

Ebola Nurse Nina Pham Used as PR Pawn, Damaged by Experimental Medications

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She became the face of the Ebola crisis during its publicity peak last fall. But nurse Nina Pham, the first known case of an individual contracting Ebola within the U.S., is now suing the parent corporation of her former employer, which she says violated her personal privacy and left her chronically ill by exploiting and neglecting her during the outbreak.

Pham reportedly filed a lawsuit on March 2 in Dallas County against Texas Health Resources, the overseer of Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital where she contracted Ebola while treating “patient zero” Thomas Eric Duncan. The 26-year-old nurse says she now suffers from constant nightmares, body aches and insomnia due to the experimental medications that were forced upon her while in isolation.

She also says the hospital was negligent in properly training both her and the other nurses in how to safely care for Ebola patients, resulting in her contracting the disease. According to Pham’s lawyer, the nurse is seeking damages for physical pain, mental anguish, medical expenses and loss of future earnings.

During an exclusive interview with *The Dallas Morning News*, Pham explained that her goal is to “make hospitals and big corporations realize that nurses and health care workers, especially frontline people, are important. And we don’t want nurses to start turning into patients.”

“I wanted to believe that they would have my back and take care of me, but they just haven’t risen to the occasion,” stated Pham to the paper about how she was treated at Texas Health.

Pham says Texas Health made her “a symbol of corporate neglect”

As images of Pham and her story were being plastered all across the media, the nurse says she was still given inadequate safety wear that left her exposed to the hemorrhagic virus. Pham and other nurses were also made to become custodians, she says, in the cleanup of Ebola-infected waste that was piling up inside the [hospital](#) due to nobody wanting to touch it.

Pham describes her fate as being made “a symbol of corporate neglect — a casualty of a hospital system’s failure to prepare for a known and impending medical crisis.”

Despite being Duncan’s primary [nurse](#), Pham says she was among the last to be informed that he had tested positive for Ebola. The entire hospital became stricken with panic as a

result, leading to chaos and failed protocols that exposed Pham and her close nurse friends to a disease that could have killed them.

"You'd think the primary nurse would be the first to know," she stated to *The Dallas Morning News*, adding that she and her colleagues "fought in the trenches together," despite neglect from the hospital.

"I broke down and cried, not because I thought I had it but just because it was a big 'woah, this is really happening' moment."

Experimental Ebola "medicine" has left Pham chronically ill

Concerned about being paraded around in the media and exploited, Pham says that after she tested positive she asked that "no information" about her be released to the media. Instead of honoring her wishes, the hospital allowed Pham to be filmed while speaking to a doctor in a hospital room, with video footage later released to the public without her permission.

Pham was also given [experimental](#) medicine that she says left her with chronic fatigue and pain, as well as high liver enzymes that cause her to become ill on a regular basis.

"I don't know if having children could be affected by this, but that's something I worry about," she explained.

Sources for this article include:

<http://res.dallasnews.com>

<http://www.reuters.com>

<http://www.nbcnews.com>

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