

Sharon Deutsh, RN

May 19, 2002

Ms. Lesley Frey
Managing Editor, RNAO Journal
Registered Nurses Ass'n of Ontario
438 University Ave., Ste. 1600
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Ms. Frey,

I am writing in response to Dr. Janet Rush's article in the March/April 2002 edition of the RNAO Journal, entitled "Criminal charges rattle RNs".

There is another point of view that nurses are entitled to hear and consider.

I have composed what I believe is a well-thought-out and concise response to Dr. Rush's article, and expect that the Journal will publish it in its entirety in its next issue.

As an RNAO member, I am confident that the organization supports all of its members and their right to express various opinions. I also believe that in the interest of journalistic and nursing integrity, the Journal should not shirk from presenting all sides of important nursing issues.

In addition to the attached response, I am also enclosing the following:

- a) my C.V.;
- b) an authorization from the Shore family; and
- c) a copy of Lisa Shore's nursing flow sheet on the date of her death.

I would appreciate a written reply by letter or fax (905-889-2099) as to when you will be publishing my response.

Yours truly,

Sharon Deutsh, RN

I am writing in response to Dr. Janet Rush's commentary in the March/April Journal entitled "Criminal Charges Rattle RNs".

I assisted the family with nursing analysis at the coroner's inquest held in 2000 to investigate their 10-year-old child's death at the Hospital for Sick Children. It was this death which led to criminal charges being laid against two of the hospital's nurses.

The thrust of Dr. Rush's article is that these charges caused shock, disbelief, fear and concern among nurses across Ontario and the entire country, that it was outrageous that such a thing could have happened, and how important it was for the nursing community to support these two nurses in every way possible.

Dr. Rush has neglected to mention that the College of Nurses of Ontario is vigorously prosecuting these two nurses on multiple charges of professional misconduct relating to the care they provided to the child. It is also very relevant to note that the former Chief of Nursing at the Hospital for Sick Children received written and verbal cautions from the College with regards to her actions in the aftermath of the child's death.

I wonder whether Dr. Rush has familiarized herself with the nursing details of this case, or if her comments are simply a knee-jerk response to having two of her hospital's nurses charged with a serious criminal offence. It is undisputed fact that these two nurses admitted the child to their ward from the Emergency Department on a very quiet night, yet *never once checked the doctor's orders nor followed the applicable Hospital for Sick Children written protocols.*

Dr. Rush writes that the prevailing sentiment among Sick Kids' nurses is "This could happen to any of us." If Sick Kids' nurses truly believe that they could easily have provided the same level of nursing care to their own patients, then those patients would be far safer if they stayed away from the hospital. The nurses that I know are proud of their nursing skills, their dedication to their profession and their patients, and they would never find this type of nursing acceptable.

When this case comes to trial, nurses will have to make a choice: quality nursing or solidarity at any cost. It appears that Dr. Rush has already made her choice.