

In Memory of Edward H. Hamlin III

My name is Virginia Hamlin, and I reside in Corona, California. Edward H. Hamlin III was my husband.

In late July 2021, both Edward and I became ill with COVID-19. On August 1, 2021, we were admitted together to Corona Regional Medical Center. I survived. Edward did not.

I submit this statement based on my firsthand experience as both a COVID-19 patient and Edward's widow.

About Edward

Edward was sixty-one years old and was born in Montana. He proudly served in the United States Air Force before retiring and beginning a second career as a construction superintendent. We lived together in Corona for approximately twenty years. Edward was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Before becoming ill, he was active, hardworking, and in good health. Following his death, he was laid to rest at Riverside National Cemetery.

Chronology of Events

Edward first developed COVID-19 symptoms around July 25, 2021. By August 1, his breathing had become severely impaired. Because I was also ill, we went together to Corona Regional Medical Center, where we were both admitted. During the admission process, we were asked whether we had received COVID-19 vaccinations. After answering, "no", I perceived a change in the way we were treated. At one point, I overheard a nurse say she was tired of unvaccinated patients coming to the hospital and they should stay home and die.

Edward and I requested treatments we wished to try, including ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine. Those requests were denied. A staff member described ivermectin as unsafe and characterized it as a medication intended for horses. Instead, we were told we would receive the hospital's standard COVID treatment protocol, referred to as a "COVID cocktail."

At the time, neither Edward nor I were told exactly what medications were included in that treatment. I later learned it included Remdesivir. We received no detailed explanation of the medication's risks and benefits.

Edward received Remdesivir for five days. Edward remained isolated throughout his hospitalization, and his condition continued to worsen. Because visitors were not permitted under hospital policy, he was left without a family member physically present to advocate for him. Our family later learned he developed bedsores during his hospitalization.

Within days, I was informed Edward would need to be placed on a ventilator to allow his lungs to rest. He remained on mechanical ventilation for approximately thirteen days.

Edward was later transferred to Kindred Hospital in Rancho Cucamonga. On August 17, 2021, he passed away. His death certificate lists the cause of death as respiratory failure due to acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) resulting from COVID-19.

After Edward's death, I learned that Remdesivir had previously been studied during Ebola treatment trials and that concerns had been raised regarding its safety and effectiveness. Looking back, I struggle with the fact that we were not offered the treatments we requested. It is difficult not to wonder whether different choices might have led to a different outcome.

Conclusion

Edward and I requested treatments that were not provided. We received medications and treatments that, in my view, were not fully explained in a way that allowed us to understand their potential risks and benefits. During Edward's hospitalization he was also administered medications such as morphine and propofol. Based on what I witnessed and later learned, I believe aspects of his treatment may have hindered rather than helped his recovery.

What troubles me most is that Edward—a veteran who devoted years of his life to serving his country—was unable to pursue the medical choices he wanted for his own care.

I respectfully request that this testimony be entered into the official record so that Edward's experience is documented and remembered.