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Judge Hatchett's Son Files Lawsuit against Cedars Sinai for Wrongful Death of his Wife



Judge Glenda Hatchett (courtesy photo)

Charles Johnson IV, the son of television judge Glenda Hatchett, has filed a lawsuit against Cedars Sinai Medical Center and a group of its staffers for what they say was the wrongful death last year, of Kiyra Dixon, Johnson's wife and the mother of his two children. Thirty- nine-year-old Dixon passed away on April 13, 2016 after a routine C section at the medical center went wrong, according to the suit. Now, among other things, Johnson is asking for general damages, special damages, funeral and burial expenses and court costs.

"[Basically] we went in for what was supposed to be a routine scheduled C-section with a woman who was not only in good health but in exceptional health," Johnson IV explained to the Sentinel in a recent interview.

"The baby was not in distress, my wife was not in distress..."

But shortly after the procedure, the medical team at Cedars Sinai realized she was bleeding internally, he said. After that discovery, Dixon was allowed to suffer for 10 hours before any meaningful action was taken.

"She [was in agony] while my family and myself begged and pleaded for them to take a course of action," said Johnson IV.

Dixon, accompanied by her husband, was admitted to Cedars on April 12, 2016 at about 12:30 pm for an "elective cesarean delivery," according to the suit.



Kiyra Dixon before and after the birth of baby Langston Johnson (courtesy photo)

“Kyira was taken to the operative suite at 2:00p.m.,” the document reads.

“A foley catheter was inserted at 2:15 p.m. The delivery started at 2:31p.m. [The baby] was born at 2:33p.m. The procedure was completed at or about 2:48 p.m. At 3:00p.m., Kyira was out of the operating room and taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)...”

But by almost 5:30 p.m., Dixon’s catheter was draining bright red blood. Medical records indicate that a nurse called the resident physician to evaluate the situation, according to the suit. The catheter was removed and replaced but eight minutes later, blood was noticed draining from the new catheter.

One of the defendants named in the suit, Dr. Arjang Naim was notified, and as a variety of doctors came in and out to check Dixon’s condition, her family wondered why nothing was actually being done.

“They did nothing to correct it in a timely manner,” Hatchett said.

“This is a woman who would be alive today had it not been for, what we say in the complaint, medical negligence. One minute we’re at the hospital celebrating [the couple’s] second son’s birth, just a very joyous time and then hours later, she’s gone...”



Charles Johnson IV poses with his wife Kiyra Dixon and son Charles Johnson V (courtesy photo)

Dixon finally succumbed to massive blood loss by 2:22 a.m. Johnson IV, who is raising two toddler boys, Charles Johnson V and Langston – the baby Dixon gave birth to right before her death – has included them ad litem as plaintiffs in the lawsuit. He is also suing for negligent infliction of emotional stress, according to the lawsuit.

“[We think it’s very important to not only file this suit] against Cedar Sinai hospital but medical personnel because we need answers and we don’t want this tragedy to happen to any other family,” Hatchett said.

“It’s particularly devastating because we have these two precious babies. How do you explain to children, that they will never see their mother?”

“Cedars-Sinai is deeply saddened by the death and the toll it is taking on [Dixon’s] family,” the hospital said in a statement released to the Sentinel Monday night.

“We strongly support the family’s goal of determining exactly why this happened. While federal privacy laws prevent us from responding directly about any patient’s care without written authorization, we can share the following: Any time there are concerns raised about a patient’s medical care, we conduct an investigation to determine exactly what happened, including reviewing hospital procedures and the competency of healthcare providers, and make changes as needed to ensure that we continue to provide the highest quality medical care.”