

WARNING ... PERSONAL BLOG ...

4th May 2013 PART TWO

Stop this madness!

Oh the irony of this blog title – given that it involves dementia treatment in the late stage, and the misconceptions people have about Dementia. In all honesty it probably should be “NHS Stop this madness!”

We have been told that in order to alleviate some of my dad's discomfort in his mouth, we can swab his mouth with a saline solution occasionally – in addition to them carrying out what they call “oral care” when then turn him and administer the drugs. HOWEVER ... yes! there is a BIG however. Both nurses I have spoken to, have said that they can't supply us with any sponge swabs, as it's a health and safety issue as he might swallow the sponge. Really? As if we wouldn't notice that the sponge on the end was missing, and given that he has no swallowing reflex it seems highly unlikely to happen.

The solution offered was to dip a toothbrush in the solution and let it drip into his mouth – is this the best we can offer as a solution to a family, whose only aim is to alleviate the pain and suffering of their *dying* father.

PS - Ok, Ok! I said the “D” word (get over it!) - yet it doesn't make any of this seem any more real – if anything it makes me feel more remote from the situation than ever.

PPS – As I'm posting this a couple of days after the 4th May – today (6th May) sums up the ridiculousness of the NHS as it currently stands. My dad has been having injections of a form of morphine when he is wracked with pain. This means we have to wait until the pain starts which is terrifying for him and horrendous to watch – as a result we requested that he be fitted with a syringe driver, which is battery operated device, that regularly gives him meds so as to pre-empt the pain. As an option it wasn't offered to us, and in fact we only knew about them as one of my nieces works in a nursing home. We chased on Saturday and Sunday and were told that they had to order one or obtain one (not sure which as it's a bit fuzzy) Well today when we chased, we were informed that they had the kit but didn't have any batteries!! They are normal household batteries and I even offered to go and buy them. This shouldn't be allowed to happen! It's now been fitted for about 6 hours and we've only had 2 pain episodes, which demonstrates the benefit of the little device and how it can be used to manage pain.

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