

An email was sent to the MUHC Title IX and Equity Office on May 2, 2022 by an employee, Sara Johnson.

When I was a student nurse, I recall working on different floors during clinical rotations. During the clinic for the OBGYN training, it was the most stressful. One doctor in particular was really mean. She treated us students like we were nothing. One – she just ignored us. She did not let us get involved in the treatment of patients. Two – if she did acknowledge us, she would ask us to bring her water if we passed her in the hall. I thought this was because we were students; sort of a form of hazing. I blew it off. Now that I am graduated, I realized that it is wrong that way I was treated by this Doctor.

I am on the cardiac floor and treated much better. The cardiac surgeons treat us really well; especially Dr. Sam Hall. Dr. Hall includes me in the treatment planning – Dr. Hall even contacts me after hours. I have gotten to scrub in with Dr. Hall on really serious cardiac cases to assist despite some of my co-workers having been in the department a lot longer than me. My co-workers are starting to get jealous but I was an A student and graduated summa cum laude. Dr. Hall definitely recognizes my aptitude for the cardiac unit. Dr. Hall even said he is going to send in a recommendation that I get a pay raise, along with my colleagues Ronda and Linda.

I have noticed that Dr. Hall tends to surround himself with only white nurses. On the cardiac floor, we have two African-American nurses, Tina and Rose, and one Jewish nurse, Ruth, and three other Caucasian nurses, Tim, Ronda, and Linda. We also have a nurse that is openly gay, John. Dr. Hall has expressed that he is a strong believer in Christ. I have not heard him say anything hateful about anyone; in fact, he was very excited about the Dobbs decision as he never wants any person to be harmed. That is why he became a doctor – to do no harm.

I really want other nursing students to be treated better than I was as a student. Students deserve to be treated like I am now by Dr. Hall.

What do you do after receiving this email?

After receipt, Sara was contacted and agreed to come in for an intake interview on May 5, 2022. Sara reported the following to the investigator during her initial intake interview:

Sara works as a nurse in the cardiac floor of the hospital. She has worked at the hospital for almost two years, after graduating from the Sinclair School of Nursing at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Sara’s annual salary is \$46,000. Sara loves Mizzou and comes from a long line of Tigers who are big donors to MU Football.

Sara likes working on the cardiac floor and tries to get scheduled when Dr. Hall is working whenever she can; she admits that she has a bit of a crush on Dr. Hall. Sara is 25 years old. Sara believes Dr. Hall is 67 years old.

Sara was asked about scrubbing in on surgeries when she was actually assigned to a cardiac floor. Sara became noticeably uncomfortable in the interview and said that she had expressed a desire to Dr. Hall while he was checking on a patient and he said she could assist him during surgery. Sara said she asked her supervisor who said no – that she was not properly trained – but that when she later reviewed the schedule, she saw that she was listed the next day on the OR schedule with Dr. Hall’s initials.

Sara was next asked to describe interactions she had witnessed between Dr. Hall and Tina, Rose, or Alyssa. Sara said that Dr. Hall was a nice Christian man and that she was only present to discuss her concerns while she was a student.

You ask Sara to describe her whether John ever spoke to you about his interactions with Dr. Hall. Sara said she had an appointment and needed to leave.

What do you do at this point?

After reviewing the information received so far, you decide to schedule an interview with Tina, Rose, Ruth, and John.

Interview with Tina Givens:

Tina meets with you in person at your Title IX and Equity Office at the hospital during her lunch break. Tina has been working as an RN for MUHC for 29 years, is 54 years old, and gets paid \$54,000. Tina works on the cardiac floor with Sara Johnson. Tina discloses to you that she believes Sara and Dr. Hall might be involved in a romantic relationship but also admits that she has not witnessed anything physical occur between them. Tina says it is “just a vibe.”

Tina is asked to describe her working environment. Tina says that overall she enjoys her job. She says that most of the nurses are friends with each other and need to be supportive of one another because the doctors are really difficult to work with. Tina says that the most difficult in her opinion is Dr. Hall. Tina described Dr. Hall as having “absolutely no personality.” Tina said when he walks into a room “it is all business” and she believes “even patients get nervous.” Tina says he is a “fine surgeon.” If either of my parents needed heart surgery, I would want Dr. Hall to do it.

Tina was asked if she is ever assigned to patients of his; she said no.

Interview with Rose Nolan:

Rose talks with you on the telephone during break. She says she only has 15 minutes. Rose is 63 years old, has been working as an RN for MUHC for 37 years, and gets paid \$57,000. Rose works on the cardiac floor and has been working on that floor for 30 years. Although Dr. Hall has also been practicing with MUHC for 30 years as a cardiac surgeon, “somehow, I have never been assigned one of his patients,” Rose tells you. When asked why she thinks that is, Rose says, “because I don’t look like Sara.” Rose was asked to be more specific. Rose said, “I’m not 25 and I’m not White.”

Interview with Ruth Long:

Ruth agrees to meet with you outside at a local coffeeshop. She did not want to be seen inside the hospital, for fear that someone might see her. Ruth is 42 years old, has worked for MUHC for 7 years as an RN, has an annual salary of \$42,000, and has worked in cardiac nursing for 20 years (her entire nursing career). Ruth said that Dr. Hall is the head of the entire cardiac unit, as he is the head cardiac surgeon. Although she does not directly report to him, her nursing supervisor reports to someone who directly reports to Dr. Hall. She has heard from others that Dr. Hall does not like to be questioned, especially about managerial things, “it is his unit. He does not need any nurse questioning his authority.”

Interview with John Badey:

John spoke to you in the Title IX and Equity Office. John works as an RN in the cardiac unit. John is 47 years old, has worked for MUHC for 10 years and makes \$64,000. John has his Bachelor’s degree in Nursing and a Master’s degree in Nursing Administration. He would like to work in hospital administration. John finds cardiac surgery fascinating and

would like to scrub into a surgery but has not been given that opportunity like Sara. He has heard rumors of a relationship between Sara and Dr. Hall but tries not to get caught up in office gossip; he has never witnessed anything unprofessional between them. He is not aware of any other nurse that works on a nursing floor though that has gotten that same opportunity.

John has not spoken much with Dr. Hall other than during brief conversations about patient care. John describes Dr. Hall as abrupt and distant. John has never seen Dr. Hall work with Tina or Rose. John does recall a time that Dr. Hall said 'that he could not believe Tina and Rose were still working given that the government was handing out COVID checks. He thought they might make more that way than he had authorized them to get paid. He was sure that would get them out the door.'

Now what do you do?

END OF EXERCISE.

RAISE YOUR HAND WHEN COMPLETED TO RECEIVE NEXT PAGE.