

DAILY NEWS

Dementia patient wanders off in the cold after being dropped off at Brooklyn nursing home — found 12 hours later

CHRISTINA CARREGA FEB 14, 2018 4:00 AM

A dementia patient wandered off in the frigid cold, without a coat, during a transport between two Brooklyn nursing homes — and was discovered 12 hours later by her frantic family at a Queens hospital, relatives told The Daily News.

James Hamilton told The News the decision to place his stepmother Cheryl Shaw-Hamilton into the Crown Heights Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation was heart-wrenching.

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"I'm desperately trying to keep her safe," said Hamilton, 37, of Rego Park. "From January 1 to January 10 she drastically changed."

Shaw-Hamilton, 70, has suffered from lupus for much of her life, but over the last nine years — after retiring from a career in bookkeeping — she was ultimately diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Supreme Court halts the execution of Alabama inmate with dementia

Shaw-Hamilton's stay at the St. Marks Ave. facility was only a brief stint before her expected transfer to the Linden Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in East New York, which has a dementia unit for long-term care, Hamilton said.



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He said on Feb. 8, he got a call around 1 p.m. that she was finally getting transferred to the Linden facility.

"When I arrived at the Linden Boulevard center around 6 (p.m.), they said she wasn't there," said Hamilton.

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The worried son then called the Crown Heights facility, which told him his stepmom was transported by Royalty Transportation LLC ambulance services around 3:30 p.m. and arrived at 4:30 p.m.

Dementia-stricken man found dead after disappearing from home

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"We checked the security footage and it shows a man guide her to the front door," Hamilton said. "She then walked passed the door. He guided her again into the lobby, she walked in and he left. You see her scratch her head, look into her bag, turn around and walk out."

Protocol for transporting drivers is to take the patient into the facility and complete the transfer with a staff

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"This was an egregious violation of protocol by Royalty's driver and is totally unacceptable," said Nelissa Garces, an administrator with Linden Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. "By contrast, Linden Center staff followed all patient transfer procedures properly."

The driver was fired, according to an employee of the transportation service.

Outrage over fine for dementia patient sitting on bus stop bench

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Cheryl Shaw-Hamilton suffers from Alzheimer's.

IMAGE BY: JESSE WARD/FOR NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

"The safety and well-being of our residents is paramount, and we immediately reported this incident to the Department of Health," said Graces.

After reviewing the surveillance video with the security guard, Hamilton said he immediately called the police to report his stepmom missing.

From 8 p.m. on Feb. 8 until 9:30 a.m. Feb. 9, Hamilton, his cousin and the police searched for Shaw-Hamilton throughout Brooklyn, in local hospitals and fast-food restaurants with 24-hour sitting areas — all to no avail.

"I went home and got a call from her transportation service confirming that she would be discharged from Jamaica Hospital. I told them not to let her go," said Hamilton who rushed over to the hospital.

Missing elderly woman's remains believed to be found in crocodile

Shaw-Hamilton was confused with a large gauze over the right side her forehead and dark circles around her eyes, he said.

"I was so happy to see her. The hospital staff was able to figure out who she was through her Medicaid cards," said Hamilton, who remembers his stepmom as a vibrant person who loved to travel and dance before she suffered dementia.

Hamilton's cousin Khadejia Bass, 47, contacted community activist Geoffrey Davis, who put the family in

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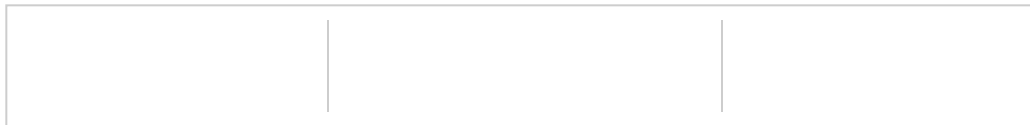


"It was 10 degrees, she was out all night and didn't have on a coat," said Davis. "Both facilities and the ambulance must be held accountable for allowing this to happen and not happen to anyone else."

Dementia patient who wandered from nursing home killed by croc

"Clearly facilities and transportation companies that treat the elderly with Alzheimer's have an obligation to the patient and families to safely transport them from one place to another. In this case, they woefully failed the patient and her family," said Rubenstein.

Royalty Transportation did not immediately respond to a request for comment.



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