

Outlook on Halton Hills

At least 7 RNs support Dr. Ford says lawyer

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"I want to be fair to everybody - to the patients," replied Dr. Hoddnott. Dr. Hoddnott said Dr. Ford gets along well with patients and other doctors.

He also admitted that Dr. Ford generally is an accessible physician.

Mr. MacKenzie questioned Dr. Hoddnott about the opinions of Dr. Al Thompson, former Chief of Staff. Dr. Thompson has referred three patients a week to Dr. Ford for eight years, said Mr. MacKenzie.

Dr. Hoddnott conceded that Dr. Thompson is a well respected leader of doctors in Georgetown and that he indicated "he'd never had any problems with Dr. Ford's patients."

Dr. Thompson assisted Dr. Ford in the delivery room many times, said Mr. MacKenzie.

Mr. MacKenzie also questioned him about the opinions of Dr. Allister MacIntosh, former Chief of Staff of the MAC and now a coroner.

Dr. MacIntosh has referred five to ten patients a month to Dr. Ford for eight years and he has had no concerns, said Mr. MacKenzie.

Dr. Adrian Hobart, who frequently assisted Dr. Ford in deliveries, said Dr. Ford's surgical technique is the "best of anyone in the area," said Mr. MacKenzie.

He said a host of other doctors "unreservedly expressed confidence in Dr. Ford" in sworn affidavits, to the hearing board.

At least seven registered nurses also submitted their support for Dr. Ford, said Mr. MacKenzie.

Dr. Hoddnott conceded that Dr. Ford is "affable" and "popular with the nursing staff."

He also admitted he referred patients to Dr. Ford for certain procedures up until late 1986 and possibly right up until his privileges were revoked.

Mr. MacKenzie pointed to a "cease and desist" motion passed by the MAC in November of 1986. That motion, to stop investigating Dr. Ford, passed with a 12-4 margin, said Mr. MacKenzie.

Dr. Hoddnott said he didn't vote on the motion.

"You must have recognized you were in a very distinct minority," said Mr. MacKenzie.

He said no matter which way that vote went it was likely to "tear hospital staff and nursing staff apart and probably the community."

Turning his attention to the April 7 meeting in which Dr. Ford's privileges were revoked, Mr. MacKenzie said Dr. Ford was not invited to that meeting, nor was he told about it although he was in the hospital at the time.

Dr. Hoddnott also conceded that none of the doctors who supported Dr. Ford had their opinions made known at the April 7 meeting.

Only Medical Staff President Craig Browning gave evidence supporting Dr. Ford at the April 7 meeting saying there was "general support for Dr. Ford among the medical staff," said Dr. Hoddnott.

"Don't you think the members of the board should have been fully informed on April 7?" Mr. MacKenzie asked.

"I think they were," replied Dr. Hoddnott.

Dr. Hoddnott also said although Dr. Robert Gail conducted his report of Dr. Ford in January of 1985, Dr. Ford didn't see the report until a year later.

About Dr. Kurdyak's report Mr. MacKenzie asked, "didn't Dr. Kurdyak look at 20 D and C cases and say they were all justified?"

Dr. Hoddnott acknowledged that the report said that.

Dr. Kurdyak's report generally went along with Dr. Ford's practices and only questioned a few cases, Mr. MacKenzie indicated.

Among the areas studied in Dr. Kurdyak's report were hysterectomies on women under 35 years of age, stress incontinence repairs, IUD exchanges, D and C operations with certain sterilization techniques.

Mr. MacKenzie said in 19 of 21 hysterectomy cases examined, Dr. Kurdyak "appeared to support the procedure, in four of five cases of stress incontinence he had sufficient documentation for the procedures, and that his D and C procedures were "not out of line."

All of the cases were for "in-patients" at the hospital.

Mr. MacKenzie also said the numbers involving the "out-patients" were also generally not questioned by Dr. Kurdyak.

Mr. MacKenzie said Dr. Gail's report acknowledges patients at Georgetown hospital are younger than at other hospitals and therefore more families of child-rearing age might be responsible for more D and C operations.

Dr. Hoddnott also admitted he wanted to take over preparing the minutes for some MAC meetings because the secretary was prone to "editorializing" in his prepared minutes.

About Dr. Hoddnott's meeting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons Mr. MacKenzie asked "why not have someone more favorably disposed towards (Dr. Ford's) practice at the meeting."

Dr. Hoddnott replied: "There was

no concern expressed about my lack of favorableness towards Dr. Ford."

He also said Dr. Kurdyak's report was seen as "soft" by the College and not likely to help the MAC come to a decision.

Dr. Hoddnott also admitted the new rules prepared by the MAC which Dr. Ford felt were aimed at him were never formally approved.

Under questioning from Mr. MacKenzie, Dr. Hoddnott revealed that there was resentment among doctors at the Georgetown Medical Centre towards Dr. Ford because of his policy of accepting patients without referrals. In 1982, Dr. Elliott Halparin had written a letter to Dr. Ford complaining about that practice saying he was taking "bread and butter" from the family physicians' tables.

Criticism from Georgetown Medical Centre members Dr. Donald Trant, Dr. Alex Furness and Dr. Debbie Zeni were levelled at Dr. Ford, said Dr. Hoddnott who is also a member of the medical centre.

Dr. Hoddnott said there was "probably some resentment" from the Georgetown Medical Centre members towards Dr. Ford.

While Dr. Ford's gynecological practice was criticized much earlier, Dr. Hoddnott admitted the first criticism of Dr. Ford's obstetrical practice apart from cases of premature ruptured membranes, came in January 1987.

Dr. Hoddnott also testified that Dr. Kumar was "getting static" about the Dr. Ford controversy and that "she felt she was losing patients" because of it.

He said he took "considerable personal abuse repeatedly at medical staff meetings" because he wouldn't discuss cases he'd investigated in Dr. Ford's practice.

"To this day most physicians know nothing about the investigations," he said.

He said a Milton obstetrician, Dr. Florence Jackson, is now providing relief services for Dr. Kumar at the Georgetown hospital.

Dr. Hoddnott concluded his testimony by saying most of the problems with Dr. Ford's practice is "based on incompetence in judgment rather than incompetence in technique."

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