

FAITH

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conscious at all times, except during surgery, and was very concerned that she would be given a blood transfusion against her will.

"She had made that decision," he said. "She confirmed it numerous times, even with a nurse present, asking her if she wanted blood."

Williams died at 12:45 p.m. Saturday.

Officials at the hospital decline to discuss any aspects of their treatment of her.

But an official of the Kansas City Area Hospital Association said doctors at St. Mary's probably suffered over their inability to fully treat the patient.

"Our business is saving lives, and to allow someone to die goes against what we live to do," said association vice president Joanne Kennebeck.

Kennebeck, a lawyer, said patients have the right to refuse medical treatment, and administering a blood transfusion in this case might also have infringed on Williams' constitutional right to freedom of religion.

"These are tough ones," Kennebeck added.

Jeff Williams said he does not question the coroner's assessment that his mother bled to death. Nor does he question the Jehovah's Witness faith.

"I did not have any second thoughts in that regard," he said. "It was not easy, but how can anything like that be easy?"