



FACT SHEET

Danquah v.

University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

ABOUT Danquah v. University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

In September 2011, the hospital run by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey passed a policy that would require Same Day Surgery Unit nurses to assist with abortions. The hospital imposed the new policy in October 2011 and repeatedly threatened that they must assist with abortion cases or be terminated. The hospital began to schedule the nurses on a rotating basis for training sessions that would include assisting surgical abortions. When a nurse objected to assisting abortion cases due to her religious beliefs, a supervisor responded that UMDNJ has “no regard for religious beliefs” of nurses who object to participating. Twelve of the nurses, represented by Alliance Defense Fund attorneys, filed suit on Oct. 31, 2011 against the hospital for requiring them to help with abortions. Both federal and state law protect them from being forced to do so. Federal law prohibits hospitals that receive certain federal funds from forcing employees to participate in abortions or related health services. UMDNJ receives approximately \$60 million in known federal health funds annually. In addition, New Jersey law states, “No person shall be required to perform or assist in the performance of an abortion or sterilization.” The lawsuit requests that the hospital be ordered to obey these laws and to return part of the federal taxpayer money it has received in light of its violation of federal conscience laws.

CURRENT STATUS OF Danquah v. Univ. of Medicine and Dentistry of N.J. AS OF 12/21/11

A federal judge issued a temporary restraining order on Nov. 3 that prohibits the hospital from forcing any of 12 nurses that sued the facility to participate in training or services related to abortions. The order, which the hospital agreed to, also prohibits any acts of employment discrimination against the nurses until that matter is resolved. It is only in effect until the court decides whether to issue any additional order for a preliminary injunction after a hearing scheduled for Dec. 22.

FOCUS OF HEARING – WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Pro-life nurses shouldn’t be forced to assist or train in services related to abortions, and both federal and state law protect them in this regard. If hospitals are allowed to require personnel to participate in abortion cases, one of the most precious and important legally protected rights Americans have will be violated: the right to practice your faith without undue government interference or coercion.

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ABOUT ADF

ADF is a legal alliance of Christian attorneys and like-minded organizations defending the right of people to freely live out their faith. Launched in 1994, ADF employs a unique combination of strategy, training, funding, and litigation to protect and preserve religious liberty, the sanctity of life, marriage, and the family.

ABOUT Matt Bowman

Matt Bowman serves as legal counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund at its Washington, D.C., Regional Service Center, where he is a key member of the Life Litigation Project to protect the sanctity of human life. Before joining ADF in 2006, Bowman clerked for several federal judges, including The Honorable Samuel A. Alito, Jr., at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. He is admitted to the bar in Michigan, the U.S. Supreme Court, the District of Columbia, and numerous other federal courts. Practicing law since 2003, Bowman earned his J.D. from Ave Maria School of Law.

ABOUT Demetrios Stratis

Demetrios Stratis is one of nearly 2,100 attorneys in the ADF alliance, having graduated from the ADF National Litigation Academy in 2002 and completed NLA advanced training events in 2004 and 2008. He has served and is serving on a number of pro bono matters in association with ADF and the New Jersey Family Policy Council—as chairman of the NJFPC Legal Resource Council—to protect religious liberties and the sanctity of marriage. His law practice, Ruta, Soulios & Stratis, LLP, in Fair Lawn, N.J., focuses on the areas of family law, criminal law, personal injury, civil litigation, and constitutional law. He earned his J.D. from New York Law School and is a member of the bar in the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, as well as the District of Columbia.

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