# Dr. No

September 25, 2012 By Reed Vreeland

A case of HIV discrimination by a medical practitioner made national headlines recently when a New Jersey man living with HIV sued a Catholic teaching hospital, Trinitas Regional Medical Center, for allegedly denying him access to treatment and visitors after he disclosed that he was gay and HIV positive. He also alleges he was denied a prescription for his HIV medication.

Regardless of the ruling on the case, when health care providers refuse to serve an HIV-positive person it reinforces HIV-related stigma (in itself a barrier to care) and violates his or her right to access health care protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Despite the overwhelming amount of information indicating that it is safe for physicians to treat people with HIV and to allow them to have visitors, HIV discrimination among medical personnel still occurs—frequently. A 2007 study conducted by the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation, Law and Public Policy showed that 56 percent of Los Angeles County skilled nursing facilities denied HIV-positive patients care for services commonly offered to HIV-negative patients. Additional studies confirm relatively high levels of HIV-related discrimination in U.S. medical settings. Often, these cases are linked to other forms of prejudice, including homophobia, racism and discrimination based on education level, socioeconomic status or history of drug use. Here's what you had to say about the issue.

About eight years ago a Catholic hospital in Dallas told me they did not carry HIV medications. This was after I had my gall bladder removed. They kept me a week and monitored my condition [since I am also] a diabetic. I could get no help. I was told [withholding medication] was common to see how a person healed after surgery. Hogwash!
**—Marty McCormack, Dallas**

This is so reminiscent of what went on during the early years of the epidemic. Where have these people been for the past 25 years? It's a disgrace to the health field.
**—Michael, Long Island, NY**

I am so sorry for this to happen to this man. I was first diagnosed in December 2005, and I was at a very religious hospital. I was told that I have AIDS and meningitis and that I would be dead in five days. No one returned except [the person who came] to sign me out with a referral.
**—Rick, CA**

I can't believe people think they can get away with things like this. Religious hospitals aren't any

better [or different] than any other hospital. They have no right to deny someone their required medication. You don’t see them telling diabetes patients they can’t have insulin, or heart patients they can’t have their blood pressure meds.
**—John, AL**

The moral of this story is that if you know you are going to be hospitalized, BYOM [Bring Your Own Medication]. Last year when I had my gall bladder removed, I brought my own meds. Having said that, there is no excuse for bad behavior by doctors, nurses and hospital administrators. I hope this guy gets his day in court.
**—Name withheld, Puerto Rico**

---

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/medical-discrimination-22979-3205