

Vicious, Alcohol-Fueled Assault Leaves One RN Victim Wary and Nervous

Healthcare violence knows no geographical boundaries, and is screaming for legal and administrative reform

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An April 21, 2016, article in the UK's GazetteLive describes a vicious assault on three hospital nurses by a patient family member.

Twenty-one-year-old Natasha Close reportedly punched the three nursing staff in the face, kicked one in the stomach, and pulled out another's hair.

The April 21st article, written by Lindsey Sampson, reported that Close had been drinking the evening before the assault, which occurred during early morning hours of April 9, 2016.

Around 1am on April 9th, Close received a telephone call informing her of her brother's hospitalization following a car accident, and summoning her to the hospital.

Once Close arrived at the hospital she met her relatives and spoke to a staff nurse. "Not apparently getting the answers she wanted," according to the GazetteLive, Close said, "She's a cheeky cow; she won't tell me what's going on." Then, swearing, Close demanded, "Who does she think she is?"

As a number of family members then gathered around the patient bedside, a second nurse asked them to keep the number of visitors down to two at a time. That nurse was "punched in the face, her hair was pulled and she was kicked in the stomach" by Ms. Close.

The first nurse attempted to intervene by grabbing Close's hand, whereby Ms. Close punched her in the right side of the jaw.

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When a third staff member tried to help, Ms. Close punched her in the face, kicked her and pulled her hair out in clumps. Close then went on to punch a police officer who tried to remove her from the hospital.

According to Close's attorney, "The incident followed a misunderstanding by an intoxicated Ms. Close, who thought the nurses were trying to stop her seeing her second brother, who she mistakenly believed was also being treated in the hospital." He added that, "Ms. Close is astonished by her own conduct on this occasion. She is ashamed."

Close was given a 12-month "community order" with 20 rehabilitation sessions and 40 hours' unpaid work, and was ordered to pay £50 pounds to each assault victim, £85 pounds in court fees.

One of Close's victims described the event as "horrific".

"It was absolutely horrific," said the 25-year-old nurse who preferred to remain anonymous. Directly following the assault, she describes, "I was in absolute agony, in my jaw, but I couldn't leave work because we wouldn't have had enough staff."

The victim, who had been out of work for two weeks following the attack, described being "wary and nervous" about returning. She added, "It's just sad that these people think they can come into a place you work and do that when you're just trying to help people."

Comments posted in response to the GazetteLive articles included:

Work-place assaults are bad, but when those workers are Nurses, Police Officers, or others trying to give care, the sentence should be doubled.

The sentence is an insult.

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*Until the justice system starts to hand out deterrent sentences then
[they] will continue to offend against decent people!*

Heck. I tend to agree.

Healthcare violence, which knows no geographical boundaries, does, in fact, need stricter laws and penalties; and our workers deserve formal safety programs and training protocol.

source:

<http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/ashamed-woman-punched-kicked-nurses-11216796>

<http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/it-absolutely-horrific-ae-nurse-11217576>