



Lawsuit filed in 'Angel of Death' case

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Published: 9/6/2008 12:08 AM

A Cary woman filed suit Friday against the operators of a McHenry County nursing home and several of its employees, claiming her mother died after a nurse gave her excessive doses of morphine while her co-workers and supervisors did nothing to prevent it.

Vickie Lund is seeking undisclosed damages from the former Woodstock Residence and workers that include a Lake in the Hills woman described in court documents as an "Angel of Death."

The suit claims that woman, former Woodstock Residence nurse Marty Himebaugh, gave Virginia Cole "improper and unlawful" doses of medicine that caused or contributed to the 78-year-old woman's death in September 2006.

Himebaugh, 57, was indicted by a McHenry County grand jury earlier this year on charges she gave four patients, including Cole, dangerous doses of morphine or other drugs either without a prescription or at levels larger than prescribed.

The charges do not claim Himebaugh killed the patients, who all died in 2006. Authorities have declined to comment on their causes of death.

Also named in the lawsuit is Himebaugh's former supervisor, Penny Whitlock, 58, of Woodstock. She also faces criminal charges and encouraged Himebaugh to serve as an 'Angel of Death' at the nursing home, court documents state.

The lawsuit alleges other supervisors knew or should have known of Himebaugh's actions but did not stop her.

The indictments followed a 15-month investigation into a string of suspected mercy killing at the 115-bed nursing home, since renamed the Crossroads Care Center of Woodstock.