

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 14-897V
(Not to be published)

BUNTLY WILLARD *and* KRISTIN
WILLARD, *Legal Representatives of a Minor*
Child, N.W.,

Petitioners,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Michael Adly Baseluos, San Antonio, TX, for Petitioners.

Gordon Elliot Shemin, U.S. Dep't of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent

Filed: August 27, 2015

Decision by Stipulation; Damages;
Influenza ("Flu") Vaccine;
Acute Disseminated
Encephalomyelitis ("ADEM")

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

On September 23, 2014, Petitioners Buntly Willard and Kristin Willard, Legal Representatives of a Minor Child, N.W., filed a petition seeking compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program.² Petitioners allege that N.W. suffered Acute Disseminated Encephalomyelitis ("ADEM") and related complications as a result of receiving an influenza ("flu") vaccine.

¹ Because this decision contains a reasoned explanation for my action in this case, I will post this decision on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-347, § 205, 116 Stat. 2899, 2913 (codified as amended at 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2006)). As provided by 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-12(d)(4)(B), however, the parties may object to the posted decision's inclusion of certain kinds of confidential information. Specifically, under Vaccine Rule 18(b), each party has 14 days within which to request redaction "of any information furnished by that party: (1) that is a trade secret or commercial or financial in substance and is privileged or confidential; or (2) that includes medical files or similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy." Vaccine Rule 18(b). Otherwise, the whole decision will be available to the public. (*Id.*)

² The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program is set forth in Part 2 of the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755, codified as amended, 42 U.S.C.A. § 300aa-10-§ 300aa-34 (West 1991 & Supp. 2002). All citations in this decision to individual sections of the Vaccine Act are to 42 U.S.C.A. § 300aa.

Respondent denies that N.W.'s ADEM and any related medical problems were caused by the receipt of the flu vaccine. Nonetheless both parties, while maintaining their above-stated positions, agreed in a stipulation filed August 21, 2015, that the issues before them can be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding Petitioners compensation.

I have reviewed the file, and based upon that review, I conclude that the parties' stipulation is reasonable. I therefore adopt it as my decision in awarding damages on the terms set forth therein.

The stipulation awards:

A lump sum of \$10,000.00, in the form of a check payable to Petitioners. This amount represents compensation for past unreimbursable medical expenses; and

A lump sum of \$55,000.00 in the form of a check payable to Petitioners as guardians/conservators of N.W.'s estate. This amount represents compensation for all remaining damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

Stipulation ¶ 8.

I approve a Vaccine Program award in the requested amount set forth above to be made to Petitioners. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment herewith.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by jointly filing notice renouncing their right to seek review.

6. Respondent denies that the flu vaccine is the cause of NW's alleged ADEM, or any other injury

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payments:

- a. A lump sum of \$10,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioners representing compensation for past unreimbursable medical expenses; and
- b. A lump sum of \$55,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioners as guardians/conservators of NW's estate. This amount represents compensation for all remaining damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

9. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioners have filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

10. Petitioners and their attorney represent that they have identified to respondent all known sources of payment for items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), including State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or by entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

11. Payment made pursuant to paragraph 8 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 9 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

12. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursable expenses, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of NW as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

13. Petitioners represent that they presently are, or within 90 days of the date of judgment will become, duly authorized to serve as guardians/conservators of NW's estate under the laws of the State of Texas. No payments pursuant to this Stipulation shall be made until petitioners provide the Secretary with documentation establishing their appointment as guardians/conservators of NW's estate. If petitioners are not authorized by a court of competent jurisdiction to serve as guardians/conservators of the estate of NW at the time a payment pursuant to this Stipulation is made, any such payment shall be paid to the party or parties appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction to serve as guardian/conservator of the estate of NW upon submission of written documentation of such appointment to the Secretary.

14. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 8 and 9, petitioners, in their individual capacity and as legal representatives of NW, on behalf of themselves, NW, and his heirs, executors, administrators, successors and/or assigns, do forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that

have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the flu vaccine administered on October 17, 2011, as alleged by petitioners in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about September 23, 2014 in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 14-897V.

15. If NW should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

16. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

17. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 9 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

18. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the vaccines caused NW's ADEM, or any other injury.

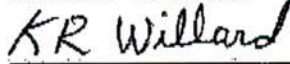
19. All rights and obligations of petitioners hereunder shall apply equally to petitioners' heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns as legal representatives of NW.

END OF STIPULATION

Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONERS:



BUNTLY WILLARD


KRISTIN WILLARD

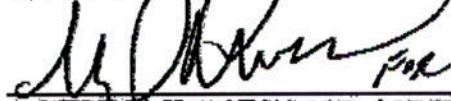
**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR
PETITIONERS:**


MICHAEL BASELUOS
Baseluos Law Firm
202 E. Park Ave
San Antonio, Texas 78212
(210) 787-5993


**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:**


VINCENT J. MATANOSKI
Deputy Director
Torts Branch
Civil Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, DC 20044-0146

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES:**


A. MELISSA HOUSTON, M.D., M.P.H., FAAP
Director, Division of Injury
Compensation Programs (DICP),
Healthcare Systems Bureau, U.S. Department
Of Health and Human Services
5600 Fishers Lane
Parklawn Building, Mail Stop 11C-26
Rockville, MD 20857

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR
RESPONDENT:**


GORDON SHEMIN
Trial Attorney
Torts Branch
Civil Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, DC 20044-0146
(202) 616-4208

Dated: August 21, 2015