

## 'I called him my hero': Former patients call for public inquiry into disgraced neurosurgeon

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Demonstrators have called on the Scottish government to open a public inquiry into allegations that a neurosurgeon left patients with life-changing injuries through botched surgeries.

Professor Sam Eljamel was suspended from his role as Head of Neurosurgery at Dundee's Ninewells Hospital in 2013 over the claims. He had previously worked at the hospital since 1996.

He is now thought to be living and working in Libya.

A number of Eljamel's former patients have accused him of medical negligence and botching operations that have left them with life-changing injuries.

Among those whose lives he changed forever was Fay Pelloie, who sought treatment in 2003 for a trapped nerve.

But after seven botched surgeries, over eight years under the care of Eljamel, she says that the "future for me is paralysis. It's not if, it's when."

Her story is one of many that reflects the suffering that patients have had to endure after Eljamel's care.



Fay Pelloie has been left in constant pain after seven botched surgeries. Credit: ITV News

A review conducted in the aftermath of the complaints levelled against Eljamel criticised NHS Tayside for inadequate supervision and oversight.

It identified that a "group of 111 patients were potentially exposed to possible harm" due to these lapses.

Dr Pamela Johnston, Executive Medical Director of NHS Tayside, said: "NHS Tayside apologises to former patients of the surgeon and remains committed to doing whatever is required to support the independent commission."



'I called him a hero': Jules Rose was meant to have a brain tumor removed, but instead Dr Eljamel removed her tear duct. Credit: ITV News

Jules Rose, one of Eljamel's last known victims, had gone in for brain tumor surgery, only to have her tear duct operated on instead.

"I was vulnerable, but I trusted this man. I called him my hero after my first operation," she said.

"Our justice is to hold those to account [at] NHS Tayside because they knowingly knew what was going on with Professor Eljamel."

Despite pressure from campaigners, the Scottish government is yet to agree to a public inquiry.

Scottish Health Secretary Michael Matheson MSP emphasised the need for a thorough and robust investigation.

"There is a need to make sure that this issue is properly and thoroughly investigated and I want to make sure that we have a robust process in place that will facilitate that," he said.

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