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\$30 Million Awarded In Malpractice Lawsuit Over 1991 C-Section Birth

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Apr. 8--A Plantation doctor's and hospital's delay in performing a Caesarean section during Jacob Tomlian's birth left the 16-year-old with cerebral palsy, mental retardation, a spastic gait and deafness in one ear, according to Broward jurors.

That delay, jurors decided on Monday, will cost Westside Regional Medical Center, in Plantation, and Dr. Mark Grenitz \$30 million, said Tomlian's attorney, Crane Johnstone.

"I don't think there's been a bigger [medical malpractice] verdict in town," Johnstone said. "The family has waited 16 years. It's kind of a big deal for them."

Jurors found the hospital 85 percent responsible and the doctor 15 percent responsible in the medical malpractice case, Johnstone said.

Grenitz, 46, has been in practice 17 years, his attorney, James S. Haliczzer, said.

About a decade ago, another panel of jurors decided in favor of Grenitz and the medical center, said Haliczzer and Michelle Marsh, a medical center spokeswoman. An appeals court reversed that verdict for a new trial.

Haliczzer and Marsh said they were disappointed in Monday's verdict and are exploring options in response to it.

During labor, heart-monitoring equipment showed fetal distress during the 1991 birth, Johnstone said. Although Dora Tomlian eventually underwent an "urgent C-section," it was not soon enough, Johnstone said.

Tomlian, formerly of Davie, now lives in Reno, Nev., with his parents.

He walks with the aid of arm-brace crutches, reads at a first-grade level and attends a special education program for handicapped children, Johnstone said.