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**Levin & Perconti Files Lawsuit against Forest Hill Health & Rehab Center,  
GEM Management and owner Michael Lerner**

**CHICAGO, September 4, 2008** -- Steven M. Levin of the Chicago-based law firm Levin & Perconti filed a nursing home negligence lawsuit in the Circuit Court of Cook County on August 28, 2008 on behalf of the family of Olive Jean Fletcher for the personal injuries she suffered while under the care of Forest Hill Health & Rehab Center in East Moline, IL. Olive's injuries were a result of nursing home abuse and neglect that ultimately led to her premature death on October 13, 2007 at the age of 89.

Olive Fletcher was admitted to Forest Hill on January 31, 2006. Before entering Forest Hill, Olive lived with her daughter, Carol Magnuson and Carol's husband, Robert. Olive suffered from progressive dementia and began wandering the house during the night. Carol decided to place her mother into Forest Hill when she and her family could no longer provide her with sufficient care. According to Carol, "It got to the point where it was too much for us to handle; as much as it broke our hearts, we knew her safety was at risk in our home." They trusted that Forest Hill would provide the safe environment and constant care that Olive needed.

In the months after entering Forest Hill Health & Rehab Center, Olive suffered from three falls and sustained several cuts, bruises and lacerations. On October 2, 2007, Olive was admitted to Genesis Medical Center (Silvis, IL) after sustaining her third fall. During her residency at Forest Hill, Olive suffered from malnourishment that resulted in significant weight loss. At the hospital, Olive was also diagnosed with severe dehydration. Surprised by her condition, Olive's doctor suspected that Olive had been a victim of nursing home abuse.

During the next week, her condition rapidly declined and on October 13, 2007, Olive died of renal failure as a result of severe dehydration.

“It was horrible. We put our mother and our trust into Forest Hill and believed that they would do what they are supposed to do to fully care for her. They failed to take care of her and we lost our mother because of their neglect,” said Olive’s daughter, Linda Hill, of Pinetop, AZ.

The company that manages Forest Hill, GEM Management (owned by Michael Lerner of Chicago), is currently under scrutiny from Service Employees International Union (SEIU) members at the GEM-owned Galesburg Terrace home in Galesburg, according to an article in the *Peoria Journal Star* from September 2<sup>nd</sup>. SEIU member employees there pleaded with the Illinois Department of Public Health to place them under the control of the state until new management is found. Employees allege they could improve patient care under the State’s control since GEM currently operates with a number of violations and high employee turnover.

Attorney Steven Levin of Levin & Perconti filed the case. According to Mr. Levin, “Olive’s death was a direct result of Forest Hill Health & Rehab Center’s failure to provide the necessary care and treatment she deserved. Her family was unaware of the numerous violations that GEM Management and its owner, Michael Lerner, have had in recent years. In addition to carrying a number of violations, Mr. Lerner chooses to operate his homes without proper insurance. Lerner’s record is appalling and this clearly shows that he does not truly care for the health and welfare of those under his care. ”

Levin & Perconti is a nationally renowned law firm concentrating in all types of 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](http://www.levinperconti.com) for more information.

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