

Coverys Medical Malpractice Carrier Sued for Failure to Protect Confidential Patient and Physician Data

NORTH ATTLEBORO, MA , UNITED STATES, August 22, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- North Attleboro, MA-- August, 22.22-- Massachusetts physician Ryan Welter MD PhD, who has practices in North Attleboro and Westwood, Mass., filed a lawsuit against mutual medical malpractice insurer Coverys, after discovering breaches by a Coverys employee, of privileged and HIPAA-protected medical record data of Dr. Welter's patients held by Coverys on its computer databases.

Coverys is the largest malpractice carrier in Massachusetts representing thousands of physicians. Because physicians are mandated to report any allegation of misconduct to their carrier, Coverys has routine access to confidential medical records of both patients and physicians. The Coverys employee is a billing manager and should have no access to confidential patient data.

In late 2020, Dr. Welter brought the data breach to the attention of then CEO Gregg Hanson, who denied the breach and declined to hold Coverys' billing manager accountable for the data breach. Coverys did not publicly disclose the breach to Coverys' mutual policyholders or the government. It is legally mandatory to report this type of HIPAA-protected data breach to both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Federal government.

Dr. Welter filed suit in Bristol Superior Court alleging that Coverys has no protections in place to safeguard privileged medical data about patients and the physicians who are mutual policyholders of Coverys, in violation of federal law and its own declared data protection agreement with physicians.

"Protecting patient and physician confidentiality must be a paramount concern of medical malpractice carriers. What Coverys has done in refusing to take action violates the confidentiality on which medical decisions are made," stated Dr. Welter about the case. "I am hopeful the judicial system and the public will demand better from our corporate institutions."

Coverys removed the case from State Court to Federal Court which is traditionally more favorable to corporations. A hearing on Dr. Welter's motion to remand back to state court was held on Thursday, August 18, 2022, and a decision is expected in a few weeks. The case is Docket number 1:22-cv-11047-PBS in the United States District Court, District of Massachusetts

(Boston).

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