

For Immediate Release

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### **Wrongful death suit filed against Villa Scalabrini and Westlake Hospital**

Chicago--November 14, 2007-- Jeffrey E. Martin of the Chicago law firm Levin & Perconti filed a lawsuit in the Circuit Court of Cook County on behalf of Mary Dolan (Carol Stream), the daughter of 71-year-old Giovanni Scianna, and her family against Villa Scalabrini Nursing & Rehabilitation Center (Northlake), Westlake Community Hospital (Melrose Park), and attending physician, Dr. Peter Eupierre. Giovanni Scianna was a resident at Villa Scalabrini from June 22, 2005 until July 15, 2006. During his residency, Giovanni lost 43 pounds, became malnourished and dehydrated, and developed multiple bed sores on his lower extremities and his sacral/coccyx area. He developed an infection in his blood (sepsis). His malnutrition hindered his body's ability to heal and increased his risk for developing pressure ulcers. On October 14, 2006, Giovanni died from complications from these injuries.

Giovanni Scianna was admitted to Villa Scalabrini for rehabilitation following a stroke. At the time of his admission, Giovanni was able to walk with a rolling walker, eat on his own, and verbally communicate his own needs. When Giovanni was admitted, an overall health assessment was performed which documented his weight at 189 pounds and his skin healthy and free of pressure sores. Attorney Jeffrey Martin explained what happened: "Approximately 6 months into Mr. Scianna's residency, he was admitted to Methodist Hospital for depression. A consulting psychiatrist prescribed an anti-depressant medication, Lexapro. After a brief stay, he was noted to be doing fine and was sent back to Villa Scalabrini. After his arrival, the attending physician

assigned to Giovanni, Dr. Eupierre, changed the medication to Welbutrin and Risperdal and over the course of the following months continued to increase the dosages of these medications despite Mr. Scianna's severe adverse side effects. Mr. Scianna's cognitive abilities were deteriorating and he was experiencing rapid weight loss. His overall health was declining."

The lawsuit also claims that during Mr. Scianna's residency, the Villa Scalabrini staff and Dr. Eupierre failed to monitor his nutritional status. As a result, Giovanni became severely malnourished and dehydrated resulting in a forty-three pound weight loss during his approximate 12 month residency. The complaint further alleges that Mr. Scianna's calls for assistance were frequently ignored, personal items were stolen, and he was allowed to lie in his own urine for prolonged periods of time.

Giovanni was an in-patient at Westlake Hospital from July 15-26, 2006. The complaint against Westlake Hospital alleges Giovanni's care and treatment fell below the minimum standard of care for a reasonably careful hospital staff. Specifically, the complaint alleges that the staff failed to ensure that Mr. Scianna received sufficient nutrition; failed to provide him with adequate hydration; failed to monitor his skin condition; and failed to turn and/or reposition Mr. Scianna enough so as to relieve prolonged pressure on various parts of his skin.

Martin added, "Members of staff at both Villa Scalabrini and Westlake Hospital and Dr. Eupierre failed to monitor and treat Giovanni's skin which resulted in the development of eight (8) severely infected pressure sores over multiple parts of his body. The severity of the sores ranged from Stage II to Stage IV."

Martin explained, "Curiously, when Mr. Scianna was discharged from Westlake

Hospital and transferred to an alternate nursing home, the Discharge Summary from Westlake Hospital noted only slight redness in the sacral area. Yet when the subsequent nursing home he was admitted to conducted their own assessment, they documented pressure ulcers on eight different areas of his body ranging in severity from Stage II to Stage IV. His overall decline in health caused and/or contributed to his death on October 14, 2006.” Both Villa Scalabrini and Westlake are owned, operated and/or managed by Resurrection Health Care.