

Eli's Hospice Insider

Hospice News: Alleged False Charting Sparks Wrongful Termination Suit

In a battle of he-said, she-said, your organization may lose even if it wins.

Reputational damage from employee lawsuits can be a big concern, as one Illinois-based hospice is learning the hard way. Former Passages Hospice nurse Jacqueline Reavis has filed suit against the Lisle-based chain, claiming she was dismissed for reporting bogus charting, reports the Madison Record.

The company's owners and managers demanded that Reavis falsely chart her patients' conditions and insisted that she alter her paperwork to show that patients required a higher level of care than they actually did, according to the complaint filed Sept. 16 in Madison County Circuit Court. Reavis refused and reported the pressure to Passages owner Seth Gilman, says the newspaper.

Two days later, the local managers in Southern Illinois fired her in a "manner that was physically threatening, demeaning, humiliating, frightening, and extremely emotionally upsetting to plaintiff," the suit states. They "summoned police officers to be present at the termination, caused plaintiff to partially undress, made threats and false statements about plaintiff, and forcibly grabbed from plaintiff's hand ... documents ... which contained information regarding the report of misconduct and/or fraudulent/illegal conduct engaged in by defendant."

The managers told Reavis they were terminating her because of charting errors and failure to follow the chain of command, the Record says. However, she contends she actually lost her job in retaliation for her reporting the fraud.

Reavis is seeking \$100,000 in damages, among other things, the newspaper says.