



Hospital Acquired Infection – Case Study

Our Client v The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Year of incident: April 2014

Date of Settlements: January 2017

Acting: Kate Lax, Assistant Solicitor at Wake Smith Solicitors

Facts:

We acted for the three Claimants who all contracted MRSA following an admission to Leeds General Infirmary in April 2014.

Consequences:

All three Claimants (a Mother, Father and small Child) contracted MRSA following the Mother's admission to Leeds General Infirmary for the birth of her baby in April 2014. The family presented with symptoms shortly after discharge from hospital and sought treatment from their GP.

A swab was taken which tested positive for Staphylococcus MRSA. The family were referred to the Leeds Community Infection Control Service for Infection Prevention Control where they were commenced with antibiotic therapy and the decolonisation process

Claimant 'One' suffered folliculitis in his beard area, right thumb paronychia (a nail disease) and a facial rash. He also suffered with achy joints and recurrent skin lesions and boils on his stomach, face, armpit and on his legs, hips and thighs.

Claimant 'Two' suffered recurrent skin lesions and boils on her thighs, legs, breast area, right arm and on her cheek. She also suffered with achy joints and mild depression secondary to MRSA.

Claimant 'Three' (a minor) suffered relatively minor injuries of discharging eyes and a snuffly nose.

In November 2014, Claimant One was re-diagnosed with MRSA and the family were advised to undergo the decolonisation process for a second time and in December 2014, Claimant Three tested positive for MRSA for a second time and the family were advised to undergo the decolonisation process for a third time.

The MRSA outbreak was linked to a member of staff who was colonised with MRSA and who was also suffering with dermatitis. The root cause was determined as a lack of knowledge and clear guidance about the implications of skin conditions (dermatitis) in relation the MRSA decolonisation process.



Expert Evidence:

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

- Consultant General Physician
- Paediatric Ophthalmologist

Each expert helped to identify the extent of each of Claimant's injuries.

The Proceedings:

Liability was admitted promptly after service of the letter of claim subject to causation. The cases settled after disclosure of supportive medical evidence. Claimant three's settlement was subject to an Infant Approval Settlement.

Settlement:

The claims settled for a total value of £10,250 plus reasonable costs.