

March 9, 2001

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Dear Janet and Laura:

I admire the dedication with which you have proceeded to facilitate the development of the "Next of Kin" legislative bill.

As a health care quality professional, and as a mother who lost an 18 year old son in a motorcycle accident, I have a great appreciation for the importance of your efforts. I was one of the **fortunate** family members who was notified immediately of my son's accident by the hospital's emergency department staff. Even though my son never regained consciousness, I had the opportunity to be with him during his final hours and to this day, 21 years later, I feel certain that he knew that I was with him.

I believe that health care organizations "**try to do the right thing**" but as you pointed out, sometimes things slip through the cracks and families and loved ones are not always notified of medical emergencies in a timely manner. I support the intent of the "Next of Kin" bill since I sincerely believe that the patient's family is an important adjunct in the care-planning process.

From the personal experience side, because of timely notification of my son's accident, I was available to work with the physicians and care-provider staff who cared for my son during the last 4 days of his young life. This was a very important experience for me and I know that the decisions made were collaborative and in the best interests of my son.

Keep up the dedicated work that you have been doing.

Sincerely,



Pat Ziegler, RN, MPA, CPHQ, FNAHQ
Health Care Quality Professional
