

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

ZIVA FINK,

*

Petitioner,

*

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No. 09-057V

Special Master Christian J. Moran

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v.

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SECRETARY OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES,

*

Filed: May 24, 2010

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Respondent.

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Stipulation; influenza (flu) vaccine;
Guillain Barre Syndrome (GBS).

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UNPUBLISHED DECISION¹

Sheila A. Bjorklund, Esq., Lommen Abdo Law Firm, Minneapolis, MN., for Petitioner;
Michael P. Milmo, Esq., U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., for Respondent.

On May 19, 2010, the parties filed a joint stipulation concerning the petition for compensation filed by Ziva Fink on February 2, 2009. In her petition, Ms. Fink alleged that the influenza vaccine, which is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table, 42 C.F.R. §100.3(a), and which she received on November 12, 2007, caused her to suffer the onset of Guillain Barre Syndrome (GBS). Ms. Fink further alleged that she experienced the residual effects of her GBS for more than six months.

Respondent denies that Ms. Fink suffered any injury as a result of her influenza vaccination, and denies that Ms. Fink’s current disabilities are sequela of her alleged injury.

¹ Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the special master's action in this case, the special master intends to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims's website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-347, 116 Stat. 2899, 2913 (Dec. 17, 2002).

All decisions of the special masters will be made available to the public unless they contain trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is privileged and confidential, or medical or similar information whose disclosure would clearly be an unwarranted invasion of privacy. When such a decision or designated substantive order is filed, the person submitting the information has 14 days to identify and to move to delete such information before the document’s disclosure. If the special master agrees that the identified material fits within the categories listed above, the special master shall redact such material from public access. 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-12(d)(4)(B); Vaccine Rule 18(b).

Nevertheless, the parties agree to the joint stipulation, attached hereto as Appendix A. The undersigned finds said stipulation reasonable and adopts it as the decision of the Court in awarding damages, on the terms set forth therein.

Damages awarded in that stipulation include:

- a. A lump sum payment of \$180,000.00, in the form of a check payable to petitioner.**
This amount represents compensation for all damages available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).
- b. A lump sum payment of \$9,500.00, in the form of a check payable to petitioner and petitioner's attorney, Sheila A. Bjorklund,** for attorneys' fees and costs available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(e), and in compliance with General Order #9, no out of pocket expenses were incurred by petitioner in proceeding on the petition.

In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC, Appendix B, the clerk is directed to enter judgment in case 09-57V according to this decision and the attached stipulation.

Any questions may be directed to my law clerk, Francina Segbefia, at (202) 357-6358.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

S/ Christian J. Moran

Christian J. Moran
Special Master

THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

ZIVA FINK,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 09-57V

Christian J. Moran

STIPULATION

It is hereby stipulated by and between the parties, the following matters:

1. Petitioner, Ziva Fink, filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 to 34 (the "Vaccine Program"). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to her receipt of an influenza vaccine, which vaccine is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the "Table"), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3(a).
2. Petitioner received her immunization on November 12, 2007.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that she suffered the onset of Guillain Barre Syndrome ("GBS") that was caused-in-fact by the influenza vaccine she received on November 12, 2007. Petitioner further alleges that she experienced residual effects of her GBS for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on her behalf as a result of her condition.

6. Respondent denies that petitioner suffered the onset of GBS as a result of the influenza vaccine, and further denies that petitioner's current disabilities are sequela of her alleged injury.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payments:

a. A lump sum of \$180,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a); and

b. A lump sum of \$9,500.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner and petitioner's attorney, Sheila A. Bjorklund, for attorneys' fees and costs available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(e), and in compliance with General Order #9, no out of pocket expenses were incurred by petitioner in proceeding on the petition.

9. Petitioner and her attorney represent that she has identified to respondent all known sources of payment for items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), including State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et. seq.)), or entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

10. Payments made pursuant to paragraph 8 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

11. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner, Ziva Fink, as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

12. In return for the payment described in paragraph 8, petitioner, in her individual capacity, and on behalf of herself, her heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the influenza vaccine administered to her on November 12, 2007, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about February 2, 2009, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 09-57V.

13. If petitioner should die prior to entry of the judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

14. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

15. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

16. Petitioner hereby authorizes the respondent to disclose documents filed by petitioner in this case consistent with the Privacy Act and the routine uses described in the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program System of Records, No. 09-15-0056.

17. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or by the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the influenza vaccine caused petitioner's GBS, or her current disabilities.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION

Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER:

Ziva Fink
ZIVA FINK

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Dated: 5/19/2010