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Lawsuit Claims Children's Memorial Lost Teen's Tumor

Suit Seeks Damages For Emotional Distress

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CHICAGO -- Lawyers for a Highland Park woman who underwent surgery at Children's Memorial Hospital in 2006 have filed a lawsuit against the hospital claiming it lost a tumor removed from the patient before it could be biopsied.

The suit, filed on behalf of Kara Morris, who is now a freshman at the University of Michigan, claims that after having surgery to remove a tumor encased in Kara's thyroid, Children's lost the tumor before determining if it was cancerous.

The suit states that this negligence caused, and continues to cause, emotional stress and anxiety, as she will never know for certain if she does or does not have cancer.

During the surgery, doctors removed the tumor and a portion of Morris' thyroid. A week later, when she and her family returned to receive the biopsy results, the hospital told them that because they lost the sample, no biopsy could be performed and no determination regarding the presence of cancer could be made.

"We were in shock; we could not believe that the hospital we trusted to care for our daughter lost the tumor removed from her body. The tumor held all of our answers and without it we will never know whether she has cancer. We brought this case against Children's Memorial so that other families do not have to go through what we are facing," said the patient's mother, Charlene Morris.

"There isn't a day that goes by when I'm not thinking about it," Kara Morris said. "While I want to remain confident that everything will be OK, there is always an uncertainty because I will never get a clear answer on whether or not I have cancer."

A news release from the Chicago-based law firm Levin & Perconti states that Morris undergoes ultrasounds every six months to monitor her thyroid to ensure there is no new growth or changes. In addition to her experience of stress, attorneys claim she will most likely face great difficulties obtaining individual insurance as she moves into adulthood due to her uncertain health status.

Attorneys Michael Bonamarte and Steven M. Levin of Levin & Perconti represent Kara. According to Mr. Bonamarte,

"Kara is a strong girl with a bright future ahead of her. Unfortunately, she will be tormented because the tumor was lost and the biopsy was never performed. This inexcusable loss of the tumor by the hospital will cause her lifelong anxiety and undue stress," said attorney Michael Bonamarte.

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