

Australian court overrules parents in cancer case

June 2 2012

An Australian court ordered the parents of a cancer-stricken child to put aside their religious beliefs and allow her life-saving treatment including a blood transfusion, reports said Saturday.

The four-year-old's parents had refused the transfusion because it was against the teachings of their Jehovah's Witness faith, but South Australia's Supreme Court upheld an application by the hospital forcing them to relent.

Justice Richard White ruled that it was "appropriate and indeed necessary" for the girl, who was diagnosed with [leukaemia](#) on Monday, to receive a [blood transfusion](#).

"I'm satisfied that there are no alternatives to the provision of a blood transfusion," White said, according to a report of the case in the Adelaide Advertiser newspaper.

"Without a blood transfusion there's a very high prospect (the girl) will die," he added.

"I'm satisfied that it's in (the girl's) best interest to receive the blood transfusion despite her parents' objections."

The Jehovah's Witnesses movement, which claims to have more than 17 million followers worldwide, identifies itself as a Christian religion with its beliefs based solely on the Bible, including a prohibition on accepting

blood.

Doctors had told the court that the girl had just weeks to live if she were not treated and could suffer heart, brain and [kidney damage](#) even if she survived without a transfusion.

Her father wept as he spoke of the family's [adherence](#) to "strict Bible principles".

"We want the best possible treatment for (her) and the hospital are doing a great job. The only thing we don't consent to is the issue of blood," he said.

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