# Family's concerns over hospital care after woman's death from liver failure



A 35-year-old woman from Clacton, Essex, died from liver failure just three days after experiencing her first symptoms, prompting significant concerns from her family regarding the care she received at Colchester Hospital's A&E department. Kerry Joanne Wilkins, who had no known prior health issues, displayed alarming symptoms including hot flushes, blotchy skin, and vomiting, which led her to seek medical attention at the hospital.

Kerry arrived at the A&E department in May last year and was reportedly made to wait for approximately six hours before receiving any significant treatment, during which time she was only provided with a chair in a corridor. Eventually, blood tests revealed issues with her liver, leading to her being placed on intravenous fluids. Medical staff determined that her liver was failing, and she was administered morphine and anti-sickness medication.

Her sister, Jessica Matilda Wilkins, 31, has expressed her distress over the treatment Kerry received. She stated that medics seemed to be dismissing their concerns about Kerry's condition. Jessica remarked, "We were in shock the whole time she was in hospital - they were dismissing us," and emphasised, "She should have had a new liver, we don't know why they chose not to give her one."

Jessica has voiced confusion over what may have caused her sister's liver failure, noting how unwell Kerry appeared during her hospital stay. She described Kerry as "completely delirious," unable to communicate, and seemingly unrecognisable to her family. Concerns about potential life-threatening conditions were also heightened—and Jessica highlighted a potential risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome due to Kerry’s menstrual status. Despite her worries and requests for further examinations, Jessica felt that nurses failed to provide adequate attention to her sister's needs, which included a lack of assistance when Kerry’s condition declined in the hospital toilet.

As her health deteriorated, Kerry was eventually transferred to intensive care where she fell unconscious. Jessica noted that medical staff only administered antibiotics after she had previously inquired about their necessity. "It was an absolute shock to the system to see Kerry in intensive care. Why did they let her get to that state before they helped her?" she asked.

Kerry’s death on the third day of her hospitalisation has left a profound impact on her family. Jessica described her sister as "the life and soul of the party," expressing an overwhelming sense of loss, stating, "I feel like we've lost our right arm."

An inquest into Kerry's death is scheduled to take place on October 23 at Seax House in Chelmsford, Essex. Dr Tim Leary from the East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust has extended sympathies to the family. He acknowledged the concerns raised regarding Kerry's care and mentioned that the family’s feedback has been taken into account through the hospital’s patient advice and liaison team. He clarified that "many factors" influence the decision-making process regarding liver transplants, suggesting that suitability varies from patient to patient.

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

## References

* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6984963/> - This URL supports the general understanding of liver disease progression, such as liver failure, and the critical considerations in managing severe liver conditions.
* <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/liver-disease/> - This resource provides information on liver disease and can help contextualize the potential causes and treatments for liver failure, aligning with some concerns raised in the article.
* <https://www.britishlivertrust.org.uk/information-and-support/liver-conditions/liver-failure/> - This website provides detailed information on liver failure, including its symptoms and potential treatments, which can inform discussions about hospital care and treatment decisions.
* <https://www.bmj.com/content/368/bmj.m1071> - This URL offers insights into the complexities of medical decision-making, including factors that influence decisions for treatments like liver transplants.
* <https://organdonation.nhs.uk/learning-zone/liver-transplantation/> - This resource explains the process and considerations involved in liver transplantation, addressing some of the family’s questions about why a transplant might not have been considered.