

March 20th, 2016

College des Medecins du Quebec
2170 Rene Levesque Blvd West
Montreal, Quebec H3H-2T8

Patricia Tolidano (on behalf of Irene Lacerte Laberge)
1180 Oscar Benoit #202
P.A.T, Quebec H1A-5E6
Email: LuvAllDoggies@aol.com
Phone: 514-351-0596
Cell: 516-668-1434

Additional persons that can speak to this complaint:
Denise Lacerte Paquette (Sister of Patient)
Same address and phone number as above

Complaint for Patient:

Irene Lacerte Laberge
Address at Time of Death (and prior 38 years):
3719 Boul Levesque O. #4
Chomedey, Laval, Quebec H7V-1G4

Date of Birth: February 27th, 1928
Date of Death: October 30th, 2015
Social Insurance: 202-779-476
Code de la Regie: 1201030916
Regie D'Association Medical: WAC1-2852-2716

Hospitals:

Sacred Heart
5400 Boul Gouin West
Montreal, Quebec H4J-1C5
Phone: 514-338-2222
File Number: 950287

Maisonneuve Rosemont
5415 Boul de l'Assomption
Montreal, Quebec H1T-2M4
Phone: 514-252-3400
File Number: 1516622

Primary Physician:

Dr. Jana Michalkova
Centre Medical Samson
4599 Boul Samson
Laval, Quebec H7W-2H9
Phone: 450-686-7170

Urologist / Specialist:

Dr. Guy Belair (seen at Sacred Heart as well)
5025 De Salaberry
Montreal, Quebec H4J-1J1
Phone: 514-331-2323

Oncologist / Specialist:

Dr. Audrey Roux (seen at Maisonneuve-Rosemont)
Phone: 514-252-3425

Pharmacist: Dr. Daniel Marin

3771 Boul. Levesque O
Chomedey, Laval, Quebec H7V-1G5
Phone: 450-681-6403

I, Patricia Tolidano, daughter and only child of Mrs. Irene Lacerte Laberge, grant you, the College des

Medicins du Quebec, full authority to obtain all medical records for my mother, Mrs. Irene Lacerte Laberge, in research of this matter.

Signature: _____
Patricia Tolidano (Daughter)

Witness: _____
Denise Lacerte Paquette (Sister)

To Whom This May Concern:

This letter is written in the hope that you may clarify some issues and most importantly that this situation may never happen again to anyone else. My mother died October 30th, 2015 in Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital. Regardless of her death, I am haunted by what has occurred.

My mother was a patient at Centre Medical Samson for over 30 years. Her family doctor was replaced by Dr. Jana Michalkova about 8 years ago, as her previous doctor had retired. She first met Dr. Guy Belair about 20 years ago, and was diagnosed with **interstitial cystitis**. The remedy was 8 weeks of holy torture – having sessions of RIMSO-50 filled and drained from her bladder. She recovered, but I found it was never a full recovery, as she had issues with urine incontinence. Her doctor claimed age was the issue – very common, no danger, and she would have to live with this forever. It was very awkward, as with travels or outings, she would need to relieve herself frequently, as well as the humiliation and discomfort of diapers and pads. Please note that my mother was a God-fearing and scrupulous woman – where every hair had to be in place. Also she was very honest and mostly forgiving.

Years go by, always plagued with this problem until September 11th, 2014. Now, the issue had elevated. She had seen Dr. Guy Belair in his office on De Salaberry during the summer as she felt she was having pain and problems ruining until that date. She was told to go to Sacred Heart from his office and see his assistant, Natalie. She could no longer urinate and they catheterized her with a urine bag taped to her leg.

I went with her on her next monthly appointment and sat in the room with her and her doctor. She asked Dr. Belair clearly: **“If cancer was the cause,”** and his instant response was **“Absolutely no, nor would it ever be, but she was old, and at 85, there was nothing to be done – it was an old, worn out bladder.”** I was furious to hear there was not even a possibility or a chance offered. And what more, no bedside manner or comfort. What perplexed me even more was that there were **no** tests – no x-rays, no ultrasounds, no MRIs, no blood tests, not even a single internal examination. I can hardly believe looking in someone's eyes you can run such a diagnosis! She was stunned, hurt, depressed, and felt that life would continue like this. This is not humane whatsoever.

Every week, a nurse from the CLSC came to change her bag at home and she went to the hospital each month where they attempted to fill and drain her bladder – a **very** painful procedure – hoping it would work. In the interim, she was diagnosed again with **interstitial cystitis** and proceeded with the same RIMSO-50 treatment (which can only be described as torture). During her October, 2014 appointment, my mother insisted there was something failing in the bladder – and Dr. Belair again responded, without examination, that it was her bladder failing and there was nothing to be done. Sadly, it was not until November of 2014, about 2 months later, where the catheter was removed for a very short time – just 24 hours, before having to be re-inserted. Time passed where she continued her monthly treatments which she would purchase from her pharmacist Daniel Marin. She purchased the treatments in packages of 4. After these were completed, she was to renew and was told that the only company who provided the medication was no longer producing the solution. There were no substitutes and we nearly lost hope. Finally, near February of 2015, the medication came available again and she could resume treatment, but

as there was such a time delay from the first 4 treatments, she was forced to start again and take 8 new treatments. In the interim, she was still very concerned about having cancer and that it was dropping further in her bladder.

Again with monthly visits with Dr. Belair at Sacred Heart Hospital and with the same complaints and concerns, and received the same responses – she was too old for anything to be done.

When it started to bleed in the summer of 2015, she went to her family doctor, Dr. Jana Michaelkova, who finally performed an internal examination to find that there was a growth and it seemed like it was blocking the urine and the source of her problem. On the next visit to Sacred Heart, she went from the urology department to the gynecology department, and a gynecologist performed an examination (the name is not in our records). The gynecologist determined she was in decent health otherwise and would operate to remove the tumor, but needed to run tests to determine the exact state. Unfortunately, all her fears were confirmed – it was malignant and metastasizing and there was nothing he could do anymore but refer to Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital as it was **cancer**, the very thing Dr. Belair had dismissed **without examination**.

Also note that Dr. Jana Michalkova told my mother that she had **three** other patients, all women between 75 and 85 years old who all had catheters and urine bags and the same diagnosis of “old bladder” with “nothing to be done” all by the same Dr. Guy Belair and all at Sacred Heart Hospital! This concerns me immensely as my mother had cancer, was misdiagnosed (**without examination**) and was sentenced to an earlier death. I feel strongly that had she been examined, much of this pain and suffering could have been avoided, her quality of life improved dramatically, and her life lengthened. There are others and I know you must research this issue – these are innocent people who put their trust and faith in Dr. Guy Belair only to be disregarded and tossed aside because of their age!

At Maisonneuve-Rosemont, she met her oncologist, Dr. Audrey Roux. She had no tests done at all – and even with this doctor, she was alarmed to see no testing had been done. One doctor even suggested that tests from her episode 20 years ago had not been done, and therefore the diagnosis may not have been correct or correctly resolved at that time either, leading to the issues over the next **two decades**.

My mother, as well as people of that generation, believe doctors are next to gods, and do not question the diagnosis or the treatments. I believe these are educated people who make the best decisions they are able to with their capabilities. But they are human. They swore an oath to help people live as well as possible. But again, what concerns me are the methods and bedside manner of Dr. Belair – no testing, no examination, and his treatment of the older population (remember, there are at least 3 other women with similar cases). These people all live in Laval and use that clinic, that hospital, and that specialist – urologist Dr. Guy Belair – because it is close and convenient to home.

Unfortunately, with the testing done at Maisonneuve-Rosemont, the tumor was malignant. The cancer was pointed out in 8 places and had metastasized to her hip bone. She was to stay Monday through Friday at their residence next to the hospital for her daily treatments of radiation. In the second week of treatment, she had an unbelievable diarrhea – completely disabling (**14 times** in a day) and in terrible pain all the time (she was given morphine for the pain). In the third week, Dr. Roux admitted her to the emergency department in Maisonneuve-Rosemont to investigate the source of the diarrhea, hoping it was bacterial. Tested that it was not the case, but rather a side-effect of the radiation. This was not possible and absolutely incorrect – my mother had been complaining about diarrhea for weeks before starting her treatment. She was admitted to the hospital in Room 6402. This Dr. Roux had told my mother she had at

least 6 months and maybe one to two years to live, but no one knew for sure. Within the last 2 weeks she lost **95 pounds**. She was admitted under terminal care!

She passed away on Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 2:10 AM. She did not even get a chance to complete her radiation treatment! She did not live another 6 months, and this should be investigated as well!

The only respite is that she is no longer in constant pain, no longer having terrible, **misdiagnosed** diarrhea, and being cleaned constantly. This was nothing short of a living hell for her.

I am beseeching you to investigate the care from Dr. Guy Belair, especially as we are aware there are other patients who appear to be in the same situation and may have also been misdiagnosed. This was medical negligence and I would appreciate a follow-up as to your findings.

Also to be investigated is the oncologist, Dr. Audrey Roux – who even the day before her death left me a message that “all was well” and they were “seeing progress with the cessation of the diarrhea.” The night before my mother died, Dr. Roux came to the room to say how well it was going while my mother was already in a coma. This is not professional care. Please follow-up on your findings here as well.

Also to be investigated is Dr. Jana Michalkova, who waited 8 months, until there was bleeding, to perform an examination on my mother. There is no reason a family physician, who is seen very frequently, should not take the time to do that examination early or refer for a full gynecological exam. It seems as if everyone here thought it was someone else's job to take care of my mother, but really, it was the job of **all of them!**

Expectations of This Letter:

1. Reprimands for all doctors of care of Mrs. Irene Lacerte Laberge
2. Dr. Guy Belair should never treat patients again
3. Clearer responsibilities for family doctors (Dr. Jana Michalkova), both in terms of treatment and avenues to report concerns (she was afraid to elevate this problem for fear of losing her medical license or other issues)
4. Better resources for seniors for care and medical issues
5. More responsibility for family doctors to provide greater transparency for health concerns and follow-ups – the time between scheduling an appointment, either with or without referral, as well as testing and follow-up visits is absurd
6. Family doctor to provide assistance in scheduling specialists – in order to avoid waiting 3, 6, or 9 months for appointments (these are actual wait times for my mother).

I am praying that you will understand and take action where warranted. I certainly want and eagerly wait to know the outcome of this investigation.

I remain.

Always,