



Misprescription by GP – Case Study

Our Client v Dr Miller (GP)

Year of incident: February 2014

Date of Settlement: October 2017

Acting: Kate Lax, Assistant Solicitor at Wake Smith Solicitors

Facts:

We acted for the Claimant who was misprescribed intravenous Salbutamol for her chronic obstructive lung disease instead of Salbutamol for infusion by her General Practitioner. The difference being one was to be administered directly into a patient's vein and the latter was to be placed into a nebulizer and inhaled.

Consequences:

The Claimant had a history of chronic obstructive lung disease and primary biliary cirrhosis. On 11 February 2014, the Claimant was seen by her GP complaining of feeling unwell with shortness of breath and feeling wheezy especially in the morning. Her GP prescribed her Salbutamol which was the correct medication however prescribed IV Salbutamol instead of nebulizer ampoules.

That evening the Claimant inhaled the ampoules of Salbutamol before a family member noticed the prescribing error. After nebulizing the second ampoule, she had to be taken by ambulance to the Emergency Department at Peterborough City Hospital due to the effects of the medication.

After the nebulization, the Claimant's breathing difficulties worsened. In addition, her face, stomach and legs became swollen and she suffered with shaking, palpitations, light headedness and headaches. The Claimant also suffered with anxiety.

Expert Evidence:

Wake Smith Solicitors obtained expert evidence from experts in the following field:

- General Practice

The expert confirmed that it was inappropriate to prescribe the incorrect formulation and by doing so the Defendant breached her duty of care to the client.

The Proceedings:

Liability and causation were denied following service of a letter of claim. The Claimant was forced to issue court proceedings due to limitation constraints. However, the parties were able to reach a settlement agreement shortly after issue of proceedings.



Settlement:

The claim settled for a value of £1,500 plus reasonable costs.