

Hospital fined over shower death

A hospital where a man died from Legionnaires' disease has been fined £80,000 for ignoring safety guidelines.

Daryl Eyles, 37, had just been given the all-clear from doctors treating him for leukaemia when he took a shower at Bath's Royal United Hospital (RUH).

The hospital pleaded guilty to charges that it carried out "inadequate" safety checks on its water system. It was also told to pay £24,000 costs by a court.

Mr Eyles's widow said she hoped lessons would be learnt following the case.

Speaking after Thursday's hearing at Bristol Crown Court, Andrea Eyles, 37, said: "Patients put their trust in hospitals. They expect to be kept safe.

"Mr Eyles had bravely fought his own battle against leukaemia. It was a battle he had won.

The patients have got to [come] first every time

Derek Eyles, victim's brother

"He was then struck down by Legionnaires' disease due to the woefully poor levels of maintenance and management.

"They've done wrong - they know they're in the wrong. I hope it never happens to anyone else."

Mr Eyles had been told he was likely to make a full recovery from leukaemia but he contracted Legionnaire's disease after taking a shower following his fourth and final chemotherapy session.

The bacteria had been breeding in the shower head and both the hot and cold water tanks.

Six-figure payout

The hospital later admitted liability after a Health and Safety Executive investigation exposed a series of failings in the maintenance of the water system.

His family has already received a six-figure settlement from the hospital trust.

Speaking outside the court on Thursday afternoon Mr Eyles's brother, Derek, spoke about the fine.

**I would like to again express my heartfelt apologies to
Mr Eyles' family**
Mark Davies, RUH chief executive

"The patients have got to [come] first every time.

"And if that's the only way to get the hospital, the NHS to sit up and take note, to ensure that the hospitals are clean and up to a good enough safety standard for the patient, then so be it."

Mark Davies, chief executive of the Royal United Hospital, Bath NHS Trust said new measures had been put in place to ensure that similar cases did not happen in the future.

He said: "We fully accept the decisions from the court.

"On behalf of the hospital I would like to again express my heartfelt apologies to Mr Eyles's family."

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