

Testimony of Lori Kramer

Regarding Inge Kornfeld

My name is Lori Kramer. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of my mother, Inge Kornfeld, who died at Doylestown Hospital on November 20, 2021, at age 87.

On November 8, 2021, my mother fell at home, fractured her hip, and tested negative for COVID-19 in the emergency department. The next morning, I was told to visit at 10:00 a.m. When I arrived, a nurse in full protective equipment said my mother had tested positive and I had to leave. I asked whether her hip surgery would proceed; she said yes. It did, and my mother returned home on November 11, her 87th birthday. Before this hospitalization, she was remarkably healthy, lived independently, and had not been hospitalized since giving birth to me in 1959. Her only medication was thyroid medicine. Throughout her life, she did not keep or take any other prescription or over-the-counter medication - not even Tylenol.

At home, she initially recovered well with physical therapy, walking, and family support. When her oxygen level later declined, we called an ambulance. She was readmitted on November 14. That was the last time my sister and I saw our mother conscious and able to speak with us in person.

During her first two days, she repeatedly pleaded, "They are torturing me. Get me out of here." I told her that she might die if she came home. She answered, "No. If I stay here, I will die." She said the high-flow oxygen burned and stung her eyes. Her records state that restraints were used to prevent her from removing the oxygen equipment. After the second day, our direct communication stopped.

We requested that my mother be given ivermectin, but the hospital denied our request. We also explicitly instructed them not to administer remdesivir or baricitinib. My mother suffered terribly, gasping for air during her final two days. We were not permitted to enter her room or hold her hand. Our only opportunity to speak to her was through a cellphone sealed inside a Ziploc bag that a nurse held near her ear. Because my mother had age-related hearing loss, I do not believe she could hear our final words clearly through the plastic. We were denied even the comfort of knowing whether she heard us say goodbye.

We stood outside her window and begged to be with her. We were made to believe that entering while she was alive could cost us our own lives. The only person beside her was a nurse wearing full protective equipment, including a powered respirator and face shield, gloves, and a disposable isolation gown.

After my mother took her final breath, the nurse disconnected her oxygen, turned around, walked to the door, and told us we could go inside. I cannot reconcile why it was

considered too dangerous to hold her hands while she was dying, yet acceptable to enter moments after she was gone. I will always wonder whether, in her final moments, she was thinking, "Where are my two daughters?" She should never have had to die without us beside her.

My mother also did not receive her last rites. Her body remained in the hospital morgue for days, and the funeral home was not permitted to embalm her. Afterward, I obtained approximately 1,200 pages of records. They raised serious concerns about her hydration, dry mouth, bruising, suffering, and repeated documentation of her unvaccinated status, including an imaging report stating, "Patient has not been vaccinated for COVID-19."

My husband of 40 years, John R. "Jack" Kramer, was hospitalized in the same COVID ward, only three rooms away. He died two days after my mother, on November 22. Losing them within 48 hours changed our family forever. I submit this testimony so that what my mother endured, and what families were denied, will not be forgotten.

My name is Lori Kramer. My husband, John R. "Jack" Kramer, entered Doylestown Hospital with COVID-19 in November 2021 and never came home. I want this testimony to document how he was treated and how terribly he suffered.

When Jack was admitted, I spoke with his physician only by telephone. Jack and I had discussed our wishes, and I made it clear that he was **not to be placed on a ventilator**. Jack repeatedly told his doctors to "**ask my wife**" about treatment protocols. He trusted me to advocate for him if he could no longer speak for himself. Because I was not allowed at his bedside, I called the hospital three to four times every day, relying on nurses for updates. At the same time, my mother was hospitalized just three rooms away. She died two days before Jack. I was grieving one devastating loss while still fighting for the life and dignity of the other.

Throughout Jack's records, his **unvaccinated status was repeatedly documented**. In one entry, a physician wrote that he was "**unfortunately unvaccinated**." I found that repeated emphasis troubling and believe it belongs in this testimony. I pleaded for ivermectin. My request was denied. His records document my involvement in his treatment decisions and my objection to intubation.

As the days passed, Jack received numerous powerful medications, including **baricitinib, a drug that carries an FDA boxed warning**. During his hospitalization, his kidney function deteriorated and he developed acute kidney injury. I remain deeply concerned that baricitinib and the overall medication regimen contributed to his decline. Antibiotics and other medications were added, followed by antifungal treatment as complications developed. He developed painful sores in his mouth, throat, and nose. One medication

seemed to lead to another while he deteriorated. But the records cannot fully describe what Jack endured.

He was placed on **high-flow oxygen**, which caused tremendous discomfort and distress. A nurse told me his eyes were extremely irritated and that she repeatedly had to wipe away his tears. **His hands were restrained to the bed.** At one point, Jack told a nurse, **"I feel like I'm dying of thirst,"** and begged for water. He was told, **"You know you can't have water."** Knowing he was frightened, restrained, desperately thirsty, and alone will haunt me forever. Early in his hospitalization, while he could still communicate, Jack asked a nurse, **"When will I get better?"** He believed he would recover and come home.

Then came the telephone call that changed everything. A physician told me they had tried to reach me and that they **"had to intubate him."** I have no record of a missed call or voicemail before that conversation. Then he said, **"The good news is, you can now come visit him."**

While my husband was awake, frightened, and able to speak, we could not be beside him. Only after he had been intubated, sedated, and could no longer communicate were we permitted to visit. When I entered the ICU, I was devastated. The proud, strong man I married was unconscious, unshaven, with tubes throughout his body and sores in his nose and mouth. He appeared dehydrated and ungroomed.

In my eyes, my husband had been humiliated and stripped of his dignity. No wife or family member should ever have to witness someone they love in that condition. After intubation, I saw Jack connected to IV infusions including **fentanyl, propofol, Nimbex, and heparin.** He was deeply sedated and medically paralyzed, unable to speak, move, or communicate with us. My husband trusted me to speak for him when he could no longer speak for himself. **I tried.** I am submitting Jack's story so that what happened to him is documented and heard. His medical records and supporting documentation are available upon request.

Jack was my husband, not a protocol. He deserved dignity, compassion, and a voice. Today, I am using mine for him