

Negligence suit against Evergreen Park care center settled

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The family of a patient who died in 2007 after moving into an Evergreen Park rehabilitation center and developing bedsores agreed to settle a negligence lawsuit against the facility for \$575,000, according to the family's attorneys.

The settlement was reached in late December on behalf of Vania Beard for injuries suffered by her grandmother, Samuel Lee Beard, while she lived at Evergreen Healthcare Center, 10124 S. Kedzie Ave., according to the Chicago-based law firm of Levin and Perconti.

The care center now is under new management "and is doing very positive things in the community," said Liana Allison, a spokeswoman for Transitional Care Management, the facility's management firm.

An ongoing renovation included the opening last year of suites that TCM said combined elements of a spa and posh hotel.

Allison said she could not discuss the case of an individual patient.

The lawsuit alleged that the facility failed to properly prevent, monitor and treat the patient's bedsores, which contributed to her death in May 2007.

Samuel Lee Beard, then 77, suffered a stroke in February 2007 and later was transferred to Evergreen Healthcare Center for rehabilitation, according to the lawsuit. She was noted to be at high risk for bedsores because she was immobile and developed bedsores that were discovered by her family, not the nursing staff, according to Beard's attorneys.

Her sores worsened and her overall condition deteriorated, the attorneys said. She was hospitalized two months later and diagnosed with sepsis, dehydration and pneumonia and died as a result of the injuries, attorneys said in a prepared statement.

Levin said his firm has four other lawsuits pending against Evergreen Healthcare.

Since 2001, more than 90 complaints about patient care have been filed against the facility — but only seven in the past two years — according to the Illinois Department of Public Health's website. The most recent complaint was filed in November.