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For further information, contact:

John J. Perconti
312.332.2872

65-year-old Stroke Patient Receives Record \$3 Million Settlement From Suburban Nursing Home and Doctors Who Neglected Her

HILLSIDE, IL – In only 22 days, Arlene Williams, age 65, was neglected to the point that she developed deeply infected bed sores that took years to heal. The doctors and nursing home – the Renaissance at Hillside – finally paid her a record \$3 million settlement in compensation for their failure to assess, prevent and treat her condition.

“It’s tragic that Mrs. Williams had to suffer so badly,” said John J. Perconti of Levin & Perconti in Chicago, the attorney who represented her in her neglect lawsuit. “It’s one example of the rampant, nationwide abuse of the elderly in nursing homes and assisted living homes.” See www.levinperconti.com for further information.

Mrs. Williams entered the Renaissance at Hillside nursing home on January 28, 2000 for rehabilitation following a stroke that left her unable to reposition herself. By February 16, 2000, she had developed four pressure sores, which are caused when the blood supply to the skin is cut off for long time periods by pressure and lack of movement. One sore on the base of her spine was so large, deep and badly infected that it took four years to heal. The sore measured five by four inches in size.

In depositions, nursing home employees admitted that they could not regularly turn and reposition her because of understaffing. Once they discovered the sores, they admitted they gave her medication without a doctor’s order. She had developed “stage IV pressure ulcers on a foot, heel, ankle and sacrum” – the base of the spine. Two doctors also paid her compensation for their roles in her injuries: Dr. Rama Vaidyanatha paid \$150,000 and Dr. Michael Rothman paid \$50,000. The Cook County Jury Verdict Reporter stated that this was a record settlement for this type of injury.

Hillside, Illinois is a typical middle-class suburb of Chicago with a population of 8,155 people. The median household income of Hillside residents is \$50,776 and the median resident age is 36.3 years. “In the City and suburbs, bad things are happening to our parents, grandparents and elderly loved ones,” attorney Perconti said.

Nursing home abuse is so widespread that 30% of facilities have been cited for instances of

abuse, according to the Nursing Home Abuse Resource.

“The elderly residents depend upon these facilities for food and liquid and to turn them in their beds to prevent life-threatening sores,” Perconti said.

"Unlawful abuse and neglect is widespread, underreported, infrequently prosecuted and the cause of untold suffering, injury, illness and death," said Marie-Therese Connolly, who heads the U.S. Department of Justice Nursing Home Initiative, in a study published last month in the Journal of Health Care Law and Policy.

ABOUT LEVIN & PERCONTI

Levin & Perconti has a national reputation for successful representation of catastrophically injured clients and the families of those wrongfully killed. The firm specializes in cases of elderly abuse, nursing home neglect and assisted living resident neglect.

Founded in 1992, Levin & Perconti has grown to eight attorneys representing over 125 years of litigation experience. The firm has successfully handled virtually every type of catastrophic personal injury and wrongful death action, and has achieved more than \$220 million in verdicts and settlements for its clients and their families.