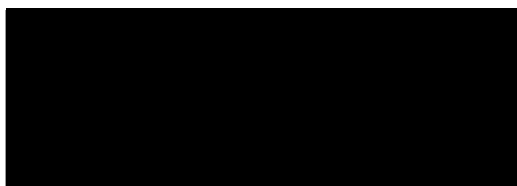


In July 2007 my late sister, Margaret Witherspoon, was transferred to ward 6, Mid Ulster hospital from the Royal Victoria hospital following an operation for a fractured femur. On transfer she had pressure sores on her back, which greatly concerned the nursing staff in ward 6. The conditions in ward 6 were far from ideal and left much to be desired. Some of the bays were overcrowded and materials were stacked in corridors, making thorough cleaning well nigh impossible. My sister's bed was approximately two feet from the adjoining bed. Inevitably she acquired MRSA and a short time later CD. Sometimes she would have to wait a long time before continence pads were changed. This caused much distress not only to her but also to visiting relatives. As relatives were not satisfied with the quality of care in ward 6 and after complaints were made, she was moved to isolation in ward 3. The nursing care there was excellent and attention to personal hygiene much improved. In January 2008 she was considered fit enough to be transferred to a nursing home. Whilst in the nursing home she was kept isolated, as staff there informed me that although she was in remission, she had not been given the all clear for MRSA and CD. After a few weeks she was re-admitted to ward 2 Mid Ulster with urinary problems. Some time later she had a recurrence of diarrhoea and was again moved to ward 3, where she died on 24 April 2008.

At no time was I given any information (oral or written) on CD or offered any protective clothing. I did make use of the hand gel provided, but brought along my own gloves. I did observe the nursing staff using gloves and aprons and washing hands before and after dealing with patients. No advice was given to relatives regarding laundry of patient's clothes at home, apart from keeping them separate. Ordinary polythene bags were used for soiled clothes, not the special dissolvable bags provided in some hospitals.

In my opinion CD was a contributory factor to the cause of my sister's death and should have appeared on the death certificate. There was a delay in releasing the body, because the death certificate had not been completed due to consultation between Dr Ryan, the consultant physician, the consultant microbiologist and the medical director of the NHSCT.

Signed :

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Mrs Roberta Colhoun.

Mrs Roberta Colhoun

Dated: *24th February 2010*