

To: trevathan_e@kids.wustl.edu
From: David Freels <dfreels@mindspring.com>
Subject: Tyne & Jim Willis
Cc:
Bcc: Harch.all, Philip_James, Michael_Rosetti
X-Attachments: :Big Mac:177350:Trevathan.PDF:
Message-Id: <103130300b7582a2388d6@[209.86.151.53]>

Dr. Trevathan,

Attached is a pdf file. You can open and read pdf files with Adobe's Acrobat reader. If you don't have Acrobat, it's a free download from <http://www.adobe.com>.

In this pdf file you'll find copies of the written transcript of our Georgia Medicaid hearing before an Administrative Law Judge from September of last year concerning reimbursement for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT).

Next you'll find a copy of the letter you wrote to a mutual friend of ours, my neighbor Tyne Willis. You authored this letter in August, 1999, blasting hyperbaric oxygen. My favorite line is at the end of the 2nd paragraph: "The notion that it could 'wake up' damaged areas of brain is frankly scientifically silly."

According to the attached transcript you were hired by Georgia Medicaid as an impartial reviewer on our case in November, 1999.

Small world, huh doc?

Guess what. It's getting smaller, and you just might wind up insignificant--and scientifically silly.

Next is a copy of an email printout you sent to Tyne from some other misguided pediatric neurologist who also can't seem to acknowledge the efficacy of HBOT.

I have gone back and forth about whether or not I should contact you directly. In the end, in the interest of science and for the sake of brain-injured children, I've decided to go ahead and contact you.

The first thing I should do is thank you for being enough of an arrogant crupper to dispute the validity of SPECT-scan imaging. Apparently you're rather passionate on this subject and frequently share your misguided opinions with your patients. One such patient made a post on the internet quoting you--though not by name.

This same parent also mentioned in the same post that her pediatric neurologist was consulted on a Georgia Medicaid case for hyperbaric oxygen.

I knew who he was talking about--us. I also faxed his post to Dr. Paul Harch in New Orleans. Your ignorance aroused Dr. Harch to the point that he agreed to testify at our hearing as an expert witness.

Thank you for pissing him off. He cares enough about these children and his medicine to actually put his money where his mouth is. He testified at no charge, no consultation fee. He took off from work to be here. It personally cost him money to be here. Would you do that?

Perhaps you'd finally like to know more about hyperbaric oxygen for brain-injury. Dr. Harch's website is <http://www.hyperbarics.org>.

In addition, the second international symposium on hyperbaric oxygen for brain-injured children will be held toward the end of July in Boca Raton, Florida. I urge you to attend. Bring your friends from the world of pediatric neurology. Details can be found at <http://www.hyperbaric-oxygen.com>.

During the course of the hearing, the state brought in two pediatric neurologists as their expert witnesses. They offered no proof to dispute the findings of our son's SPECT-scans before/after HBOT.

But here's what I learned. 100% of the seizure drugs you prescribe for brain-injured children have never been through randomized, double-blinded controlled studies--nor are they FDA approved for pediatric use.

Not only that, I also learned that to gain seizure control, it's not unusual for you to try one drug and then

another, and another, and on and on--sometimes you'll even mix two or three or four or more anti-convulsants together to gain control. I also learned that this process usually takes months and even years before control is achieved.

Dr. Trevathan, the kind of medicine you practice is nothing more than the experimental and investigational use of unapproved, unproven drugs on brain-injured children. What's worse, you don't have the guts or the intellect to just wonder if there's anyway to fix a brain-injury.

We lost before the ALJ because the judge sided with your colleagues that HBOT for brain-injury is "experimental and investigational". We're appealing and we will win because the Medicaid statute only requires that a treatment work; a treatment's categorization is irrelevant.

Other states are already reimbursing HBOT--including Missouri (I hope that keeps you awake at night.).

Dr. Trevathan, you sir, and your entire branch of medicine are nothing but a bunch of hypocrites. Right now, I have zero respect for you. To me, I would think there would be at least two pre-requisites to becoming a pediatric neurologist: I think you should have a brain and a spine.

I'm angry with you. You should have had the decency and professionalism to excuse yourself from our case. You couldn't give an objective opinion in our case--and you didn't. You had already made a decision in August, 1999 specifically and intentionally about our son and his chance of improvement under hyperbaric oxygen--before reviewing the evidence in November, 1999.

Because of you, we didn't get an impartial review.

I'm going to sue your ass off.

Did you just get a shot of adrenaline? If it went up, then that might mean you have a spine. If you felt it, that might mean you have a brain.

I'm not going to sue you, don't worry. I'm just trying to get you good and pissed off so you'll call Tyne.

You see doc, I haven't even gotten to the kicker of this narrative yet. Tyne has been one of Jimmy's patterning volunteers for two or three days a week for the last two years or so. She watched and listened as I explored the possibility of hyperbaric oxygen for Jimmy.

Then she saw the changes in our little boy, and then she told me about her husband Jim. You remember Jim. You remember the coma he was in seven or eight years ago. You remember how he was supposed to die but didn't. Well Tyne said he still had short-term memory problems and was developing some balance problems.

She asked me if I thought he could benefit from some extra oxygen. I let her read everything I had, and then she decided to do it. She did SPECT-scans before/after. And Jim? Wow. No more memory problems, significantly improved balance. He was doing great. Tyne was ecstatic.

Then one day in March--March, 2001--during a moment of over-confidence, Jim fell. Hit his head. Had a stroke. Took him to Dekalb. Edema. Because of the shunt put in during the coma, fluid couldn't drain off. Swelling, pressure. Then coma. They went in and drained it off. More swelling, pressure. They went in again and drained him again.

The neurologist asked Tyne if she had any questions. That woman is like a rock. She asked one question, "When can we get him into a hyperbaric chamber?" The neuro was stunned.

"How do you know about hyperbaric oxygen?"

She whipped out Jim's before/after SPECT-scans. The neuro wrote a Rx for HBOT right on the spot. They sent him over to Emory rehab. He'd get in the chamber in the morning and do rehab the rest of the day.

Then he graduated.

Faster than any patient has every gotten out of Emory rehab. "What else is he doing?" Tyne began lecturing on Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy.

So did Jim.

He's walking, talking. Got a couple of battle scars on his head. He and Tyne walk around the block almost every night. It's incredible. Thank God he had had that first series of treatments. I think it got his brain healthier and kept him from dying when he fell.

Dr. Trevathan, the truth is that I'm not angry with you at all. I am frustrated with Medicine because it has removed from physicians the responsibility to think. It's too easy to rely on peer-reviewed medical journals that you never have time to read anyway.

If this note has made you angry, good. You need to have a boost in blood circulation, just so you'll know what it feels like. It actually feels great. You should see what it's doing for my little boy.

Ask Tyne. She can tell you. Call her. Her number is 770-270-9020.

I hope to see you in Boca Raton.

I'll buy you a beer.