



Plaintiffs in North Dakota Hepatitis C Case Settle Claims Against Nursing Home Outbreak

The deal resolves one of many lawsuits against a Minot facility and its lab services provider for allegedly infecting 52 seniors in 2013.

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In the aftermath of one of the largest hepatitis C virus (HCV) outbreaks in recent U.S. history, 21 North Dakotans have settled their claims against the nursing home lab facility they allege may have infected them with the liver virus in 2013, [The Minot Daily News reports](#).

The confidential settlement resolves one of many legal disputes sparked by a North Dakota Department of Health investigation three years ago that found that unsanitary routine health procedures at ManorCare Health Services in the city of Minot could have exposed hundreds of nursing home residents to hepatitis C. Ultimately, [52 seniors were infected](#) in the outbreak, with tests indicating that all hep C cases were genetically linked.

This case concerns Trinity Health, a health care conglomerate that provided lab services to ManorCare during this time. Both the nursing home where the outbreak occurred and the infected residents have accused an employee of Trinity's outpatient laboratory of causing the outbreak by diverting drugs and reusing needles at the facility. However, state and federal health officials say they never pinpointed a cause for the spread of infections and have since closed all investigations relating to the matter.

Those infected initially had filed lawsuits against both Trinity and ManorCare but dropped their claims against the nursing home in June 2016 to focus on Trinity.

Trinity has repeatedly declined to take responsibility for the Minot outbreak. However, the lab facility's attorneys said they decided to settle to avoid litigation costs and allow individuals and their families to move forward with their lives. Neither the plaintiffs' attorney nor Trinity Health has released the terms of the deal.

The settlement leaves just one claim still pending in the Trinity class-action case; a separate claim filed by ManorCare against Trinity seeking punitive damages for the outbreak is ongoing.

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