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## **Hillcrest center sued over abuse claims**

By BRIAN STANLEY

Bstanley@stmedianetwork.com

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JOLIET — A nursing home has continually failed to stop residents from abusing other residents, a lawsuit filed Tuesday claims.

The family of William A. Kahle, 47, is suing the owners of Hillcrest Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 777 Draper Ave, in Cook County where the company is headquartered.

In September 2011, Kahle, who had been there for more than a year, was allegedly burned by another resident and the nursing home failed to report the incident to Department of Public Health. Kahle's father, William W. Kahle, filed a complaint with that agency that reportedly found another resident was responsible for assaulting nearly two dozen others.

“The (IDPH) investigation also revealed that between May and October a 26-year-old male who suffers from bipolar disorder and ADHD, sexually physically or mentally abused at least 23 other residents,” Kahle's attorney, Steven M. Levin, said.

Levin said residents told investigators the man exposed himself, sexually assaulted male and female residents, urinated on another and used narcotics on the premises, threatening to harm the victims and “come back with a gun” if they reported it.

“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 IDPH reported the resident was transferred to Hillcrest in May 2011 after exhibiting aggressive behaviors and threatening residents and staff at another nursing home.

On Tuesday, Joliet police confirmed there is an open investigation regarding abuse at Hillcrest. An administrator at the facility had “no comment” on the suit.

Hillcrest has previously settled a lawsuit with the family of a man who died as the result of reported negligence in November 1999.

In March 2001, patients Christopher Matejka and Jason Richey beat and stabbed Henri “Jay” Baker to death in his Homer Glen apartment after they used passes to leave the grounds.

A copy of the Public Health report is available at

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/ltc/docs/SurveyResult/6002604FAIK11152011.pdf>

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