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Father sues hospital after son's 2011 death

Man says doctors didn't see danger mentally ill wife posed to their son

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The mental health professionals who treated a mother before she killed her infant son in 2011 face a wrongful-death suit filed Wednesday by the child's father in Cook County Circuit Court.

Beau Keogh alleges the psychiatrists, nurse and psychotherapist that provided treatment to his wife, Janet Keogh, failed to recognize and convey the danger she posed to their 20-month-old son.

"These professionals, who are trained to assess postpartum psychosis and treat it, could have prevented this tragedy by simply explaining to Beau and his wife and her family that she should not be left alone with their son," said William T. Gibbs, Beau Keogh's attorney and an associate at Corboy & Demetrio P.C.

None of the defendants returned a phone call today seeking comment.

In 2011, Janet Keogh, then 30, killed Colin Keogh while Beau Keogh was out playing tennis. Police found the baby unresponsive in the master bedroom, and reported Janet had a "grayish" tone to her face and was staring

off into space, local media reported.

Later that year, Cook County Associate Judge James B. Linn found Janet Keogh not guilty by reason of insanity following a bench trial.

The lawsuit states that Janet Keogh suffered from postpartum psychosis, a severe form of postpartum depression, but professionals failed to take steps to notify Beau Keogh that his son's life could be in danger because of it.

It states that Janet Keogh sought psychiatric help beginning six months after Colin's birth.

Though she never suffered from mental health issues in the past, the suit alleges, she envisioned jumping out of a 30th floor window and reported that she was a "terrible mom;" the "world is decaying;" her son was shrinking; and she felt helpless.

She attempted to kill herself six months after Colin's birth and was hospitalized twice, the suit states.

One of the defendants, Dr. Aleksandr Dekhtyar, cared for Janet Keogh when she was admitted to Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital in Hoffman Estates two days after her suicide attempt, the lawsuit says.

Dekhtyar allegedly told the couple that postpartum depression "does not exist five months postpartum" and did not diagnose her with the condition.

Janet Keogh was discharged from the hospital and then



William T. Gibbs

sought outpatient treatment.

Leslie Lowell Stoutenburg, the director of the pregnancy and postpartum mood and anxiety disorders program at Alexian Brothers, "set the couple at ease" in a consultation a few weeks later, the lawsuit says.

She allegedly stated that Janet Keogh's condition was commonly seen by her staff and that she should attend group sessions with other women experiencing similar issues.

The lawsuit alleges that the other defendants who treated Janet Keogh and the organizations they worked for should have known that, if she did not receive proper care, "she would act out in a violent manner and cause harm to her son."

"They put (Beau Keogh) at ease and explained to him that this was not that severe of a condition and that there wasn't



Thomas A. Demetrio

any real need to be too concerned, that it would just resolve — which obviously it didn't," Gibbs said.

Janet Keogh continues to undergo psychiatric treatment, Gibbs said.

Beau Keogh filed the lawsuit as the special administrator of Colin's estate. It seeks a judgment against the defendants for the loss of his son, grief, sorrow and funeral and burial expenses.

Other defendants in the suit are Alexian Brothers Health System, St. Alexius Medical Center, Lavoll and Edger S.C., Dr. Robert R. Edger, Lesley Foreman and Studio for Change P.C.

Gibbs represents Beau Keogh along with Thomas A. Demetrio, a partner at Corboy & Demetrio.

The case is *Beau Keogh, etc. v. Alexian Brothers Health System et al*, No. 13 L 1321.