

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Levin & Perconti

325 North LaSalle Street, Suite 450

Chicago, IL 60654

312.332.2872

questions@levinperconti.com



**Family Files Abuse Lawsuit against Hillcrest Nursing and Rehab in Joliet
*Health Department's investigation reveals 23 incidents of abuse***

CHICAGO, March 20, 2012 - The family of a 47-year-old nursing home resident filed a lawsuit today in the Circuit Court of Cook County against Hillcrest Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Joliet, Ill. The nursing home's owners are headquartered in Cook County. The suit alleges that William A. Kahle was physically abused by another resident in September 2011. An Illinois Department of Public Health investigation report revealed that 23 other residents were sexually, physically, verbally, or mentally abused at the facility from May 2011 through October 2011. Steven M. Levin of Levin & Perconti represents the victim's family in the case.

William was admitted to Hillcrest, located at 777 Draper Avenue, in June 2010. In September 2011, William was burned by a fellow resident at the nursing home. William's father, William W. Kahle, filed a complaint with the Illinois Department of Public Health to investigate the incident. "The investigation report revealed that our client was burned by another resident, and that the nursing home did not document this incident of abuse or report it to the IDPH," said Levin. The IDPH report also revealed that during this time, another resident, a 26-year-old male who suffers from bipolar disorder and ADHD, abused at least 23 other residents.

"Resident accounts revealed that this 26-year-old male resident exposed himself, sexually assaulted both male and female residents, urinated on another resident and used crack, cocaine, and SHAZAM (synthetic marijuana)," said Levin. "The report states that this resident threatened to harm his victims if they reported these incidents and even threatened to "come back with a gun" if they said anything."

According to the report, this resident was transferred to Hillcrest in May 2011 after exhibiting aggressive behaviors and threatening residents and staff at another nursing home. "With this resident's history, Hillcrest should have taken steps to prevent him from terrorizing and abusing other residents," said Levin. "Among the findings, the IDPH cited the facility for failing to protect residents from abuse by an identified high risk offender, and failing to report the incidents of abuse to the IDPH."

"The Kahle family filed this lawsuit to hold the nursing home responsible for failing to protect William from abuse," said Levin. The lawsuit alleges that Hillcrest placed residents in a dangerous environment by failing to monitor and adequately supervise residents who had a history of violent criminal acts and violent behavior. The suit alleges that Hillcrest failed to develop and implement policies that prohibited the mistreatment, neglect, and abuse of residents. The suit also alleges that the facility failed to report our client's abuse to the IDPH or his family.

"Our family trusted Hillcrest to take care of my son," said William W. Kahle. "We were shocked that they allowed another resident to burn him, but even more concerned when we read the full report. We could not believe the nursing home allowed another resident to terrorize and abuse so many residents. We decided to file a lawsuit so that others would learn the extent of the abuse at Hillcrest. We do not want this to happen to any more residents, especially those who cannot speak up for themselves."

The Illinois Department of Public Health website reveals that Hillcrest's regulatory record is speckled with violations. "This facility has a history of resident neglect, and our firm has handled cases against Hillcrest in the past," said Levin. "In one case, we represented the family of a man who died as a result of negligence in November 1999. Twelve years later, and the facility is experiencing similar problems."

"These incidents highlight the dangers that arise when nursing homes fail to properly care for or supervise residents with aggressive behaviors," concluded Levin. "Nursing homes are obligated to protect every resident under their care, but many facilities fail in this duty when they do not address issues with aggressive residents early on. We hope that this lawsuit will encourage nurses, CNAs, caregivers, family members, and others who have knowledge of abuse and neglect to come forward and tell their stories."

Levin & Perconti is a nationally renowned law firm concentrating in all types of nursing home abuse and neglect, personal injury, medical malpractice, and wrongful death litigation. The lawyers at Levin & Perconti are committed to protecting and vindicating the rights of people who are injured by the negligence of others. Please contact the firm at (312) 332-2872 or visit www.levinperconti.com for more information.

###

Please contact us at 312-332-2872 to speak with Steve Levin, or [click here to obtain a copy of the IDPH report](#). Photos available upon request.