

**Thank you very much Representative Edwin Vargas and Representative Peggy Sayers and other members for sponsoring and supporting House Bill #5977 in State of Connecticut Legislature.**

My name is Ciaran Staunton and I am Rory Staunton's dad and Orlaith, my wife who is Rory's Mom. WE would like to thank of all our friends here at this hearing.

This is our family's tragic story

Our son Rory died tragically on April 01 and that was the day our lives changed forever. Rory died from sepsis, something we had never heard of before. Ten years before this Carl Flatley, the founder of Sepsis Alliance lost his beautiful daughter Erin to Sepsis, he had never heard of sepsis when she died and it is hard to believe that ten years later our beautiful son Rory would die from the same illness which is one of the largest killers not only in the United States but in the World and yet a killer that according to a recent survey less than half the people in the United States have heard of.

Rory fell and cut his elbow playing in his school gym. The gym teacher proceeded to cover the wound without washing it and didn't bother to send him to the school nurse who was in her office.

When Rory came from school on Wednesday, he hung out, did his homework, ate some pizza and went to bed. A little after midnight in the early hours of Thursday morning, we awoke to hear Rory throwing up in the bathroom, not a lot of sickness but he was screaming "my leg, my leg". Orlaith brought him back to bed and she fell asleep with him rubbing his leg and coaxing him to return to sleep.

The following morning he had a fever and continued to complain of the pain in his leg.

We began calling his pediatrician immediately as his temperature was over 104 (he had never had a temperature that high) but more worrying was that the medication wasn't bringing it down. After many calls to the pediatrician's office she finally called us back and we insisted that she see him. She agreed to see him at 6pm that evening. On Thursday evening supported by his mom as he was unable to make the journey on his own Rory made his way to her office where she, the pediatrician noted that he was shivering, had a fever, had a temperature of 102 auxiliary and had an extremely red throat.

His pulse she noted as 140,

his blood pressure 100/60,

his respiration was 36.

We pointed out his skin which she noted as being mottled and blanched.

She noted that he had upper abdominal pain, had a cut on his left elbow.

We told her it was the pain in his leg that he was screaming about, he vomited large amounts of yellowish fluid WHILE IN HER OFFICE. He said "it's the pain in my leg that's bothering me". The pediatrician said it was from the fall, he said no.

Nonetheless she referred him to the Emergency Room for re-hydration with a diagnosis of gastric flu.

## ER

At the emergency room they concurred with the diagnosis of gastric flu, ignoring any other symptoms present. They gave him fluids. We didn't know but in fact blood tests were ordered **stat** but as far as we know they were never read.

WE don't know as the hospital is refusing to tell us the details of the night but what we do know is that he was discharged and these bloods when returned to ER showed among other alarming signs that his blood was producing white blood cells at rates that were very abnormal and would suggest a serious bacterial infection.

12 minutes before Rory left the hospital his vital signs were taken, his condition had deteriorated, it appears that no one took the time to review all available information; they discharged him saying he had a sick stomach and dehydration.

They gave him a prescription for Zofran. This flu they said might take up to a week to clear they told his father, they said he will have diarrhea but will feel better in a few days.

The following morning having watched her son sleep deeply and groan throughout the night Rory's mom wrote a letter to the Dean of his Middle School saying in part

*" There is apparently a very bad stomach virus going around which they believe Rory has it presents itself with these symptoms and can take in some cases up to a week to clear. I have never seen Rory so sick. I wanted to let you know that of course he will not be in today but also to alert you if any children are feeling unwell"*

On Friday Morning Rory's temperature continued to be high, he was very tired, his leg hurt a lot and he had complained of dizziness. We were not convinced of the stomach virus diagnosis, and we began calling his pediatrician.

The pediatrician told us not worry about the temperature we were told focus on getting food into him. Despite our attempts to convince her that that was impossible we nonetheless bought him Gatorade, sprite, ginger ale, coke-anything we thought he would drink. Late afternoon we made a trip to get chicken soup. He took one sip and returned to sleep. He had diarrhea and we were elated, we thought for sure now this is definitely the stomach virus they told us about.

His mom stripped him down and checked to see if they had missed a bug bite, she got him to move his neck in case it was meningitis.

Finally, seeing his skin turn blue/black and his face begin to turn yellow we returned with him to the ER where all hell broke loose and despite the best efforts of the wonderful staff in the ICU Rory expired at 6:29 on that Sunday evening.

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Our beloved son Rory was the light of our lives. He should never have died. It is clear to us that he did not receive the basic standard of care which would have saved him and which he, as an innocent child, above all, had a right to expect.

Our beloved boy is gone but we want to ensure that no other family experiences the utter heartbreak and grief we have because of such substandard care.

Rory was a child no one every forgot. He was deeply interested in life and had many questions on international politics, science, technology and the ways of the world.

He had already set up a campaign to curtail the use of the "R" word at his school.

North Korea

He was captain of his debate team where he had won many awards for speaking, he was on the Lego Robotics team, he was elected by his peers to student council.

In the words of his teacher he had never met such a profound student as Rory. In a tribute written by the President of his local park he said that "it was possible to look at a child and, as an adult say **"I could be more like him"**.

He was a natural leader, eying a career in politics or aviation. Among his heroes he talked about Sully Sullenberger, Rosa Parks and John F Kennedy. We believe as those others around him that the world has lost an incredible human being who was also a fantastic big brother to Kathleen.

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So, now we believe there has to be a battle call so no other young child dies of this killer.

We believe we must all work together to advocate for changes and press ahead with awareness and education regarding sepsis. We had never heard of it, most of our friends had never heard of it.

Since Rory died we have been able to reach out to people everywhere.

His Story has been in the New York Times four times,

His Story has been the Today Show,

His Story will be on Dr Oz,

We are working on a Discovery Channell Documentary

Oprah Magazine has covered sepsis.

There have been Countless worldwide newspaper articles written about this case.

His Story has been numerous websites and it's still going on.

## Rory's Law

Rory we believe wouldn't have died if clear failsafe procedures were in place when he entered the ER at the hospital on the first night.

We want to establish a Rory's Law for all hospital emergency rooms:

so that parents are told who the experienced qualified professional in charge of their child is,

that parents get an explanation of their child's blood test results and diagnosis with a discussion on other potential illnesses and why they have been ruled out.

Most doctors do this already but we must protect all children and make it mandatory for the doctor to stop, listen and communicate.

Rory's life would have been saved if this was in place.

**LAST PAGE**

**Sepsis kills!!!*parents need to know this.***

The last place a parent wants to bring their child is to an emergency room.

All parents are aware of meningitis; they know to check their child for the symptoms. They don't rush to the ER if their child has a little stiffness in their necks-they know to look at the broader picture.

Parents and schools **must** be educated about sepsis.

They must be able to say **have you thought about sepsis?**

Information will save lives

**We need to build on this momentum together. Parents, Doctors, public officials, all working together, to stop this killer that is attacking our families, our communities, and our lives,**

The Staunton family will leave no stone unturned, and with your help we will prevail.

New York's Governor Mario Cuomo has begun the fight against Sepsis this year, when he signed in to law new Gold Standard Sepsis Regulations.

Sepsis Kills 8000 New Yorkers each year.

We are confident that Connecticut will be the next state to say no to Sepsis.

Thank you