

October 4, 2016

Patti Willis, Vice President
University of Maryland Shore Health System

Dear Patti,

Please forgive the informality, but I have a long relationship with "Easton Memorial" and I know you have been its primary champion for many years (and I used to work with Katie at CBMM!). With this in mind, I want to share my recent experience at the hospital.

On September 9, after finding no other explanation for severe neck pain and an inability to swallow, I went to the ER at 6 pm, saw that it was busy, and asked my friend to take me to the Doc's In Urgent Center on Rt. 50. They were able to see me and ruled out strep throat. The CNRP on duty rightly insisted I return to Shore Health for a CT Scan, and even called ahead to be sure I was taken in as soon as I arrived. By 11 pm, it was determined that I was suffering a raging infection in my neck, caused by two loose screws.

Dr. Khalid Kurtom has been my neurosurgeon for several years, and it was quickly determined he needed to be called. He was at my side, in scrubs, in 20 minutes. Dr. Tim Schneider was there, and I've come to learn Dr. Kurtom's "Operating Room A Team" was called in and surgery began at about 1:30am. When it was over, all of the cervical hardware that Dr. Kurtom implanted in Dec. 2013 was removed and antibiotics were pumped in to fight the infection. Apparently two of the screws that held the plate in my neck worked their way loose, causing an abscess and puncturing my esophagus.

For the next 10+ days, I was the recipient of the most exceptional nursing care I have experienced. The 4th Floor Neuro Nursing Staff is a professional, compassionate and competent unit that addressed my needs without fail. I am doing an injustice to the women whose names I can't remember, but I can point to the wonderful nursing of Mellissa, Pam, Teresa, Becky, Michaela and an enthusiastic aide Tee, with a flower in her hair to match her scrubs. Every hospital staff member who entered my room was gracious and friendly.

The Knud-Hansen family has been associated with Easton Memorial /Shore Health since 1964, as physicians and patients. I was never more proud of this relationship than Sept. 9-19. Every person in the OR and on the 4th floor deserve congratulations. They already have my heartfelt gratitude.

Thanks for your time, and best wishes,

Emilie Knud-Hansen