KAUFMAN DOLOWICH LLP

Henry Norwood, Esq. quoted in the Healthcare Risk Management article: 'Take Care of Maya' Verdict Could Have Chilling Effect, 1-3-2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Florida jury ordered a $261 million verdict against a hospital that reported suspected child abuse. The hospital has requested a new trial.

- *The child's parents were prevented from seeing her.*
- *The mother committed suicide, allegedly in response to the hospital's actions.*
- *A Netflix documentary brought publicity to the case.*

*In circumstances when child abuse is not observed, but only suspected, it is not advised that healthcare providers decide to physically separate the child from their parents, as was alleged in the Florida case, says **Henry Norwood**, JD, an attorney with Kaufman Dolowich in San Francisco.*

Contacting the appropriate authorities, including the state child welfare organization and the police, is the appropriate response. These authorities are better equipped to handle suspected abuse and determine whether any abuse occurred.

"In the healthcare setting, the provider is often in possession of a patient's contact information, including their address, so a provider separating a child from their parents should not be necessary. Referring suspected child abuse to the proper authorities is the proper course of action," Norwood says.

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