

Status of cardiac monitor at question in girl's death

By KERRY GILLESPIE
STAFF REPORTER

Staff at the Hospital for Sick Children are contradicting each other over a cardiac monitor implicated in the death of 10-year-old Lisa Shore, her parents say.

A hospital official testified at an inquest earlier this week that the alarm on the monitor attached to Lisa may not have beeped when her heart stopped, possibly because of a malfunction. But yesterday, the hospital's lawyer, Patrick Hawkins, said the co-metric monitor — which monitors heart rate and respiration — is still being used and is perfectly safe.

"The hospital has fully looked at the type of monitor in question, has been using that monitor for a number of years and is satisfied to this point with its functioning and capability," he said outside coroner's court.

The actual monitor that hospital staff say was used on Lisa has never been identified and is among the hospital's pool of about 200, he said.

Sharon Shore, who was sleeping

beside her daughter when she died, maintains no monitor was ever attached to her.

Lisa died Oct. 22, 1998, after being admitted for recurring leg pain brought on by a broken leg.

For her pain, she was given morphine on a self-controlled pump.

After only two days of testimony, the inquest was adjourned yesterday when the monitor's manufacturer asked to be involved.

Dr. Jim Cairns, deputy chief coroner, granted standing to GE Marquette Medical Systems, which makes the monitor, and gave the company time to prepare. Cairns apologized for the delay but added, "This inquest is important. . . . I do not want to try and squeeze this in."

Sharon Shore said she was saddened by the delay, but more so by what she called attempts by the hospital to deny its role in Lisa's death.

"It's reprehensible that the hospital is trying so hard to blame everybody but itself and will not accept responsibility in Lisa's death," Shore said.