

Couple wins suit against doctors

• Jury awards parents
\$10.8 million for injury to
son while admitted to St.
Thomas Medical Center

BY RICHARD MCBANE
Beacon Journal staff writer

The parents of a young man who suffered massive brain damage while being treated at St. Thomas Medical Center in 1991 yesterday won a \$10.8 million verdict in a malpractice case against two doctors.

A Summit County Common Pleas jury in Judge Michael Callahan's court deliberated about six

hours before returning the verdict after a trial that lasted more than a week.

Manohar and Constance Lal, co-guardians of Sharad Lal, declined to talk to the Beacon Journal after the verdict against Dr. Bashar Mubashir of Akron and Dr. Frederick Marquinez of Stow.

According to testimony at the trial, Sharad Lal, then 20, was admitted to St. Thomas Medical Center on Nov. 9, 1991, because of leg pain. Lal had a history of leukemia, which was in remission at the time, and is now cured.

Testimony was that Marquinez

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• Conflicting testimony
given on son's future

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a specialist in hematology and oncology, and an employee of Mubashir, ordered high dosages of morphine for Lal to cope with the pain. As a result of the morphine dosages, Lal suffered pulmonary and cardiac arrest on Nov. 11, 1991.

Because of the pulmonary and cardiac arrest, Lal suffered massive brain damage requiring 24-hour care. He was a college student at the time, and expected to go to medical school.

The jury heard conflicting testimony on Lal's life expectancy, a major factor in the amount of the

verdict. Experts presented on Lal's behalf estimated that he could have a life expectancy of 49 more years. Defense testimony was that he might live five to 20 years.

The defense did not dispute the injuries suffered by Lal, but contended that the injuries were the result of inadequate and negligent care provided by the hospital, and not a result of the treatment prescribed by the doctors.

St. Thomas Medical Center settled with the Lals prior to trial.

Mubashir and Marquinez could not be reached to comment. Defense lawyer Gary Goldwasser of Cleveland did not return a telephone call.

Timothy Scanlan of Akron, lawyer for the Lals, said the settlement with St. Thomas will be unsealed at a separate hearing to be held before Callahan. The verdict against the doctors may be offset by the amount of the settlement with the hospital.