You are shadowing in the Intensive Coronary Care Unit. There is a female patient with whom you have talked a few times. She is 79 year old bright and alert. She had been in good health for a person of that age until this event. In fact, until two days ago she was living in her home without need of any assistance.

Last Monday (two days ago) she had a coronary event. She called 911 and was brought to the hospital. After she was stabilized in the emergency room she was taken to the “cath-lab” and had her heart catheterized. She presented with significant blockages in a number in varies branches of the coronary artery (one of the branches was presenting a blockage of 90%). In the opinion of the attending cardiologist, angioplasty and stints were indicated. The doctor realized however that the patient was not as well stabilized as first thought and the procedure had to be put off.

Since that time her family has been pressuring her to not have the procedure but to go home. This seemed highly suspicious to all of the staff. The patient has said to you and other staff that she is “now all mixed up”… and does not know what to do.

A few minutes ago you overheard her son and daughter talking. The son said that if she gets the angioplasties and stints she could last for years. He added that by then she would likely have used up all of her money and that they would get nothing!

What do you assert is the proper action on your part?