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St. Joseph Hospital Transfers Patient to Mexico

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The article describing St. Joseph's Hospital transfer of Antonio de Jesus Torres Aguayo to a Mexican hospital, is shocking. St. Joe's Barrow Institute is a premiere medical facility for head trauma. To transfer a comatose crash victim to a lesser facility, one unprepared for the patient, for financial, not medical reasons, is unethical. It may also be criminal. Further injury suffered during transfer or from inadequate care in the receiving hospital, is preventable assault.

To transfer this patient, a physician had to sign a hospital discharge and transfer order. Did an Arizona physician put his or her medical license at risk simply to save St. Joseph's Hospital a few dollars? Doing so would be in conflict with the Hippocratic Oath we have all sworn, which, in part, stipulates that,

"Whatever houses I may visit, I will come for the benefit of the sick,
remaining free of all intentional injustice...; I shall do no harm."

Without a physician's order, the transfer violates the Arizona Hospital License Act. In either case, moving a sick patient to an inferior facility for strictly financial reasons, is an intentional injustice, harmful to the patient.

If common sense, professional integrity, and human charity cannot restrain Arizona Hospitals from sending abroad, patients unable to pay for care, than our legislature must act to prevent this cruelty.