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Lawsuit Filed on Behalf of 65-Year Old Woman Neglected in Manorcare at Libertyville-Facility Cited by Illinois Department of Public Health

LIBERTYVILLE, IL – Steven M. Levin of the Chicago-based law firm Levin & Perconti filed a lawsuit today, July 30, 2007 in the Circuit Court of The Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Lake County, Illinois on behalf of 65-year old Barbara Clapman (Crystal Lake) against Manorcare Health Services, Inc., a Delaware Corporation, d/b/a Manorcare at Libertyville, alleging neglect and mistreatment. The facility has also been cited by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) for neglect and improper nursing care. Dr. Howard Baker, the Medical Director at Manorcare at Libertyville and Barbara Clapman’s treating physician, and Pamela Lamb, the facility’s Administrator, are being named as Respondents in Discovery as they are believed to have information essential to the determination of who should properly be named as additional defendants in this action.

Barbara Clapman was admitted to the Manorcare at Libertyville Nursing Home for a short-term rehabilitation stay following extensive spinal surgery. The complaint alleges that during Barbara’s stay from April 16, 2007 through May 21, 2007, the staff at Manorcare neglected Barbara so badly that she developed several severely infected pressure sores. One of the pressure sores, located in the sacrum area, became so deep that it caused osteomyelitis, an infection in the bone. It wasn’t until Barbara’s family, who were present in the nursing home for nearly twelve hours a day, noticed a foul odor that the nursing home staff notified them that

Barbara had developed a pressure ulcer. By the time Barbara was taken to the hospital for treatment, she was running a temperature of over 103 degrees and her bone was visible through the wound.

The complaint also alleges that Barbara became malnourished and dehydrated, suffered severe weight loss, and multiple episodes of hypoglycemia because she was not receiving appropriate doses of insulin medication for her diabetes. All of these factors have contributed to her deteriorating medical condition.

Specifically, the facility failed to keep Barbara from developing pressure ulcers by not performing daily skin checks or turning and repositioning her. Her nutritional status was allowed to decline to the point that as she suffered a 20 pound weight loss in one month which caused her wounds to worsen.

Attorney Steve Levin commented on the broader issue, “This case represents an example of a larger issue in our health care community. Patients are being discharged from hospitals because they do not qualify for inpatient rehabilitation and sent to nursing homes for short-term rehabilitation where their condition worsens. The problem results when a nursing home is not sufficiently staffed and when the staff is not properly trained to care for patients like Barbara Clapman who have acute health issues. Unfortunately, the nursing home admissions department provides assurances to the family that their loved one will receive rehabilitation and be properly cared for. As a result, patients like Barbara Clapman become innocent victims of neglect.”

Sherman Clapman, Barbara’s husband said, “No one should ever have to bear the unnecessary pain and suffering that my wife, Barbara, has endured due to the shameless neglect she experienced at Manorcare.”

Clapman continued: “My daughter, Stacey, and I chose Manorcare because they promised that they would provide quality rehabilitation services for my wife and the highest standard of care. The nature of my wife’s back surgery required that she be turned and repositioned every two hours. The staff’s failure to turn and reposition Barbara caused a wound to develop and become so deep that the bone was exposed. As a result of their neglect, my wife had to be hospitalized and is now in constant and excruciating pain. She has been moved from the hospital to a nursing home and her future prognosis is uncertain.”

"My wife had been making such excellent progress with her rehabilitation before this happened. This tragedy has caused a major set back in her recovery," he concluded.