

SWEDISH STROKE PATIENT HEARS DOCTORS DISCUSS REMOVING HIS ORGANS

43-year-old man lodges official complaint after overhearing medics talking to his girlfriend about organ donation while he was paralysed but fully conscious



**By Richard Orange, Malmö
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A Swedish man who was paralysed by a stroke is filing an official complaint against a Gothenburg hospital after he listened in horror to his doctors telling his girlfriend and relatives he was going to die and discussing transplanting his liver and kidney.

"I heard them tell my girlfriend and my relatives that there was no hope," Jimi Fritze, 43, told The Telegraph.

"I couldn't do anything. I could only

see and hear. I couldn't move my body."

The former supermarket manager from Örebro suffered a stroke nearly two years ago as he and his girlfriend were dining on smoked fish and fine wine at a restaurant on the Gothenburg archipelago. As it was too windy for a helicopter to land on the island, it took one and a half hours to get him by boat to hospital.

By that time, he was completely paralysed.

"They looked at an x-ray of my brain, and when they had done that, they told my girlfriend that it wasn't good and that I wouldn't live," Mr Fritze said.

"I could hear her crying the whole time, but I couldn't do anything."

He drifted into unconsciousness, waking later to hear the doctors discussing his case.

"I heard them talking about donation, they wanted to do some tests on my liver and my kidney, so they could give them to some people," he said.

Still, he could do nothing to alert anyone to the fact that he was fully conscious.

"I was scared because I thought that I was going to die then, and a hard death," he said. "I remember I thought, what will happen if they cremate me, will I see the fire and feel the fire?"

When his family came in to say their final farewell, the doctors discussed organ donation with them, even though Mr Fritze had yet to be declared officially brain dead, something he believes violated official guidelines.

If a more experienced doctor had not returned from holiday three days after his accident, he is in little doubt that he would not be here today.

"I think I would have been stuck in bed until my body didn't work any more, so they could take the parts from me," Mr Fritze said.

As it happened, when the new doctor took another look at the x-ray, she immediately realised that there was a good chance that Mr Fritze might recover. Within days, he was able to communicate by nodding his head.

After nearly two years, and constant rehabilitation therapy, Mr Fritze can now speak and move, although he remains confined to a wheelchair and reliant on an assistant.

Last month, he filed an official complaint to Gothenburg's Sahlgrenska Hospital, where he was treated, hoping that it will help prevent the same thing happening to others.

Stefan Sarajarvi, a spokesman for the hospital, said that the hospital had begun an inquiry into Mr Fritze's complaint, and would respond later this month.

"We take all the complaints we receive very seriously, and do everything we can to make sure it doesn't happen in future," he said.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/sweden/10745138/Swedish-stroke-patient-hears-doctors-discuss-removing-his-organs.html>