

Blister from slipper led to deadly sepsis after NHS blunders

Family finally wins apology seven years on

THE family of a great-grandmother who died after a badly fitting slipper led to sepsis have won an apology from the hospital that botched her treatment – after a seven-year fight.

Widow Rosa Edwards, 90, was independent and healthy when she went to her doctor about a blister – caused by her slipper – that wasn't healing on her right foot.

Eventually, in October 2011, the retired dog breeder was admitted to hospital for treatment to a blocked artery, which was blamed for stopping the blister healing.

The blockage was operated on in July 2012, but a follow-up appointment she should have been given a week later did not take place.

Her health deteriorated and on August 22 she was readmitted to St Peter's Hospital in Chertsey, Sur-

By James Tozer

rey, where it became clear the surgery had failed. A week later sepsis set in, and on August 29 a surgeon decided her leg had to be amputated urgently to save her life.

Even though he wasn't on call, he told colleagues he was prepared to return to work and carry out the operation if they were

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END THE SEPSIS SCANDAL

overstretched. But although an operating theatre was booked for 1.20pm, the surgery wasn't carried out and Mrs Edwards, a mother of six, had to wait until 2am the next day to have her leg removed.

When her children visited hours

later, they found her in distress, and she died soon after. Horrified by her decline from a simple blister, they complained, but the hospital denied wrongdoing. The hospital maintained its stance even when the family took the case to the health service ombudsman.

Finally, her family instructed a specialist medical negligence solicitor who commissioned a report by an eminent surgeon.

He concluded it had been 'essential' that Mrs Edwards was seen soon after surgery on her blocked artery to check it had worked.

Had doctors realised it had been unsuccessful, they could have performed a bypass graft which would have enabled the ulcer to heal and 'she would have kept the leg'.

Even though that didn't happen, she could have been saved had the amputation been carried out promptly, he said.

But as recently as 2017, NHS legal experts urged the family to

Suffered: Widow Rosa Edwards with a Finnish spitz show dog in the Eighties



drop its claim. However, the family's refusal to give in paid off, and eventually the trust settled, telling the family it was 'truly sorry' for her 'undue suffering' and agreeing a five-figure payout.

'We had to watch her suffer, she was really panicking,' said her daughter, Sherin Baker, 73. 'We were so angry about Mum's death, we knew they made mistakes.'

The family's lawyer, Richard Malloy, of Gregory Abrams Davidson Solicitors, said: 'It was not until formal legal proceedings

were commenced that the trust properly engaged, resulting in payment of substantial damages and an apology.'

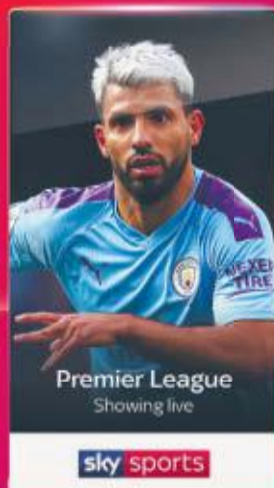
Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said: 'We are truly sorry to have caused Mrs Edwards and her family undue suffering and we would like to apologise for the distress caused.'

The Mail's End The Sepsis Scandal campaign has been pushing for three years for faster diagnosis of the potentially fatal condition.

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