Fatigue Doesn’t Take a Day Off: Managing Worker Fatigue & Shift Risk Fatality File

Nurse Falls Asleep After Consecutive Night Shifts, Causing Fatal Commute Crash

A 24-year-old nurse in Georgia, Kayla Proctor, fell asleep while driving home after completing three consecutive 12.5-hour night shifts at Northside Forsyth Hospital. During her commute, her vehicle drifted into oncoming traffic and collided with another car, killing a 72-year-old woman, Jean Holbrook. Deputies reported that Proctor admitted she had “fallen asleep at the wheel” after leaving her third night shift in a row. She was arrested and charged in connection with the fatal crash.

This tragic incident highlights the severe risks associated with extended night shifts, cumulative sleep debt, and shift fatigue—particularly in healthcare, where long hours and back-to-back night schedules are common. Fatigue-related impairment can mirror alcohol intoxication, reducing reaction time, situational awareness, and decision-making, especially during early-morning commutes after night work.

Source: Nurse.org