

# King family vs. Eastern Health

Update on the King family vs. Eastern Health story. Bob Buckingham, the lawyer for the Kings tells Ted that court proceedings have been postponed indefinitely because Eastern Health has relaxed the restrictions it placed on Elsie and Yvonne visiting their mother Elsie at the Escasoni Complex.

CBC On the Go

Tuesday June 13, 2012 – St. Johns, Newfoundland and Labrador

Host Ted Blades with King family lawyer, Bob Buckingham

Transcript:

Host: Yesterday we reported on the story of Yvonne and Grace King. The King sisters told us that they were punished for speaking up for what they said was the inadequate care their mother Elsie was getting at Eastern Health Sciences Centre. Their punishment? The health authority had severely restricted the amount time the daughters could spend with their mother. But Eastern Health told us their time was cut because of their rude and aggressive behaviour towards staff.

The situation had gotten so bad that each side was taking the other to court: the sisters to get the visitation restrictions lifted; and Eastern Health to keep them in place.

They were supposed to be in court today, but things have changed.

Bob Buckingham is the King family lawyer and he joins me on the line now.

Host: So, this case was supposed to be in court today, but something's happened. What?

Bob Buckingham: Well essentially what has happened is Mrs. King has been transferred to long term care and that has changed the water in the beans to a certain extent given that the original dispute and issues were with the administration and staff at the Health Sciences Centre.

It would be a bit premature to argue (about) things at the long term care facility now that there's been a change. So, we're just taking a little breather and hope that things change, but if they don't we will move ahead with the application.

Host: And what about the application from Eastern Health's side against your clients?

Bob Buckingham: Eastern Health's application was in response to ours, as opposed to a separate application, so they were responding to ours, so if we don't proceed with it, they're not going to proceed with it.

Host: So what criteria is involved here? Is it just that we'll see how things go, and if the sisters and Elsie King are happy, then you just leave it there?

Bob Buckingham: Well, I think that will be the logical way for things to move forward. We had real concern with Mrs. King not having access with her daughters, and also her daughters who were her advocates within the system.

But now that she's over at long term care, and there are some initial restrictions but we are assured that they're going to be lifted shortly. If that happens, great, if not we'll amend our application and move on from there.

Host: How were those assurances communicated to you and the King family?

Bob Buckingham: Well, they were provided in three different forums. One, was a meeting that had with Eastern Health a number of weeks ago, two - there have been communications between myself and legal counsel for Eastern Health; and three - there have been meetings between long term care administration individuals and my clients.

Host: I don't know if you can talk about this or not but there is or was also an assault charge pending against Grace King that was supposed to be set for the fall. Is there any change on that front?

Bob Buckingham: Well, that matter is set down for a trial in late August, and my client, Grace King, has pleaded not guilty and we're going to have a trial on that issue.

Host: So, that still stands?

Bob Buckingham: It's still there, and it will be defended.

Host: Alright Mr. Buckingham, we'll leave it there and we'll see what happens in August.

Bob Buckingham: Well, hopefully before then, things will work out in long term care, and there will be no issue with respect to Mrs. King and her daughters spending a lot of time together. The real issue here is Mrs. King who is 88-years-old, and has been in an institution, a medical facility, for seven or eight months. The strain is tremendous, and it has to stop.

<http://www.cbc.ca/onthego/episodes/2012/06/13/king-family-vs-eastern-health/>