

Defense Verdict in Favor of Shelby County Physician

Attorneys involved:

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After five days of trial, a Shelby County jury returned a defense verdict in favor of a local pain management physician. The suit alleged that as a result of the pain physician's care and treatment which involved the prescription of Hydrocodone, plaintiff's husband committed suicide. The defense maintained that the physician acted reasonably in providing pain management services. The defense also presented evidence that there was no causal connection between the defendant's pain management services and the patient's suicide. The defense also showed there was no scientific evidence associating Hydrocodone and suicidal ideation.

The defense case was supported by Dr. Robert Lansden, a pain management specialist in Birmingham, and Dr. Douglas Jacobs, a nationally known psychiatrist who specializes in suicide assessment and prevention. After the evidence was in, plaintiff's counsel suggested to the jury that they award between one and ten million dollars in wrongful death damages to the widow of the deceased. The jury deliberated less than twenty minutes before returning a defense verdict rejecting this claim.