

Drained and Fatigued

A Nurse is Stabbed with a Syringe – is she the Villain?

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Sometimes, in the nursing world, it is as if you are operating in a parallel universe.

Don't believe me? Try this: A nurse working in a psychiatric hospital is attacked and stabbed twice with a hypodermic needle.

And some say "good for him."

According to reporter John Garvey and the 5/5/16 UK-based Newbury Today¹, nurse Dawn Watts was simply doing her job by administering medication to a patient in a UK psychiatric hospital. The patient received this medication every two weeks via intramuscular injection in his Gluteus maximus – in layman's terms, his buttocks. During the incident, the patient was initially very cooperative, but then without warning leapt up, grabbed the syringe, and stabbed it into the Watts' upper thigh twice, injecting her with the medication.

Forty-seven-year-old patient and attacker Timothy David Randal stated that the injection hurt, so he grabbed the syringe in anger.

Some history: Randal had been charged with assault the previous August, throwing punches at a staff member that resulted in minor injuries, and again in October

In court proceedings from the 2016 syringe attack, Randal's attorney noted "he has been penalized already," saying he'd spent six weeks in isolation from the August 2015 assault.

I do not understand.

This man becomes angered. He lashes out. He commits assault.

¹ <http://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/home/18053/Psychiatric-nurse-injected-with-drugs-by.html>

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His attorney defends him by stating he had been “penalized already” for a previous assault, having spent 6 weeks in isolation; the implication being ***there’s no need to punish him now.***

In fact, as a result of the 2016 attack on nurse Watts he received no punishment other than financial fines of £85 court fees and £50 compensation to Watts.

Some - not all, but some - of the comments from this article are wildly divisive.

Here is a sampling:

“He was just her a taste of her own (toxic) medicine.”

“You can only call this an “attack” if the “treatment” of this guy was consensual. If he was forced on these drugs I'd call it ‘self-defense’.”

“The man deserves a bloody gold medal of honour.”

I’m drained and fatigued by views that imply, once again, a misconception that nurses are the enemy; the bad guys. That we are doing no good deeds, but are evil villains intent on torturing victimized patients at our will.

Here is the reality:

- Nurse Watts could have contracted Hepatitis B as a result of the attack.
- She could have contracted HIV as a result of the attack.
- She could, and statistics support she likely will, develop post-traumatic stress as a result of the attack.

This should never have happened.

We have a right to be safe in the workplace.

As one commenter noted:

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“Come on think of the nurse that is trying to do her job. No one that takes a job to care for people should have to get that treatment”.