

# Mutner sues Mulago hospital for wrongful death of her daughter

**Negligence.** Doctors left a surgical chip in her abdomen.

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A mother has filed civil suit charges against Mulago National Referral Hospital doctors over negligence in the controversial death of her 27-year-old daughter, Moureen Nabukalu.

Ms Christine Sentamu, the mother of the deceased, sued Mulago doctors for leaving a surgical equipment inside her daughter's stomach, which she said, led to her death.

Court records indicate that in June 2017, the late Nabukalu developed abdominal pain and she was rushed to hospital for an operation.

She was examined and the tests confirmed that she was suffering from Gallstones.

Gallstones are solid particles that form from bile cholesterol and bilirubin in the gallbladder.

The gallbladder is a small sack-like organ in the upper right part of the abdomen. However, it is not yet clear whether she had cholesterol stones or pigment stones.

The mother, through Yiga and

company advocates, on Friday petitioned court in Kampala, seeking redress and compensation for the unexpected loss of Nabukalu.

In her suit, she contends that the doctors' negligence deprived her of necessities in life, since her daughter was her source of livelihood.

The deceased had completed school and was pursuing her career as a therapist, earning a monthly salary of Shs400,000.

Court documents show that the operation in question took place on October 13, 2017.

The doctors who allegedly operated on the deceased were: Dr Richard M, Dr Kiyemba, Dr Gamukama and Dr Kituka.

#### After surgery

The records show that after the surgery, the deceased experienced excruciating abdominal pain, compelling her mother to return her to Mulago for a scan.

The doctors did not disclose the findings to her. It is not clear why the doctors did not act on the findings but they instead discharged her on October 17, 2017 and told her to return on October 26, 2017.

When the late Nabukalu returned home, the situation worsened and her mother sought an alternative medical

#### KEY ISSUES AT HAND



**Deprived.** In her suit, she contends that the doctors' negligence deprived her of necessities in life, her source of livelihood.

**Intensive care.** Although she was supposed to spend five days in ICU after surgery, the following day, Nabukalu was transferred to general ward where her stomach kept swelling until she died on November 12, 2017.

**Report.** No postmortem report nor death certificate was issued to her to-date. She accuses the hospital of a cover-up.

checkup at Mengo hospital on October 25, 2017. The scan results revealed that there was a metallic surgical clip in her abdomen that needed urgent attention.

"...She then went back to Mulago hospital where the doctors scheduled a second surgery for November 8, 2017, on condition that Nabukalu and her mother purchased surgical equipment to be used, besides paying Shs500,000 for admission at the intensive care unit (ICU) where she was to spend five days under 'better supervision,'" the suit reads in part.

Although she was supposed to spend five days in ICU after surgery, the following day, Nabukalu was transferred to the general ward where her stomach kept swelling until she died on November 12, 2017.

After Nabukalu died, Mulago hospital discharged Ms Sentamu with a document giving her authority to take her daughter's body from the hospital, but no postmortem report nor death certificate was issued to her to-date. She accuses the hospital of cover-up.

She is now seeking court to order Mulago National Referral Hospital to pay punitive damages for the alleged continued negligent acts against patients, especially her daughter, a refund of Shs5m she spent on both medical expenses and burial, as well as general damages for the unreasonable delay to save her daughter's life.

The hospital has 15 days to respond.