

Brain-Dead California Teen Gets Surgery at New Facility After Court Fight

A California girl who was declared brain dead after a tonsillectomy last month and later moved to a new care facility after a legal battle has undergone surgery to insert feeding and breathing tubes, a family attorney said on Wednesday.

Jahi McMath, 13, was transferred from Children's Hospital and Research Center in Oakland, outside of San Francisco, where she had remained without brain activity for nearly four weeks, to an undisclosed Catholic care center on Sunday night.

Doctors at the new care center performed tracheostomy and gastrostomy surgeries, Christopher Dolan, attorney for the girl's family, said in a Twitter message on Wednesday.

"She is doing very well, and now getting the treatment she should have gotten 28 days ago," Dolan said. "Doctors are optimistic that her condition has stabilized."

The case has drawn international attention and the support of pro-life groups, including one founded by the family of Terri Schiavo, a Florida woman who died in 2005 after a 15-year battle over whether to keep her body alive in a persistent vegetative state.

It was not clear when the procedures took place. On Monday, Dolan told a press conference that Jahi had "wasted away at Children's Hospital (and) that she might not make it."

McMath was admitted to Children's Hospital on Dec. 9 to have her tonsils removed and for other procedures to address sleep apnea. After the surgery, she went into cardiac arrest and

suffered brain swelling.

The hospital declared her brain dead on Dec. 12 and made plans to remove her from the ventilator, but her family has fought in state and federal court to keep her on life support.

A restraining order barring the hospital from removing that life support had been set to expire on Tuesday.

An online fundraiser launched by Jahi's mother, Nailah Winkfield, seeking to raise \$20,000 to pay for her daughter's transfer exceeded \$55,000 on Wednesday.

The family and its lawyer have declined to give the name or general location of Jahi's current care facility, saying they have received threats of violence from members of the public who disagree with their handling of Jahi's case.

Reporting by Laila Kearney in San Francisco; Editing by Eric M. Johnson and Lisa Shumaker

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