned

other patients seen on the same day as Mr Gray, one of whom subsequently died.

Dr Ubani refused to give evidence at the hearing, despite being summoned by the coroner William Morris.

He was employed by Take Care Now in 2008. The company was subcontracted by the Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust to cover out-of-hours shifts at the weekends.

Dr Ubani did not have to take an English language test or any clinical assessment in Britain because he was a doctor within the European Union.

Guidelines for doctors from outside Europe are far stricter, the inquest at Wisbech was told.

Dr Edward Reynolds, the medical director of On Call Care Ltd, an on-call doctor service, was asked to look into the checks made on Dr Ubani.

He said the doctor specialised in cosmetic surgery and had carried out very little GP

work with no experience in areas such as paediatrics.

"His CV is full of alarm bells," Dr Reynolds told the hearing. "If it had been presented to me, I would not have wished to hire this doctor."

Dr Reynolds said because Dr Ubani had been registered by the Cornwall PCT as a doctor within the EU, he was entitled to work anywhere in the country without further assessment.

He said there was a lack of understanding in Europe as to the type of opiate painkillers used in this country.

"This tragic case has really highlighted the difference in professional process in Europe as opposed to this country in terms of the use of strong drugs," Dr Reynolds said.

The inquest continues.

Drink-driving with a lady... on 4mph scooter

By Daily Telegraph Reporter

A GRANDFATHER on a mobility scooter was nearly four times over the drink-drive limit when he was stopped by police with a woman on his knee.

John Powell, 51, was taking the woman to the bank because she owed him money and he wanted to be sure he received it, magistrates in Tameside, Greater Manchester, heard.

After a pedestrian alerted police, Powell, of Stalybridge, was stopped while riding along the pavement and gave a breath alcohol reading of 138mg. The legal driving limit is 35mg.

Yesterday, he was fined £50 after admitting drink driving.

Speaking afterwards, he was unrepentant.

"I was only doing 4mph at the time so I wasn't going quickly but the police officer told me I'd been causing chaos. How could I have been causing chaos? It's only walking speed," he said.