# Father forced from critically ill daughter’s bedside faces up to £100,000 legal bill after wrongful arrest loss



A father who was forcibly removed from his critically ill daughter's hospital bedside by police now finds himself facing a daunting legal bill of up to £100,000 after losing his wrongful arrest case. Dr Rashid Abbasi, an NHS consultant, attempted to pursue a civil claim against Northumbria Police for wrongful arrest, false imprisonment, and assault stemming from the heart-wrenching incident that occurred in August 2019 at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle.

Dr Abbasi's six-year-old daughter, Zainab, suffered from Niemann-Pick disease, a debilitating genetic condition that severely impacted her health and led to a protracted dispute between her parents and medical staff over her care. Disturbing police bodycam footage revealed the chaotic scene, showing Dr Abbasi shouting and reportedly biting officers as they restrained him. Newcastle Crown Court subsequently ruled that Dr Abbasi's actions had instigated the violence in the paediatric unit, with the judge labelling him a "menace" on the ward. This verdict has left Dr Abbasi liable for not only his own legal costs but also a substantial portion—between 60 to 70 percent—of the police's legal fees.

The emotional turmoil that led to this incident can be traced back to a heartbreaking decision by the care team. In August 2019, doctors informed Dr Abbasi and his wife, Dr Aliya Abbasi, that Zainab was dying and that they would not pursue aggressive treatment options any further. The couple, both medical professionals, had previously successfully advocated for Zainab’s treatment during critical episodes, believing she could continue to survive with appropriate care. They clashed with hospital staff, arguing vehemently for further tests and indicating that Zainab could benefit from alternative treatments.

The police were reportedly called in as a last resort following escalating tensions surrounding the couple’s insistence on continuing care. According to the hospital trust, their involvement was necessitated by a potential breach of the peace, a point upheld by the court judgement that noted Dr Abbasi was acting like "a coiled spring" ready to escalate the situation. In a moment of desperation, Dr Abbasi was physically forced away from Zainab's bedside, leading to utter devastation for him and his wife.

In the immediate aftermath, Dr Abbasi expressed profound emotional distress, particularly over the manner in which he was removed. He contended that the police had accepted that he was not aggressive before their intervention, thus raising questions about the appropriateness of their heavy-handed tactics. Despite attempts to recover costs through a one-way cost shifting regime, it appears the police's stance against this claim will force Dr Abbasi into significant financial hardship.

The complexities of this case further highlight the fine line between medical ethics and parental rights. The Abbasis were not just concerned parents but experienced medical professionals who felt qualified to challenge the decisions made by their daughter's healthcare team. The case has stirred public interest and sparked discussions about healthcare, parental rights, and police procedures in sensitive situations, raising essential questions regarding how such incidents are handled in hospitals.

As the family continues to grapple with the aftermath of this traumatic event, the focus remains on the implications for both their future and the broader ethical dilemmas faced by healthcare providers and families in similar situations. The Abbasis’ experience underscores the profound and, at times, painful intersections within the medical system, where decisions about life and death are made amidst urgent and emotional contexts.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14765887/Father-dragged-away-dying-daughters-hospital-bedside-police-faces-legal-bill-100-000-losing-wrongful-arrest-case.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-tyne-53641034> - In August 2019, Dr. Rashid Abbasi, an NHS consultant, was forcibly removed from his critically ill daughter Zainab's hospital bedside by police after refusing to leave when doctors decided to withdraw her life support. Zainab, aged six, suffered from Niemann-Pick Disease, a rare genetic condition. The incident led to Dr. Abbasi pursuing legal action against Northumbria Police for wrongful arrest, false imprisonment, and assault. The hospital trust stated that involving the police was a last resort after the situation escalated. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-tyne-53641034?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://christianconcern.com/cccases/the-abbasis/> - Dr. Rashid Abbasi and his wife, Dr. Aliya Abbasi, both medical doctors, faced a dispute with hospital staff over the care of their daughter, Zainab, who had Niemann-Pick Disease. The hospital decided to withdraw life support without the family's consent, leading to Dr. Abbasi's arrest in August 2019 for refusing to leave Zainab's bedside. The Christian Legal Centre supported the Abbasis in challenging reporting restrictions and pursuing legal action against the police. ([christianconcern.com](https://christianconcern.com/cccases/the-abbasis/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/father-to-take-legal-action-against-police-after-being-dragged-from-dying-daughters-hospital-bed/135322.htm> - Dr. Rashid Abbasi, an NHS respiratory consultant, was arrested in August 2019 for refusing to leave his terminally ill daughter Zainab's hospital bedside after doctors planned to withdraw her life support without the family's consent. The arrest was captured on police body camera footage, and Dr. Abbasi later suffered a heart attack. He is pursuing legal action against the police for wrongful arrest and considering action against the NHS. ([christiantoday.com](https://www.christiantoday.com/article/father-to-take-legal-action-against-police-after-being-dragged-from-dying-daughters-hospital-bed/135322.htm?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rashid-abbasi-bodycam-footage-police-zainab-hospital-nhs-a9651326.html> - Shocking footage emerged of Dr. Rashid Abbasi being forcibly removed from his critically ill daughter Zainab's hospital bedside by police officers during a dispute with hospital staff over her care. Zainab, aged six, suffered from Niemann-Pick Disease. The incident led to Dr. Abbasi pursuing legal action against Northumbria Police for wrongful arrest, false imprisonment, and assault. ([independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rashid-abbasi-bodycam-footage-police-zainab-hospital-nhs-a9651326.html?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/698184-dad-dragged-away-from-dying-daughter-s-bedside-takes-legal-action> - Dr. Rashid Abbasi, a British Pakistani doctor, was forcibly removed from his daughter Zainab's hospital bedside by police after refusing to leave when doctors decided to withdraw her life support without the family's consent. The incident, captured on police body camera footage, led to Dr. Abbasi pursuing legal action against the police for wrongful arrest and considering action against the NHS. ([thenews.com.pk](https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/698184-dad-dragged-away-from-dying-daughter-s-bedside-takes-legal-action?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/697353-pakistani-couple-beaten-by-police-as-their-daughter-died-before-them> - Dr. Rashid Abbasi and his wife, Dr. Aliya Abbasi, both medical doctors, were subjected to force by Northumbria Police as they sat by their six-year-old daughter Zainab's hospital bedside. The hospital staff had called the police to remove the couple after deciding to withdraw Zainab's life support without the family's consent. The incident led to Dr. Abbasi pursuing legal action against the police for wrongful arrest and considering action against the NHS. ([thenews.com.pk](https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/697353-pakistani-couple-beaten-by-police-as-their-daughter-died-before-them?utm_source=openai))