

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL LISA MADIGAN

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Media Contact:
Robyn Ziegler
312-814-3118
rziegler@atg.state.il.us

MADIGAN: U OF C MEDICAL CENTER TO PAY \$5.1 MILLION FOR LICENSING VIOLATIONS IN NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Settlement to Fund Critical Medical Care for Low-Income Women at Eight Chicago Area Hospitals and Clinics

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced an agreement to settle claims against the University of Chicago Medical Center for violating hospital licensing regulations in the Medical Center’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (“NICU”).

Under the settlement agreement, the \$5.135 million in settlement funds will be directed to not-for-profit hospitals and health care clinics to deliver preventive preconception, prenatal and maternal health care services to low-income women on Chicago’s South Side.

“This settlement will increase access to critical medical care for low-income women and, as a result, improve their health and help them to deliver healthier babies,” Madigan said.

The \$5.135 million in settlement funds have been disbursed to eight not-for-profit community health care providers to fund preventive medical care for low-income women facing chronic and long-term health issues that are linked to problematic births. This proactive care can reduce the number of babies who require NICU treatment. The recipients who have received funding are Chicago Family Health Center, Christian Community Health Center, Holy Cross Hospital, Jackson Park Hospital Foundation, Mercy Foundation (for use at both its hospital and clinic), Mile Square Health Center, St. Bernard Hospital, and Roseland Community Hospital.

“Chicago Family Health Center sees more than 5,000 women of child bearing age, and they delivered 762 babies in 2009. Most of these women are low-income and uninsured which means they experience disparities in access to health care,” said Warren Brodine, CEO Chicago Family Health Center where the Attorney General made the announcement. “This funding from Attorney General Madigan’s office will fill the critical health care gap that so many women face after childbirth when their health care is no longer covered. With these funds we can offer family planning services, primary care and routine screenings such as pap tests.”

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This settlement resolves Madigan’s 2006 lawsuit, which alleged that the University of Chicago Medical Center violated Illinois licensing regulations by exceeding its licensed capacity in the NICU and routinely placing two or more NICU patients in bed spaces designed for one infant. These violations were first brought to the Attorney General’s attention by two former Medical Center employees. The Medical Center stopped its violations after Madigan filed the lawsuit. As part of the settlement, the Medical Center has agreed to permanently cease such violations and to adhere to a specific enforcement procedure.

Public Interest Division Chief Paul Gaynor, Special Litigation Bureau Chief Carl Bergetz, and Assistant Attorneys General Malini Rao and T. Patrick Murray handled the case for Madigan’s Special Litigation Bureau.