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Family seeks \$2 million after woman's nursing home death

Hudson Park patient died month after arm broken, claim contends

By Lauren Stanforth

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Photo of Willie Jones, an 84-year-old resident of Hudson Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Albany who had her arm broken by a certified nurse's assistant Aug. 17, 2013. Jones passed away Sept. 15 of what appeared to be unrelated causes. (Photo taken from obituary)

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The family of an 84-year-old woman whose arm was broken by a nursing assistant has filed a lawsuit against [Hudson Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center](#) alleging the incident may have contributed to the woman's death a month later.

The lawsuit seeks \$2 million in damages.

[Willie C. Jones](#), who suffered from dementia, was being cared for at the Northern Boulevard

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nursing home last August when Sarina Francis, an aide, bent Jones' arm behind her back to punish her for Jones' punching Francis in the face, according to state Health Department records. Jones was at Hudson Park for about four months, after previously being cared for in her sister's residence by a home health aide.

A state Health Department report on the incident concluded it was triggered when Francis hit Jones in the face with her own incontinence brief. The investigation determined Francis was asked to care for Jones for another five hours after her arm as broken because no one else was available to cover the shift. Two nursing supervisors also ignored Jones' pleadings for help for 12 hours before she was taken to a local hospital, according to state records.

Francis pleaded guilty in January to one felony count of endangering the welfare of a vulnerable elderly person. She was sentenced to 30 days in the Albany County jail and her assistant nursing credentials were revoked. The state Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit prosecuted the case.

Jones died 29 days after the incident. State records provide no information about whether Jones' arm injury contributed to her death.

The lawsuit, filed in state Supreme Court last month, offers no specifics about what happened to Jones after the incident, only saying that she "was seriously injured, suffering conscious pain and suffering and death."

Sean Doolan, an attorney for her family, said she stopped eating, acted out and groaned regularly after the incident. She died of a pulmonary embolism when a clot blocked a blood vessel in her lung, he said.

"When someone with dementia suffers a traumatic event like this, they can't understand and they often decline from there," Doolan said. "She never had a real recovery."

The lawsuit also seeks restitution for medical and funeral expenses.

The nursing home did not return a call seeking comment, and did not respond to repeated requests for an interview in January when the Times Union wrote about the case.

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