

Cancer misdiagnosis lawsuit resolved days before trial



Easton Hospital in Wilson Borough. (lehighvalleylive.com photo | Matt Smith) (Matt Smith)



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A lawsuit filed against an **Easton** doctor who allegedly misdiagnosed his patient's cancer, telling her to seek psychiatric help to deal with her pain, was resolved Thursday, according to one of the lawyers.

The lawsuit filed by the estate of Jayne M. Brussel in 2012 and amended in 2014 was resolved Thursday, according to attorney Gregory Nesbitt. Nesbitt represents radiologist Stuart Jones.

Asked whether the resolution involved a financial settlement, Nesbitt said, "All I can tell you is the case has been resolved." The trial had been scheduled for Monday.

Easton doctor **Terry Pundiak** told Brussel in 2010 her back and hip pain were psychosomatic, prescribed her an anti-depressant and urged her to seek mental help, the lawsuit says.

By the time her ovarian cancer was detected on Aug. 2, 2010, it had spread, the suit says. She died on Dec. 5, 2013, at age 50, [according to her obituary](#).

Brussel was a nurse practitioner who raised her children in Arkansas but moved to Pennsylvania and worked in Easton Hospital later in life so she could be closer to family, her obituary says.



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How likely are you to visit Sands Bethlehem in Pennsylvania in the next 3-6 months ?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- Definitely will
- Probably will
- May or may not
- Probably will not
- Definitely will not

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She died in Arkansas at the home of her son, Steven Brussel, who sued the doctors and Easton Hospital. He is handling his mother's estate.

According to the lawsuit, Jayne Brussel came to Pundiak with back and hip pain on Jan. 6, 2009. Jones failed to diagnose tumors from an ultrasound and didn't order any follow up treatment, the suit says.

Brussel came back to Pundiak with fatigue and pain on Feb. 13, 2009, and Pundiak refused to examine her due to the previous ultrasound results, the suit says.

After an unrelated rectal surgery on Oct. 15, 2009, she returned to Pundiak in July 2010 complaining of pain. Pundiak prescribed Zoloft and chastised her for failing to seek psychological or psychiatric counseling as per his earlier instructions, the suit says.

She stopped him to talk as she was leaving the office and asked what he would do for her pain. He answered, "nothing," the suit says.

After her July 22 appointment, she went to the **Easton Hospital** emergency room, where she was diagnosed with gallstones. Her cancer was discovered Aug. 2, 2010, during her gallstone surgery.

On Aug. 6, 2010, she received a letter dated July 23, 2010, and postmarked Aug. 5, 2010, from Pundiak telling her to find a new doctor and that he would treat her over the next 30 days on only an emergency basis.

The negligence suit, wrongful death suit and survival action sought Brussel's lost earnings and unspecified amounts for her pain, medical expenses and the suffering her loss caused her survivors.

Michael McGilvery represents Pundiak and Howard Stevens represents the **Easton Hospital**. Neither of them returned phone calls seeking comment.

Attorney Todd Miller represents Brussel's estate. He did not immediately return a phone call Thursday.

*Rudy Miller may be reached at rmiller@lehighvalleylive.com. Follow him on Twitter [@RudyMillerLV](#). Find **Easton area news on Facebook**.*

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Which of the following casinos have you heard of?

SELECT UP TO 6 ANSWERS

- Harrah's Philadelphia
- Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs
- Hollywood Casino
- Mount Airy
- Sands Bethlehem
- Parx Casino

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