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Contact:

Levin & Perconti

325 North LaSalle Street, Suite 450

Chicago, IL 60654

312.332.2872

jenna@levinperconti.com



**Family Files Nursing Home Neglect Lawsuit against ManorCare Health Services - Hinsdale
*74-year-old dies from severe dehydration caused by overmedication***

CHICAGO, September 2, 2010 - Steven M. Levin and Scott J. Richard of Levin & Perconti filed a wrongful death lawsuit against ManorCare Health Services - Hinsdale in the Circuit Court of Cook County on Wednesday on behalf of the family of Dolores "Dee" Howorth, formerly of Western Springs and Woodridge. Dee died of acute renal failure caused by dehydration less than a month after being admitted to the home's special dementia unit, and the Illinois Department of Public Health cited ManorCare for improper care. The lawsuit alleges that the nursing home's failure to provide proper care contributed to her untimely death at 74.

Dee was admitted to the Arcadia Dementia Unit at ManorCare Hinsdale on March 20, 2009. She suffered from Alzheimer's disease but was ambulatory, active and alert. After looking at over a half-dozen nursing homes, Dee's son, Henry "Hank" Howorth and his wife, Chrissie, a former nurse, felt that the specialized unit would provide the best long-term care for Dee's dementia. "I was really impressed with ManorCare. Not only was it close to home, but the facility appeared clean and vibrant with the necessary resources that would enable her to thrive," said Hank. "On the day of my mother's admission, she was blissful. She hugged and greeted everyone she met and even danced with staff while music played in the activity room. I was happy with my decision and felt relieved that she was in what appeared to be a safe and nurturing environment."

Within forty-eight hours, however, Dee was prescribed Ativan, a sedative, and four days later Seroquel, an anti-psychotic. Staff assured Dee's family they would not overly-sedate her and vowed to closely monitor her reactions to any medications. The nursing home also assigned Dee to a wheelchair with a lap restraint, telling the family that it would be a temporary measure until Dee became comfortable at the facility.

In the immediate days following admission, Dee's family noticed that she was excessively drowsy and confused from overmedication. When they visited, they found Dee slumped in her wheelchair. On numerous occasions, Hank expressed concern and questioned the necessity of the medications, but ManorCare staff reassured him that his mother's condition was temporary. "The staff said that it was a period of adjustment, and I trusted their word because my mother was in a specialized unit devoted to caring for people with Alzheimer's," recalls Hank.

Over the next three weeks, Dee's condition quickly declined. In 19 days, she lost 16.1 pounds. In addition to drowsiness, her family noticed and complained to staff that her skin was extremely dry, her mouth was chalky, and she had trouble swallowing without aspirating, all of which indicated severe dehydration. Staff continued to reassure the family that they were

closely monitoring Dee's condition until April 15 when staff realized that her condition was dire. The nursing home transferred her to a local hospital where staff attempted to rehydrate her, but Dee passed away within hours of her admission from acute renal failure caused by dehydration.

The lawsuit alleges that ManorCare staff neglected to provide Dee with sufficient fluids to maintain proper hydration. The nursing home also neglected to recognize or treat changes in Dee's cognition and physical functioning, such as her significant weight loss. Further, the nursing home did not document the changes in her condition or notify her physician of these changes. The lawsuit also claims that the nursing home chemically-restrained Dee with anti-psychotic medication, which was unnecessary to treat Dee's dementia, and physically restrained her with a wheelchair lap restraint.

"We believe that the nursing home staff chemically and physically restrained Dee Howorth for their own convenience," said Steve Levin. "Their deliberate misuse of medication caused her to become so dehydrated that her kidneys failed. ManorCare had a duty to protect her well-being and dignity but neglected to monitor her condition or provide her with even the basic necessities, causing both Dee and her family to suffer needlessly."

Dee left her sons, Hank and Thomas, and six grandchildren. "After my mother's death, it was business as usual for the nursing home, but for our family it was devastating," recalls Hank. "We need to hold ManorCare accountable because the nursing home robbed her of precious time with her children and grandchildren."

"Our family filed this lawsuit to seek justice for Dee, but also for those like Dee who are vulnerable and dependent on others for care," added Chrissie. "We believe it is our responsibility to give a voice to residents who are enduring substandard care and may not have loved ones there to speak for them."

After Dee's death, her family filed a complaint with the Illinois Department of Public Health. Upon completion of their investigation, the IDPH cited the nursing home for neglect, improper nursing care, improper restraint, and improper physician 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 for more information.

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** If you are interested in learning more about this lawsuit, please contact Jenna Bosco to set up a time to speak with Steve Levin.*