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FILED
ALAMEDA COUNTY

JAN **23** 2019

CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

By

Deputy

The attorney for Plaintiff Dean N. Williams

Facsimile: (305) 440-0906

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

DEAN N. WILLIAMS, an Individual,

Case No.

HG19003608

Plaintiff,

VS.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

KAISER FOUNDATION HOSPITALS, a California corporation; KAISER FOUNDATION HEALTH PLAN, INC., a California corporation; Dr. Hon Lee, an Individual; and DOES 1 through 50 inclusive,

Defendants.

COMES Now, Plaintiff DEAN N. WILLIAMS, who alleges as follows his Complaint against Defendants and each of them:

PARTIES

- 1. Plaintiff Dean N. Williams brings this action as an individual.
- 2. Defendant Kaiser Foundation Hospitals is a California corporation doing business at 280 W. MacArthur Boulevard, Oakland, CA 94611. Defendant's principal place of business in California is at One Kaiser Plaza, Oakland, CA 94612.

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- 3. Defendant Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., is a California corporation with its principal place of business at One Kaiser, Plaza, Oakland, CA 94612.
- 4. Dr. Hon Lee, (herein after "Lee") is a licensed Medical Doctor, license number:

 G84585 doing business in the County of Santa Clara, California at 710 Lawrence
 Expressway Santa Clara CA 95051. Dr. Lee works for Kaiser.
- 5. Plaintiff is ignorant of the names and capacities of DOES 1 through 50 and sues them as DOES 1 through 50, inclusive. Plaintiff will amend this action to allege these DOE defendants' names and capacities when ascertained. Each of the defendants herein is responsible in some manner for the occurrences, injuries, and damages herein, and that these defendants acts and omissions directly and proximately caused the damages. Each defendant herein was the agent of each of the remaining defendants, and in doing these things alleged herein were acting within the course and scope of their agency.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 6. Mr. Williams is 56-years of age and has been a Kaiser Foundation member (through his employer) since 2002.
- 7. Mr. Wittiams has been gainfully employed for 30-years with Lawrence Livermore Mational Security, LLC ("LLNS"). On the date of Mr. Williams' injuries, he was employed as a Computer Science Project Leader with LLNS.
- 8. Before Mr. Williams' injuries, he was very active and ran 6-miles three times a week. Additionally, Mr. Williams rode his bicycle 12 to 15 miles each day.
- 9. On October 9, 2017, Mr. Williams experienced heart palpitations and a "swishing sound in his chest." Therefore, an appointment with Kaiser in Walnut Creek was scheduled for October 23, 2017.

10. During the October 23, 2017 examination, it was discovered that Mr. Williams had a loud murmur. Subsequently, Mr. Williams had an echocardiogram that revealed a preserved LV systolic function with evidence for an enlarged aortic root at 5.9 cm. There was evidence of a moderate aortic insufficiency and moderate mitral regurgitation. Consequently, Dr. Shachi Shah (of Kaiser Walnut Creek) determined that Mr. Williams would be severely functionally impaired if he returned to work in any capacity.

11. Dr. Shah ordered Mr. Williams to be "placed off work" status from October 23, 2017, through January 31, 2018. Following the completion of the examination, Mr. Williams was scheduled to return to Raiser on October 27, 2017, for cardiac catheterization.

12. On November 10, 2017, Mr Williams had an aortic root repair by surgically placing a "sleeve" on the dilated aorta. Mr. Williams also endured a mitral valve replacement. This surgical intervention was complicated, as Mr. Williams had an iatrogenic postoperative myocardial infarction related to the "sleeve" that was utilized for the aortic repair impinging on the left main coronary artery.

November 17, 2017, Mr. Williams had additional surgery for revision of the aortic sleeve. With this surgery, Williams gradually recovered. However, Mr. Williams was noted to have left ventricular (LV) systolic dysfunction with an LV ejection fraction of 30 - 35% related to the iatrogenic myocardial infarction. Afterward, on November 21, 2017, Mr. Williams was discharged from the hospital to recover at home. Additionally, the treatment plan for Mr. Williams included a repeat coronary angiography in 6 - 8 weeks.

14	. On January 12, 2018, Mr. Williams had a repeated cardiac catheterization tha		
	demonstrated no significant residual coronary artery obstruction. Additionally, a		
	10% residual left main coronary artery narrowing was observed, and ar		
	intravascular ultrasound was completed on Mr. Williams, which demonstrated		
	significant diseases in Mr. Williams' coronary artery.		

- 15. On January 31, 2018, a referral cardiac surgeon (Dr. Vicken Melikian) at Kaiser San Francisco examined Mr. Williams. This examination concluded that Mr. Williams displayed "slow improvement" with his shortness of breath while walking uphill or within one flight of stairs. Furthermore, Mr. Williams had an echocardiogram that demonstrated LV systolic dysfunction with an LV ejection fraction (EF) of 40%.
- 16. On February 18, 2018, Mr. Williams experienced sharp chest pains, and his temperature reached 102.4°F. Therefore, Mr. Williams was transported to the Emergency Room at Kaiser in Walnut Creek and was diagnosed with Pericarditis. Consequently, Mr. Williams was given antibiotics, 600 mg Motrin, colchicine, and an ECHO to rule out pericardial effusion. The echocardiogram demonstrated significant LV systolic dysfunction with an LV ejection fraction of 30-36%, and the aortic root was dilated at 5.2 cm.
- 7. On March 16, 2018, Mr. Williams was examined by his cardiologist at Kaiser Walnut Creek. During this examination, Mr. Williams reported shortness of breath with exertion, diminished stamina, and felt overwhelmed. Therefore, Mr. Williams was referred to the Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Care Management Program.
- 18. On March 23, 2018, Mr. Williams was transported to Kaiser Martinez and enrolled in the CHF Care Management Program. Following the enrollment and

examination, Mr. Williams was advised to telephonically follow-up on March 30, 2018.

- 19. Once enrolled in the CHF Care Management Program, Mr. Williams had weekly telephonic appointments regarding his health condition.
- 20. During Mr. Williams telephonic appointment with the CHF Care Management Program on April 20, 2018, he reported that he was feeling stressed and that his blood pressure was elevated because of the stress.
- 21. During Mr. Williams telephonic appointment with the CHF Care Management Program on April 27, 2018, he reported that he was feeling stressed and that his blood pressure was elevated because of the stress.
- 22. During Mr. Williams telephonic appointment with the CHF Care Management Program on May 4, 2018 he reported that he was feeling stressed and that his blood pressure was elevated because of the stress.
- 23. On May 10, 2018, Mr. Williams contacted Kaiser Martinez at the CHF Care Management Program for his weekly appointment and requested for Kaiser to acquire a second opinion from an outside evaluation with a Cardiologist at Stanford University. Mr. Williams was denied his request and informed that he could obtain a second opinion from Stanford University, but would be required to pay for the visit out-of-pocket.
- 24. During Mr. Williams telephonic appointment with the CHF Care Management Program on May 18, 2018, he reported that he was feeling stressed and that his blood pressure was elevated because of the stress. Mr. Williams requested that he be considered for long-term disability. Mr. Williams also made a second requested

for Kaiser to sponsor an outside examination by a Cardiologist at Stanford University, which was ultimately denied.

- 25. On May 30, 2018, Mr. Williams was seen at Kaiser Walnut Creek by his cardiologist, Dr. Rogers. This appointment was in response to Mr. Williams reporting that he was experiencing shortness of breath while walking uphill or climbing stairs. Consequently, Mr. Williams' May 21, 2018 emocardiogram was reviewed, and the conclusion was that Mr. Williams was demonstrating an LV ejection fraction of 40 45%. Mr. Williams also reported to Kaiser that he was still unable to return to work. Appropriately, Dr. Rogers continued Mr. Williams' "placed off work" status from May 30, 2018, to November 30, 2018.
- 26. On June 11, 2018, Mr. Williams pair out-of-pocket for evaluation by a cardiologist at the Stanford University Medical Center's Advanced Heart Failure Clinic. The Stanford Cardiologist examination concluded that Mr. Williams still reported shortness of breath on exertion, especially when climbing upstairs or walking uphill. The Stanford Cardiologist assessed Mr. Williams' LV ejection fraction and reported that Mr. Williams continue taking his medication regimen and repeat the computed tomography (CT) angiogram of his ascending aortic aneurysm. The Stanford Cardiologist also recommended augmenting Mr. Williams' antiadrenergic therapy. Furthermore, once the CT imaging was completed, the Stanford Cardiologist requested to review Mr. Williams' case with his Stanford cardiac surgeon colleagues and provide Mr. Williams with additional recommendations.

27. On August 4, 2018, Mr. Williams' Thoracic CT Scan was conducted. The results revealed an increase in the size of Mr. Williams' aneurysm. Therefore, the Stanford Cardiologist recommended that Mr. Williams have a surgical repair of an aortic aneurysm.

A. In contrast, Dr. Vicken Melikian of Kaiser San Francisco reviewed Mr. Williams' August 4, 2018, Thoracic CT Scan and determined that an MRI on Mr. Williams' chest be conducted in 6-months (February 2019) to evaluate the size of the aortic root, and to evaluate in 6-months MV and LV function. CT report, which stated "Stable chest CTA. Persistent aneurysm at the level of the sinuses of Valsatya measuring 5.5 cm."

28. On September 6, 2018, due to the diagnosis of ascending thoracic aortic aneurysm and cardiomyopathy, Dr. Rogers of Kaiser Walnut Creek placed Mr. Williams on an "off work" from September 6, 2018, to February 28, 2019.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Medical Negligence against all DEFENDANTS)

- 29 Plaintiff hereby realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1-28.
- 30. A physician is negligent if he or she fails to use the level of skill, knowledge, and care in diagnosis and treatment that other reasonably careful physicians would use in the same or similar circumstances. This level of expertise, knowledge, and care is referred to as "the standard of care."
- 31. Plaintiff was under the care of the DEFENDANTS.
- 32. By the aforesaid, DEFENDANTS owed a duty of ordinary care to Plaintiff, to use the degree of care and skill that a reasonably prudent hospital operator, physician,

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

surgeon, nurse, or health care provider or administrator would use, given his or her knowledge, training, expertise, and skill.

- 33. By the aforesaid, all DEFENDANTS owed a duty of ordinary care to the Plaintiff, including the degree of care and skill given their knowledge, training, expertise, and skill.
- 34. During the period of their care of the Plaintiff each of the DEFENDANTS negligently disregarded the aforesaid perils and high probability of injury posed to the Plaintiff for their failure to comply with their standards of care to provide care which a reasonably prudent hospital operator, physician, surgeon, nurse, or health care provider or administrator would use, and in doing so failed to comply with their duties under the standards of care as set forth above.
- 35. DEFENDANTS breach the aforesaid duties of care.
- 36. As a direct and proximate cause of the DEFENDANTS' breach of duty, Plaintiff suffered severe damages.
- 37. As a direct and legal result of the aforesaid, the Plaintiff sustained injuries. As a further direct and legal result of the aforesaid, the Plaintiff sustained lost income.
- 38. An award of general and special damages for Plaintiff's pain and suffering as well as economic damages in a sum according to proof at trial, is justified and appropriate.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

'(Willful Misconduct v. all DEFENDANTS)

39. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 28 as if fully set forth herein and further alleges as follows:

- 40. During the period of their care of the Plaintiff, each of the DEFENDANTS knew or should have known the perils posed to the Plaintiff for their failure to comply with their duties of care to provide care, which a reasonably prudent hospital operator, physician, surgeon, nurse, or health care provider or administrator would use, exposing Plaintiff to the high probability of his injuries.
- 41. During the period of their care of the Plaintiff, each of the DEFENDANTS knew or should have known the perils posed to the Plaintiff for their failure to comply with their standards of care to provide care which a reasonably prudent hospital operator, physician, surgeon, nurse, or health care provider or administrator would use, exposing Plaintiff to the high probability of his injuries.
- 42. During the period of their care of the Plaintiff each of the DEFENDANTS knowingly disregarded the aforesaid perils and high probability of injury to the Plaintiff, and in doing so failed to comply with their duties under the standards of care as set forth above.
- 43. Their willful misconduct and failures include:
 - a. Fairure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) in the November 10, 2017 cardiac surgery to ensure that the aortic root was properly wrapped with the prosthetic. Due to the Cardiac Surgeon's failure, Mr. Williams' aortic root has re-expanded to a severe aneurysm post-surgery and will require another cardiac surgery.
 - b. Failure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) in the Nov 10, 2017 cardiac surgery to determine that the wrap was occluding eighty percent (80%) of the main-line coronary artery preventing adequate blood flow to the heart and

causing an iatrogenic heart attack, loss of heart function, cardiac muscular death, and Plaintiff's ejection fraction to severely decline from 65% preoperation to 30% post-operation.

- Failure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) to act immediately to determine the cause of Mr. Williams' signs and symptoms of a heart attack. On November 16, 2017 (Postop Day 6), upon the insistence of Mr. Williams' family, the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) reconsidered the signs and symptoms of Mr. Williams' heart attack, made a referral to the cardiologist, and ordered an angiogram.
- d. Failure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) to act immediately to remediate the improperly wrapped prosthetic on the ascending aorta at the time of the determination. Mr. Williams acted as his own advocate to escalate the urgency of his surgery to correct the improperly placed aortic wrap.
 - There was a seven-day delay from the time of Mr. Williams' initial cardiac surgery on Nov 10, 2017 to his interventional surgery on Nov 17, 2017 to fix the improperly placed prosthetic on the ascending aorta. Mr. Williams' sustained an iatrogenic heart attack for seven days prior to the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) releasing the occluded main-line coronary artery.
- f. Failure of the Anesthesiologist in the Nov 10, 2018 cardiac surgery to adequately administer anesthesia during surgery causing the Plaintiff to wake up during surgery and leading to severe mental trauma manifested in night terrors, lack of sleep, and clinically diagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

- g. Failure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) and the Cardiologist (Dr. Waldo Joseph) to properly inform Plaintiff of 50% chance of developing post-operative risk, namely pericarditis.
- h. Failure of the Cardiologist (Dr. Waldo Joseph) to properly monitor the Plaintiff after surgery when he developed pericarditis three months after surgery.
- i. Failure of the Cardiologist (Dr. Waldo Joseph) to adequately meet Plaintiff's medical needs after he developed pericarditis three months after surgery.
 - Failure of the Cardiac Surgeon (Dr. Han Lee) to properly inform the Plaintiff and discuss the events that took place during and after the surgery, so the Plaintiff had a full understanding of the surgery's outcome as well as life-altering affects and future risk associated with the surgery, namely the heart attack, in order to have a complete understanding of his health's condition when contemplating future medical decisions. On the Nov 10, 2017 cardiac surgery, Mr. Williams' chest cavity was closed and re-opened. However, Dr. Han Lee did not disclose this information to the patient or to the patient's family. However, due to the inadequate administration of anesthesia, Mr. Williams recalls many of the events that took place during this surgery including being closed and re-opened. When Mr. Williams recalled these memories, Dr. Lee confirmed that Mr. Williams had been closed and re-opened and that "your recall is accurate." Prior to this conversation between Dr. Lee and Mr. Williams, this information had not been disclosed to Mr. Williams or Mr. Williams' family. This information is also not documented in Mr.

Williams chart. In addition, the reason for Mr. Williams needing to be reopened was not disclosed.

- k. Failure on the part of Kaiser Permanente to conduct a thorough investigation regarding the errors made during the surgery as well as inform the Plaintiff of the investigative findings and actions taken.
- 44. By the aforesaid, DEFENDANTS have acted in conscious disregard of the probability of Plaintiff's undesired and unauthorized injuries.
- 45. As a direct and proximate cause of the DEFENDANTS breach of duty, Plaintiff suffered severe economic and non-economic damages.
- 46. An award of general and special damages for Plaintiff's pain and suffering as well as economic damages in a sum according to proof at trial, is justified and appropriate.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Fraudulent Concealment v. all DEFENDANTS)

- 47. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 28 as if fully set forth herein and further alleges as follows:
- disclose the following facts to the Plaintiff, by their fiduciary relationship to the Plaintiff as a healthcare provider/patient.
- 49. All DEFENDANTS, and each of them individually and collectively, intentionally failed to disclose specific facts to the Plaintiff, including the following:
 - a. Why did the surgery take ten (10) hours instead of five (5) as initially discussed with the surgeon?

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dants fail to confirm proper blood circulation through the			
dants fail to act immediately to determine the cause of the			
ative heart irregularities and delay by 7 days?			
endants fail to act immediately to cure the improperly			
around the aortic root once the determination was made?			
dants fail to properly inform the Plaintiff of the 50% chance			
operative risks, namely pericarditis?			
dants wait seven (7) days to have an interventional surgery			
y wrapped prosthetic around the aorta?			
endants fail to disclose the results of its investigation			
tes made during the surgery?			
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- 50. Each Defendant had the opportunity to disclose these facts, but all DEFENDANTS failed to do so.
- 51. DEFENDANTS disclosed some facts to Plaintiff but intentionally failed to disclose other facts making the disclosure deceptive.
- 52. DEFENDANTS intentionally failed to disclose specific facts that were known only to them and the Plaintiff could not have discovered these facts.
- 53. Despite multiple requests, DEFENDANTS prevented Plaintiff from discovering these facts.
- 54. Had the omitted information been disclosed the Plaintiff reasonably would have behaved differently.
- 55. The failure to make these said disclosures were the result of reckless, inexcusable, and egregiously lazy derelict of duty on the parts of DEFENDANTS.
- 56. Plaintiff relied on the assumed good faith of DEFENDANTS, and as a direct and proximate result of said reliance, Plaintiff failed to receive appropriate and timely treatment.
- 57. Plaintiff was harmed, and Defendant's concealment was a substantial factor in ausing Plaintiff's harm.
- 58. By the aforesaid, DEFENDANTS have acted with fraud and an award of general and punitive damages for Plaintiff's pain and suffering as well as economic damages in a sum according to proof at trial, is justified and appropriate.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Constructive Fraud v. all DEFENDANTS)

- 59. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 28 as if fully set forth herein and further alleges as follows:
- 60. By their "healthcare provider/patient relationship" with Plaintiff, DEFENDANTS and each of them owed a fiduciary duty to Plaintiff to disclose the facts set forth as "a-m" in paragraph 49.
- 61. DEFENDANTS intentionally breached the aforesaid fiduciary only to disclose the following information to the Plaintiff. Said breaches were financially motivated and intentional and directly and legally resulted in Plaintiff's injuries.
- 62. By the aforesaid, DEFENDANTS and each of them has acted with fraud and an award of general and punitive damages for Plaintiff's pain and suffering as well as economic damages in a sum according to proof at trial, is justified and appropriate.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Byeach of Fiduciary Duty v. all DEFENDANTS)

- 63. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 28 as if fully set forth herein and further alleges as follows:
- 64. By their "healthcare provider/patient relationship" with Plaintiff, Defendant and each of them had a fiduciary duty to Plaintiff to act with the utmost good faith and in his best interest.
- 65. DEFENDANTS breached their fiduciary duty to Plaintiff in the ways set forth as "a-m" in paragraph 49.

1	66. By the aforesaid, DEFENDANTS and each of them acted with recklessness,
2	oppression, and intentionally in breach of their duties as healthcare providers.
3	67. As a direct and legal result of the aforesaid, Plaintiff was injured and obtained
5	severe Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) due to an iatrogenic heart attack for 7 days
6	post-surgery.
7	68. An award of general and special damages for Plaintiff's pain and suffering as well
8	as economic damages in a sum according to proof at trial, is justified and
9	appropriate.
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12	PRAYER FOR RELIEF
13	WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Dean N. Williams, an Individual, prays for judgment
1.4	against the Defendants, each of them as follows:
15	For general and special damages according to proof
16	2. For economic damages
17	3. For Punitive damages in connection to the 4 th and 5 th causes of action
18	4. For attorney fees and costs, including expert costs
19	5. For such other and further relief as the court deems just and proper
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22	Dated: January 22, 2019 LAW OFFICES OF ARIC N. WILLIAMS
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24	Arie N. Williams
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27	Aric N. Williams

Attorney for Plaintiff

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VERIFICATION

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- I, Dean N. Williams, declare as follows:
- 1. I am the Plaintiff in this action, and I make this Verification.
- 2. I have read the VERIFIED COMPLAINT about Medical Negligence.
- 3. The matters stated in the foregoing Verified Complaint are true of my knowledge except as to those matters that are stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated this 22 day of January 2019, at Livermore, C

Dean N. Williams, Declarant