

Roopal Luhana Appointed to Plaintiffs' Executive Committee In Re: Sorin 3T Heater-Cooler System Litigation

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, US, June 6, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Chaffin Luhana LLP, a national plaintiffs-only law firm, is pleased to announce that founding partner Roopal P. Luhana was recently appointed by Judge John E. Jones III to the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee (PEC) in the In Re: Sorin 3T Heater-Cooler System Products Liability Litigation.



On May 31, 2018, the parties appeared before the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. Plaintiffs' counsel, which includes Ms. Luhana, submitted a Joint Application for entry of a plaintiffs' leadership group and asked the Court to adopt that group in its entirety. After reviewing and considering the Application, the Court appointed Ms. Luhana and the Plaintiffs' proposed slate to the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee.

"I'm honored to be in a position where I can actively develop the liability/evidence against Sorin and best protect our clients," Roopal said of the appointment. "Undergoing an open-heart surgery is frightening enough on its own, and to end up with a life-threatening infection afterwards because of a contaminated medical device produced by a defendant who failed to protect patient safety is unacceptable. I'm eager to move this litigation forward so these issues can be resolved efficiently and as fairly as possible."

Sorin 3T heater-coolers (also called Stockert 3T heater-coolers) are medical machines used in operating rooms to regulate patients' body temperature during open-chest surgery. The devices have water tanks that circulate temperature-controlled water to warming/cooling blankets or external heat exchangers through closed circuits. The water does not come into direct contact with the patient, but the water in the tanks can aerosolize through the exhaust system, which then may release life-threatening bacteria into the operating room and possibly onto an open surgical site.

Plaintiffs involved in 3T heater-cooler lawsuits allege that the devices were defectively manufactured, and promoted bacterial colonization, increasing risk of serious infections during the open-chest surgeries.

In October 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warned healthcare providers and patients about the potential risk of serious non-tuberculous mycobacterium (NTM) infections during open-heart surgeries, stating that bacteria from the 3T heater-cooler devices matched bacteria found in affected patients in several states. Investigations later traced the source of the bacteria to one German manufacturing site.

Infections from this particular type of bacterium can be extremely dangerous for two reasons:

- 1) They can take several months or years to develop, so doctors may not make an accurate diagnosis until the infection has significantly spread throughout the body, making it more difficult to treat.
- 2) Some of these infections can be resistant to standard antibiotic treatment, which can result in death.

The U.S. Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation (JPML) [consolidated](#) all federally-filed Sorin 3T heater-cooler lawsuits in the Middle District of Pennsylvania before Judge John E. Jones III on February 1, 2018. They had denied a previous motion for centralization back in March 2017 because 10 of the 16 actions were already coordinated before a single judge, and the parties seemed to be already coordinating pretrial proceedings in that venue.

The litigation grew significantly, however, as more infections were uncovered and more cases were filed in various state and federal courts across the country. When the defendants—manufacturers LivaNova PLC, Sorin Group USA, and Sorin Group Deutschland GmbH—filed the most recent motion for centralization, the Panel agreed it was warranted, noting that informal coordination was no longer practical. They assigned the Honorable John E. Jones III to oversee the proceedings.

Plaintiffs also claim that the defendants failed to warn about the potential risks associated with the heater-cooler devices and provided misleading and erroneous instructions about how to properly clean and disinfect them.

About Chaffin Luhana:

Chaffin Luhana LLP has a long and successful history of protecting the rights of those affected by the serious side effects of pharmaceutical drugs and medical products. Partners [Eric Chaffin](#) and [Roopal Luhana](#) represent high-profile cases in federal and state courts across the country, and provide new online resource centers for clients and the public.

To date, the attorneys of Chaffin Luhana LLP have been involved in recovering over \$1 billion for their clients during the course of their careers, and the firm itself has recovered hundreds of millions of dollars for individually injured plaintiffs. Though unable to guarantee results, the firm has a distinguished track record of success and is highly committed to each case.

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