

Fall: Bed Alarm Not Plugged In.

The seventy-eight year old patient was admitted to the hospital for back pain related to spinal stenosis.

He was identified as a fall risk on admission based on a history of mental confusion and unsteady gait.

The fall-care plan included ordering and installing a bed alarm. The bed alarm was installed but apparently was not plugged in or was not working on the night in question.

The patient got out of bed by himself in the middle of the night to use the restroom. The bed alarm did not go off. He fell and broke his hip.

His hip was repaired surgically, which meant three extra months in a rehab facility to heal fully and extra medical bills.

The hospital was criticized by the patient's nursing expert because the alarm was not working. It was also her opinion the patient should have been toileted more frequently so that he would not have had to get up on his own during the night.

The jury in the Circuit Court, Jefferson County, Kentucky awarded the patient \$134,047. **Miller v. Caritas Hosp., 2010 WL 2079846 (Cir. Ct. Jefferson Co., Kentucky, March 18, 2010).**