Today’s date

Hospital Name

Number

Liaison email address

Consumer Engagement Unit

Hospital address

Re: Complaint about Emergency Department Experience

To the Consumer Liaison,

My name is Jane Doe (DOB 12/03/1994) and I am writing to make a formal complaint regarding poor treatment I received whilst in the care of your Hospital by doctors Smith and John, along with the nursing staff on duty that night; 3rd December 2020.

I presented to the Hospital’s Emergency Department on Monday at approximately 8:10 pm after having a fall at my home. My friend brought me to ED because they were concerned I may have had a spinal injury and because I was in a great deal of pain.

When we arrived, my friend asked if I had any pins and needles or numbness, which I did up my left arm, spine and left leg to my fingers and toes. She told the attendant this and asked for them to arrange a bed for me to wait on as sitting on the injured hip was causing me extreme agony. I was placed on a hospital bed and left in a busy corridor where ambulance patients were being taken through triage, and my friend was not able to come with me.

While I was on the bed the triage nurses spoke to me and gathered an account of what had happened. They asked me to rate my pain level, to which I replied a 15/10 and reported that it was a level of pain that made me not want to be here anymore. I was concerned and communicated that my pelvic region needed to be looked at urgently as I was aware that my left ovary has a cyst and endometriosis follicles, is quite large, and has been flaring up. I was also aware that I have significant scarring and adhesions in the area.

I was finally taken to a cubicle at about 12:50 am and the doctor Smith spoke to me, examined me, and arranged for me to have xrays, blood tests, and a urine test. The doctor Smith returned and said my xrays came up with no fractures. I told her I was having a dizzy spell and she walked away. I thought she was going to get help, but she wasn’t, and I was left alone nearly passing out in the bed.

When the dizzy spell passed about ten minutes later, I asked another nurse who attended to me when I pressed the help button for a bed pan as I felt I really needed to urinate at that point. The nurse just dropped the bed pan on the bed, leaving me to fumble through my pain to place it properly and try to pee. I was able to lodge it under my bum but I missed and urinated on the sheet which was not cleaned.

I expressed my serious concerns to Dr Smith about going home when I was this dizzy and in so much pain. She didn’t seem to be too concerned and just kept repeating that I don’t need to be in emergency as nothing is broken. At this point I told her that I’d realised that the back of my head was actually quite sore and I thought maybe I had actually hit my head when I fell. This was not taken seriously or investigated whatsoever.

I asked them if they were going to check my pelvic region at all, due to the flareup being the likely cause of my fall and dizziness in the first place, and Dr Smith said flat out no, that Hospital is “not a gynae hospital” and that I should go to King Edward Emergency if I’m concerned about that. She and about 5 other hospital personnel including a doctor named John came to see me between about 4:30 am - 6 am pushing me to leave the hospital. I was begging for them to investigate my pelvic pain, head pain, and my dizzy spells and they were more interested in clearing the bed for someone else. I did try to get up and leave due to distress from them pushing me to leave several times, but I kept getting dizzy and had to lie down again.

At about 6 am, I’d had enough of the mistreatment from the nursing staff, so I let a nurse escort me to the exit. I called an uber to pick me up, and almost fainted several times on the way home.

Hospital failed me on this instance, like many others. They failed to treat me with the basic humanity, respect, dignity, and decency that all people deserve when they seek emergency services. They did not fully provide a care of duty to me that was required on this instance. Please note that I attended another Hospital on the following Monday and had an ultrasound showed I required urgent pelvic surgery due to my (expressed) pelvic issues, and concussion.

I hope that this complaint will be taken very seriously. Please advise me what actions and investigations are being undertaken to ensure that this does not happen again to another patient. I would like a full summary of all actions taken, and an explanation as to how you will be actioning a prevention plan for this lack of medical attention and care to patients in the future.

Please be advised that due to my health and mental distress, which has been worsened by my traumatic experience at Hospital, I have been unable to work and have been placed on medical leave by my GP since this event. I am unsure when I will be fit to return to work.

Here is a list of the outcomes I would like to achieve:

1. I would like an apology for the neglectful and harmful treatment I received whilst I was a patient at Hospital by the doctors and nursing staff.
2. I would like a detailed plan addressing how you are going to ensure that this poor treatment does not occur again to myself and others in the Hospital emergency department.
3. I would like an acknowledgement that I should have been either transferred in a patient transfer vehicle to King Edward Memorial Hospital or otherwise admitted to the ward for observation for dizziness due to my head injury which was not investigated by staff.
4. I would like a confirmation that Hospital will be undertaking training for all doctors and nurses on providing trauma-informed care.

I would prefer correspondence regarding this complaint to be handled in writing via email to my email address below. Can you please acknowledge receipt of my email, and provide me with an idea of how long it will take for me to receive a detailed response to my complaint?

Kind regards,

Jane Doe

Mobile, Address, Email