

## The Red, Unfortunate, and Blue

7/24/20

"Today my Eighth Amendment rights were violated by a health-care provider here in prison. I am unable to utilize the word professional because her conduct was anything but that. The word provider is inappropriate as well, as her actions were cruel and unusual.

The two operative words - health, and care, are combined for a reason. However, Nurse Practitioner Cason had no regard for my health, and not a care for what I feel on a daily basis.

I suffer from Fibromyalgia, amongst other chronic disorders, all of which produce pain. This callous, disolute woman stated that plenty of people have pain but that they 'just deal with it.' In other words, as should I.

2

I am not other people. I am simply me; and although I made a mistake does not mean I do not deserve to be treated fairly. And I am certain that the people she refers to are not incarcerated and sleep well on comfortable mattresses of their choosing and have many different ways to alleviate their pain. However, for us who are incarcerated, we are working only with limited options.

And what happens when our limited options fail us? How are we to 'just deal with it?' What should we do? Self-medicate like too many others I see when I look around? That is partially, or maybe even wholly, the reason this fragility is in the predicament it is in now. Maybe these people were told to 'just deal with it,' and so they are in their own way.

In this facility, medical personnel such as the doctors and the Nurse Practitioners who evaluate us for treatment are split into two teams: The Red Team, and the Blue Team. If your last name begins with the letters of A-h, you are a patient of the Red Team. If your last name begins with the letters of L-Z, the Blue Team.

The Unfortunate?... The Red Team, of course, of which I am a patient. What must I do to receive better healthcare; mercy? Change my last name? What I should not have to do, is even think along those lines.

Though I am being somewhat facetious, this is no joking matter. We are suffering here. Meanwhile, the patients of the Blue Team are receiving adequate healthcare.

As offenders we do not have the right to select our healthcare

providers unfortunately. And we also do not have the luxury of being guaranteed to see the same one each time no matter how awful or wonderful they may be. We may go for an appointment and meet with someone who has not even taken the time out to read our file.

Someone else to whom we must explain our condition. Someone else who may or may not have compassion. Someone else who may or may not just be here to collect a paycheck.

So if that be the case, why is it that we cannot change teams on a rotating basis? If they are not our regular healthcare providers anyway, and may or may not even be familiar with our issues and conditions, why can we not switch teams every so often so that we are all allowed the opportunity to receive

adequate healthcare?

Though I may not know the inner-workings of the system utilized by the medical department, what I do know is that there has been much negligence and malpractice occurring throughout my fourteen years of being housed at this facility. A lot of women have died senselessly at the hands of this medical department over the years. And sadly, all of this with no positive changes. No better healthcare. No improvement in the morale of medical staff.

Happlesly, the man in charge of them all, Dr. Paul Tregorski, MD, PhD, and Director for Clinical Research, Department of Health Sciences, University of Virginia, is no different. Only he holds more titles behind his name. His treatment of us is no different, no better than