

# Cause of Death – No Chamber in Calgary

February 2nd, 2010

## Delay of care cited in death

February 02, 2009 by Gwendolyn Richards, Calgary Herald

Calgary's lack of hyperbaric chamber failed fire victim: The third victim of a house fire last week would have had a fighting chance if Calgary hospitals had a hyperbaric chamber, her mother said Sunday. Tiffany Cox, 19, died Friday after several days in an Edmonton hospital receiving hyperbaric treatment, which uses an oxygen-rich environment to combat the effects of smoke inhalation. Amid plans to commemorate Tiffany's life later this week, Cox's mother is asking why none of Calgary's hospitals are equipped with the technology.

## Tiffany Cox waited more than 14 hours for treatment because no Calgary hospital has a hyperbaric chamber.

Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

"Because we didn't have a chamber here, we lost our daughter," Mitzi Halliday said. Mitzi said the delay to get her daughter into hyperbaric treatment was upwards of 14 hours — precious time that could have made a difference." They (officials in Edmonton) said if we had one here, her chances would have been much better." Health Minister Ron Liepert said Saturday it would be "ideal" to have a hyperbaric chamber in Calgary, but there hasn't been enough funding to put the specialized equipment in all hospitals. On her last night, Tiffany called her parents — a phone call they are both grateful for. "The last words I said to her was I loved her. That was a blessing," Ernie Halliday said. Cox had shown no signs of recovery following the fire that broke out early Monday morning in the northwest basement suite where she lived for more than a year, Mitzi said. She remained in a coma for her four days in hospital. Two others staying in the suite that night— Jonathan St. Pierre, 19, and Colleen Mantei, 23 — died earlier in the week from their injuries. A fourth person is still in hospital in Edmonton. Cox, a nanny, loved children and was looking forward to one day starting a family of her own, Mitzi said. "We've donated her organs and we're trying to find some comfort in the fact we're saving other children on behalf of her," she said. Family from here and Saskatchewan descended on the Misericordia Community Hospital in Edmonton to rally around Mitzi, her husband Ernie Halliday and Tiffany's three sisters. About 40 in all, sleeping on floors at times, kept a rotating bedside vigil for the young woman. The family is grateful for the care and compassion of the doctors and staff at the hospital. "They made every accommodation for us," said Ernie. "It was a very tough week and they made it a lot easier to deal with. I just couldn't believe the love and compassion they put forward." Ernie said the family is also extremely thankful to the firefighters and paramedics who brought the four out of the suite and gave them immediate medical care. "Tiffany's heart stopped for 15 minutes and they brought her back to life. They gave us some extra time with her. We can't thank them enough for the extra time they gave us," Ernie said. He added he knows the fire — one of the worst in the city's history — was difficult for fire crews as well, and hopes they know their actions are appreciated. The fire, which started when a space heater ignited materials in the living room, would have blocked the only door exit, Mitzi said. She said she told Tiffany she was worried about the bars on the windows