

**INQUIRY INTO OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
THE NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 9 July 2019

Partially
Confidential

About 3 years ago I went to Mona Vale Hospital and my appendix had to be removed. I didn't experience any problems whatsoever.

I was feeling unwell and called into Mona Vale Urgent Care Centre on 10th June. The staff at the Urgent Care Centre examined me and took some blood samples as well as injecting some fluid. They advised me that if I don't feel better soon they would suggest I go to the Northern Beaches Hospital.

Later in the day the doctor who saw me earlier in the morning at the Urgent Care Centre phoned me and asked if I was still feeling pain just under my right breast and after I answered yes, she advised me to go to the Northern Beaches Hospital.

I caught a taxi to the hospital. I mentioned to the staff that I was referred to the hospital by the Urgent Care Centre and they looked up the documents that had been sent to them from the Urgent Care Centre. After some time I was admitted and advised I would have to have an operation to remove my gallbladder. The operative diagnosis is: Gangrenous cholecystitis with empyema.

The operation happened the next day and that went OK.

The problems I experienced were:

1. The day before I was due to leave the hospital (11th June, 2019) a Dietician interviewed me in my room and told me there were serious considerations re my diet and that I had to be very careful what I ate, particularly within the first 2 weeks after the operation. She said she would give me a list of foods etc to avoid and that would be included with the Discharge Summary. When I left the hospital I looked at the discharge documentation and could not find anything about my diet. I phoned on Saturday and after 18 minutes waiting on the phone was advised that the dieticians don't work over the weekend and to ring them on Monday. I phoned on Monday and was told that instead of listing the foods I should avoid etc. she would send me a list of dieticians near where I live. The list of dieticians was mailed to me and arrived on Monday 22nd June. If not for Doctor Google and all the online advice which specifically says the first week is the most important time for making sure you eat correctly what would I have done.
2. The Discharge Summary advises that the patient follow up with the doctor who performed surgery in 2 weeks after the operation. I phoned and asked for an appointment with my doctor and was given a date/time for this visit. I was also told I had to go to the Outpatients section for this visit. When I went to Outpatients I was asked to sit down and told the doctor would see me soon. I didn't see the doctor who performed my operation coming out to see clients but a doctor asked me if I was there about fracture problems. I told her I had a gallbladder operation not a fracture. After sitting there for about an hour I asked the same doctor if she could help me as I hadn't seen anyone. She took the matter up with staff and it was discovered that the person who made my booking on the phone had incorrectly allocated me to the fracture clinic and not specifically to the doctor who performed my operation. I had to make another appointment with my doctor for another day.
3. I was prescribed Ibilex. I didn't read the leaflet just the directions on the packet as I was sure the doctor who prescribed it would know what he was doing and during my time in hospital I had to wear a red coloured arm band that was acknowledging I was allergic to penicillin. After taking Ibilex I came out in an horrific rash and went to my local doctor who told me immediately to stop taking it. When I looked at the Ibilex documentation it said: "Do not take Ibilex if you have had a serious allergic reaction to penicillin. You may have an increased chance of being allergic to Ibilex if you are allergic to penicillins."

The operation looks as if has been OK but I have not been impressed by the 3 experiences above.