

October 12, 2015

20 S. Lewisberry Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6050

Stephen T. Bartlett, MD
SVP, System Program Integration and System Surgeon-in-Chief
University of Maryland Medical System
22 S. Green St., Suite S8B08
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Dr. Bartlett:

As a recent patient of Dr. Khalid H. Kurtom (UM Department of Neurosurgery) and the UM Shore Medical Center at Easton, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding care that I received.

After missing work for nearly three (3) weeks in July, I was diagnosed with C6-C7 herniated disc. I was told I needed surgery and a referral to a neurosurgeon was made. I am a resident of Central Pennsylvania and quickly came to realize the challenges of securing the care of a reputable neurosurgeon in my area. I was distraught and immediately reached out to my brother-in-law, Dr. Steven J. White, for advice. Dr. White immediately shared with me the outstanding credentials of Dr. Kurtom. In no time, my MRI results were in his hands. I began researching and reading everything I could on Dr. Kurtom and the UM Department of Neurosurgery. Quite impressive for sure!

And quickly it all happened! Jessica Lizer, Medical Assistant and Office Coordinator, called me and we scheduled my initial consultation. She was very helpful and took into consideration my commute to Easton. On August 28, I had the good fortune to meet Dr. Kurtom. He was compassionate to my situation and upfront about his conservative practice of medicine. I met the criteria for surgical care. His confident demeanor put me at ease. But truly, it was his ability to effectively explain to me what my medical condition was and how it would be corrected through surgery, along with what I should expect afterward, that convinced me he was extraordinary in his field – truly gifted! And I was lucky enough to be his patient! I would be the recipient of his innovated and unique surgical procedure!

Crystal Hanifee, Surgical Coordinator, capably took it from there. She expeditiously made all the necessary phone calls. Surgery was scheduled! I was shocked at her ability to successfully schedule an immediate appointment with my family physician for medical clearance. In a few minutes, I was on my way to the Anesthesiology appointment. Immediately after that, my pre-op testing was completed. Crystal orchestrated all this in a matter of minutes and I was on my way home in less than two (2) hours! Wow!

On September 9, 2015 I arrived at the UM Shore Medical Center at Easton for my scheduled surgery. Was I nervous? No!! I knew I was in good hands with Dr. Kurtom as my surgeon! But the compassion continues! While I don't have last names, Ashley (and she should have had her baby by now!) was the RN caring for me in preparation for surgery. What a sweet young woman! I soon met Leah, the neurophysicist assisting during my procedure. Another caring and capable professional! And then the Anesthesiologist greeted me. John was caring and skilled and put me at ease with his sense of humor. Dr. Kurtom was ready and reviewed everything again before I was escorted to the OR by Tyler. Tyler took the appropriate actions to make me comfortable just before surgery commenced. As I awoke in recovery, I can share that I may not have been aware of all that was happening, but I knew I was being well cared for.

I was soon transferred to my room for the night and was amazed by the care I received for the next nine (9) hours or so. I was offered food immediately. Unfortunately, I had no appetite but kept a pack of crackers on my tray. I was thirsty and the staff made sure I had plenty of water (my choice) and ice as I

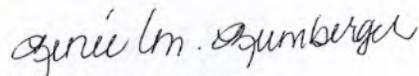
had explained that I like my drinks ice cold. Although a small gesture, I always had plenty of ice and I had only asked this of the first nurse or aide providing care to me! A short time later, a different RN or aide noticed me eating a cracker when checking my vitals. She kindly asked if I would like some graham crackers. I know I smiled when I said "yes, that would be very nice." I thanked her and before I knew it, two (2) packs of graham crackers were on my tray. I think I must have used my buzzer every hour on the hour for assistance to use the restroom. I was shocked that each and every time, an aide or RN was there immediately and always with a kind voice and willingness to help me. They would often tidy my bed before I returned. While all this may seem trivial, every kind and caring action was truly significant in my recovery. Imagine how positive my state of mind was as I was beginning the physical recovery process from my surgery. And yet another fond memory of the aide or RN that noticed how I struggled to get up and out of bed after neck surgery. She kindly and gently offered that if I would roll out of bed like a log, I would not struggle or feel any discomfort on my neck muscles. What simple wisdom that made an impactful difference, not only during my brief hospital stay, but for the first few days at home as well! Again, it can be the smallest gestures that mean the most and leave such a positive and lasting impression!

As I prepared for my discharge the next morning, I encountered more kindness and quality care by the physical therapist who walked me up and down the hall and had me demonstrate my ability to maneuver on steps. I regret that I cannot recall her name. And finally, my discharge process. As the nurse (again I do not recall her name) was reviewing all the instructions with me, she noticed that I was from Pennsylvania and not Maryland. She mentioned it politely and with a bit of confusion perhaps. I offered that my brother-in-law was a physician in the Emergency Department and shared his name. While her role doesn't often encounter that of the ED, she was not familiar with him. I further shared that he was the reason I was fortunate to be a patient of Dr. Kurtom.

The last bit of activity is very important to my testimonial as you see, I received superb care from so many kind and caring individuals because I was a valued patient at UM Shore Regional Medical Center and perhaps not because I was a family member to a staff physician. I must also share that I witnessed obvious and distinct respect of Dr. Kurtom by every individual I met throughout my surgical process. My entire experience with the various medical entities of UM is very remarkable. I have never experienced such compassion and care and rarely have I witnessed the same. As I reflect back, I can't recall that my deceased father (with multiple serious illnesses) or my deceased mother-in-law, had the good fortune of such care when it would have been most critical.

I am certain that you maintain a very hectic pace in your Senior Vice President role. While what I have shared is a bit lengthy, each encounter was significant to my overall experience and worthy of inclusion. I hope my testimonial validates the pride you have for such a fine institution in both education and health care. My heartfelt thank you to each individual, from the surgeon to the aide, for the lasting and positive impression!

Sincerely,



Renée M. Rumberger

cc: Kenneth D. Kozel, MBA, FACHE
President and CEO
University of Maryland Shore Health System
219 S. Washington Street
Easton, Maryland 21601

Chesapeake Neurological Surgery
490 Cadmus Lane
Easton, MD 21601