208772 - He gave the wrong blood type to a patient, based on what was written on his driver’s licence; is he liable?

the question

If the nurse in the hospital did a blood transfusion and gave the wrong blood type to the patient, based on what was written on his driver’s licence, and the patient died, and it became clear that the blood type written on the driver’s licence was wrong, and that the patient’s blood was of a different type, what must the nurse do?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Being careful and prudent when treating people means taking extra precautions and being very careful with regard to anything that could cause them harm or lead to their death. That includes not giving the patient a blood transfusion except after being absolutely certain that the blood is in good condition and matches the patient’s blood type.

We put this question to our shaykh, ‘Abd ar-Rahman al-Barrak (may Allah preserve him) and he said:

If it is the nurse’s job and responsibility not to rely on what is written on the driver’s licence – rather he is required to verify the patient’s blood type by doing some essential testing – then he is liable for the outcome of this mistake, because of his neglect and falling short.

But if the system allows him to rely on what is written on the driver’s licence, then the nurse is not liable for anything. End quote.

See also the answer the question no. 52809 .

And Allah knows best.