

Terminally ill patient gets \$3.1 million

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A Baltimore County jury awarded a terminally ill psychotherapist \$3.1 million yesterday after deciding that her doctor failed to diagnose lymphoma for three years.

The jury deliberated for 45 minutes before finding that Dr. John Mann, a Baltimore County internist, had breached the standard of care for his patient, Lynn Sklar, 52, of Randallstown.

The weeklong trial in the courtroom of Baltimore County Circuit

Judge Dana M. Levitz included medical experts who testified that Mann should have biopsied swollen lymph nodes in his patient's neck when she complained about pain in 1995, her lawyer said.

The \$3.1 million verdict is one of the larger awards for medical malpractice in Baltimore County in recent years.

Mann's lawyer, William B. Whiteford, said he will ask the judge to reduce the judgment "or set aside the the verdict entirely."

Sklar's attorney, Andrew G. Slutkin, said his client wept when the verdict was read.

Slutkin said that Mann told his client on numerous occasions that there was nothing wrong with her. "She had swollen lymph nodes for three solid years, and her doctor never biopsied them," said Slutkin.

It wasn't until 1998, when an ailing Sklar was admitted to Johns Hopkins Hospital, that she was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma, a form of cancer.

The lawyer said she now has only a few years to live.

Slutkin said that if Mann had diagnosed the lymphoma in 1995, his client would have had a 70 to 80 percent chance of being cured.