



Kerri Williams claims her husband was given the wrong medication while in hospital with dementia. Picture by Patrina Malone

## Drugs caused dementia patient's seizures: Wife

JASON WALLS, NT News

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A DARWIN woman has lodged a formal complaint with the health regulator after she says her elderly husband was given dangerous antipsychotic medication at Royal Darwin Hospital without her consent.

Kerri Williams said her 76-year-old husband, Brian, was given the drugs after he was admitted to the hospital as a dementia patient in 2015 and suffered seizures as a result.

Mrs Williams said she only found out he'd been given the medication when other hospital staff advised her to make a complaint late last year.

Mrs Williams said Brian's dementia had already deteriorated to the point where he at times no longer recognised her, required full-time care and was not capable of giving his informed consent.

Mrs Williams said side effects of the drug in question, Haloperidol, include stroke and premature death and she believes it should never be administered to elderly dementia patients.

She said in her opinion, it was likely given to Brian in an attempt to manage his behaviour. "It just should not have happened ever, this medication should never have been given to him because it's for chemical imbalance in the brain," she said.

Mrs Williams has lodged a complaint with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

She is now concerned others may have been given the drugs without their loved ones' knowledge.

"If he had have died, what would it have been put down to? Age and dementia. So how many other people have got this?" she said.

Top End Health Service executive director of medical services Charles Pain said the hospital took complaints or concerns from patients and family members seriously and Mr Williams' care was "safe and appropriate".

"Top End Health Service is bound by privacy laws and I can't disclose private medical information," he said.

"But I can assure the patient's family and the community that I have reviewed this case and believe the patient was provided with safe and appropriate care for his condition."

All Comments 2

**Theodora**

10 months ago

The same thing happened to my husband in 2016. He is allergic to penicillin but was given antibiotics under another name. When we found out and made a formal complaint the answer came back that it was an honest mistake by a junior doctor, not much good to me if my husband had died.

**Chantelle**

10 months ago

Good on you Kerri ! A lot of people are familiar with the dodgy medical outcomes coming out of RDH and the private hospital. They almost knocked me off last year! I remind everyone theirs over 300 other hospitals in this country and the majority are not full of trainee Doctors who graduated from Uni last December.