The Quaid Twins’ Case of Medical Negligence

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In November 2007, a case of medical malpractice caused a nightmare when Actor Dennis Quaid and his wife Kimberly almost lost their newborn twins to a severe overdose. Days after their birth, Thomas Boone and Zoe Grace developed a serious case of staph infections and the parents were referred to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for treatment (Oz, 2009). As the twins received antibiotic drugs intravenously, they required a dose of Heparin, a blood thinner meant to keep IV lines clear and prevent blood from clotting. As the parents would later learn, the medical practice had administered an overdose of the Heparin by thousand times the required amount, putting the newborns at serious risk as they required admitting in the intensive care unit (Oz, 2009). The couple later sued Baxter Corporation who manufacture Heparin, for the wrongful packaging of the drug, with similar doses for adults and children, leading to accidental dosages. The couple later received a settlement amount of USD$750,000 from Cedars-Sinai, a settlement that happened outside of court.

The case focused on the standard of care in medical centers because the mistake majorly occurred due to negligence from the nurse, the pharmacist, and even the parents. The manufacturer and the distributing pharmacist failed to double check the amount concentration of the dose for infants, and label the bottles correctly. In the United States, Medical Laws and Ethics seek to protect patients from mistakes committed by medical practitioners and ensuring that medical centers observe the healthcare standards (Monagle, 2012). The case illustrated a substandard practice because there was harm inflicted on the patients as opposed to the prescribed standards where practice should avoid causing pain or injury to the patient. Furthermore, the case would serve as a caution for parents to be proactive during treatment for their children; as later revealed, the parents had been in the room when the dose was administered. Asking questions might have raised keenness in the nurse and averted the overdose. The case is an example of substandard practice in medical facilities within the United States, raising awareness on the issue of doctors and healthcare givers’ negligence of ethical practice.

References

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