

German court hears nurse admitted more than 30 'boredom' killings (Update)

January 8 2015

A German court heard Thursday that a former male nurse had admitted killing more than 30 patients at a hospital where he worked, allegedly out of boredom.

A psychiatric expert told the trial that the 38-year-old defendant had confessed to the killings during recently held assessments, a court spokesman said.

The ex-nurse went on trial in Oldenburg in northern Germany in September, accused of the murder of three patients and attempted murder of two others.

The expert said the defendant had admitted to those charges, as well as saying he had over-medicated another 90 patients, 30 of whom died, the spokesman said.

Investigators suspect his motive was to spark medical emergencies for patients so that he could then demonstrate his resuscitation skills, but that he also acted out of boredom.

The deaths occurred at Delmenhorst clinic, located near Oldenburg in Lower Saxony state, where the accused worked in the intensive care unit between 2003 and 2005.

He is believed to have injected patients with a heart medication that disturbed the heart rhythm and caused a drop in blood pressure.

The psychiatric expert said the man, who had previously worked in other clinics, at an elderly home and for emergency medical services, said he had not carried out killings elsewhere, the spokesman said.

He met the defendant four times recently.

Ashamed

The man had expressed deep shame for his actions and said he was aware he had caused suffering for the victims' relatives, national DPA news agency said.

The court spokesman stressed that the statement by the expert to the tribunal was not legally considered a confession by the defendant, who has so far not spoken in court.

A special commission of police and prosecutors dubbed "Kardio" (Cardio) is currently checking all deaths in places where the defendant previously worked.

A colleague of the ex-nurse caught him in the act of injecting patients in 2005, DPA said.

In 2008, he was sentenced by the district court in Oldenburg to seven and a half years in jail for attempted murder and has been in detention since.

It is unclear why investigators or the hospital did not pick up on the possible extent of the alleged crimes earlier.

An inquiry has been opened into possible failings in the investigation.

In 2006, German male nurse Stephan Letter, who became known in the

media as "the Angel of Death", was sentenced to life in prison for administering lethal injections to 28 mostly elderly patients in what prosecutors called an "assembly line" killing spree.

A year later, a nurse at Berlin's prestigious Charite hospital was sentenced to life in prison for killing five seriously ill patients with drug overdoses.

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