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## Hospital-death lawsuit settles for \$2M

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The family of a 33-year-old woman who died at a hospital after lapsing into a diabetic coma has received a \$2 million settlement.

On Oct. 12, 2010, Lisa Rivera, who was an insulin-dependent diabetic, went to Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center in Chicago with shortness of breath.

Rivera was diagnosed with excessive fluid around her lungs, and a procedure was done to correct that problem.

After that, Rivera suffered from persistent pain and was placed on Dilaudid, a pain medication. Because Rivera was diabetic, her attending physician prescribed a long-acting form of insulin.

Two days later, Rivera had a reaction to the medication and went into respiratory arrest, causing her to stop breathing.

The hospital staff revived Rivera, and she remained in its intensive care unit.

The lawsuit filed in 2011 alleges the nursing staff failed on Oct. 14 and 15, 2010, to document a diet change order for Rivera, who was not eating food by mouth.

In order to change a patient's diet, a doctor's order is required,

**John J. Perconti**

said John J. Perconti, a partner at Levin & Perconti who represented Rivera's family. No such order was obtained.

Rivera's blood-sugar levels dropped because she received too much insulin. She went into a diabetic coma and died on Dec. 21, 2010.

The lawsuit alleged that Irmina Valinovic, an internal medicine physician employed by the hospital, failed to review Rivera's medical chart. Valinovic also failed to discuss with the attending physician whether Rivera was at risk for low blood sugar because she was on long-acting insulin, the suit alleged.

The defendants asserted that Rivera was receiving regular dialysis due to end-stage renal failure and had a short life expectancy.

The settlement was negotiated in a mediation handled by Donald P. O'Connell.

The settlement money which was paid last week went to Rivera's mother, Hayde Claudio, and her brother, Luis A. Rivera Jr.

"This was an error that should not have occurred," Perconti said. "There was a total lack of communication between the nurses and Dr. Valinovic, which led to this hypoglycemic episode."

Chad M. Castro, a partner at Barker & Castro LLC, represented the hospital and two of its nurses. He declined to comment.

R. Dennis Rasor, a partner at Anderson, Rasor & Partners LLP, represented Valinovic. He could not be reached for comment.

Jordan S. Powell, an associate at Levin & Perconti, also represented Rivera's estate.

Cook County Circuit Judge John H. Ehrlich approved the settlement and entered a dismissal order May 9 in the case, which is *Hayde Claudio, etc. v. Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center et al.*, No. 2011 L 13992.

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