

My name is Angela Michilli. I am submitting this statement about the hospitalization and death of my husband, Raffaele “Ralph” Michilli, at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut. Ralph was 54 years old. We were childhood sweethearts who met when I was 16 and he was 17. We were married for 30 years, raised our family together, and expected to grow old together. Ralph became ill at the end of March 2020, during the earliest and most frightening days of COVID. On April 9, I found him confused and speaking incoherently. I believed he was dehydrated and that his fever may have become dangerously high, so I called 911. An emergency-room physician initially called and told me Ralph’s vital signs were good and that he should be fine. Within approximately two hours, that same physician called again and said Ralph had to be intubated. I repeatedly objected and told him not to place my husband on a ventilator. No less-invasive oxygen support was attempted before intubation. The physician dismissed my objection, said they had to do it, and ended the call. Ralph was intubated on the day he arrived. I was prohibited from entering the hospital or being at his bedside. Two days passed before I received a meaningful update, despite my repeated calls and messages. When my daughter and I were eventually allowed to see Ralph by FaceTime, he had good color and was alert enough to respond by nodding. The nurse told us he was doing well. When she asked whether she should shave his beard, Ralph shook his head no. Before entering the hospital, he had promised he would shave only after he recovered. He still believed he was coming home. A physician later told me they were going to give Ralph remdesivir, describing it as a promising medication being used overseas. I was not given a meaningful explanation of its experimental status, risks, or potential effects on his kidneys. After remdesivir was administered, Ralph’s condition deteriorated. His kidneys failed, he required dialysis, his blood pressure became unstable, and I was told he developed sepsis and a serious bowel complication. As Ralph worsened, a physician repeatedly told me he would not survive. I demanded that they continue treating him and resuscitate him if necessary. I felt that the hospital had already given up on my husband. We are Catholic. I specifically requested that a Catholic priest be permitted to give Ralph Last Rites. That request was not honored. A woman affiliated with the hospital later told me she had prayed over him, but she was not a Catholic priest and could not administer the sacrament. Ralph died without receiving the Last Rites I had requested for him. On April 21, the hospital told me to come immediately. After weeks of being led to believe hospitals were overflowing with patients, my daughter and I entered a nearly empty building. The corridors echoed. Room after room appeared empty, and I saw very few patients or staff. The hospital kept us away while Ralph was alive. By the time we were allowed to reach him, he had already died. This has been a difficult time for my son as well who never got the opportunity to speak or see his father during the hospitalization. The grief persisted due to a lack of a proper funeral. I respectfully ask that Ralph’s experience be entered into the record and that the use of immediate ventilation, remdesivir, patient isolation, denial of family advocacy, and denial of religious sacraments be fully investigated. I have medical records available to support my account.