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## Widow to get \$3M in hospital death

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An Essex County jury has awarded \$3.3 million to the wife of a Dumont truck driver who died in University Hospital after a medical intern improperly inserted a drainage tube into his stomach, the plaintiff's attorney said yesterday.

The patient, William Clark, 40, died in the Newark hospital's trauma unit in 2001 while being treated by a dentist in the fourth day of his residency to be a medical doctor and by a four-year resident, said the attorney, David Mazie of Roseland.

After a two-week trial before Judge Stephen Bernstein of Superior Court in Newark, the jury took two hours to find in favor of Clark's wife, Dorothy.

The jury found Thomas Chiodo, the four-day intern who actually inserted the drainage tube, responsible for 49 percent of the damages, and Raquel Forsythe, the four-year resident, responsible for 51 percent.

Cynthia Walters, the attorney who represented the hospital, could not be reached for comment.

Mazie said Clark was flown by helicopter to University Hospital after being injured in a Union County automobile accident. He suffered a collapsed lung, a broken

rib, spinal fractures and other injuries that were not life-threatening or likely to disable him, the attorney said.

Three days after arriving at the hospital, Clark had so much fluid building up inside him that his stomach was visibly distended. Chiodo inserted a naso-gastric tube and drained 800 cubic centimeters from his stomach before Clark pulled out the tube, Mazie said.

Chiodo re-inserted the tube and only drained a minimal amount of additional fluid before a distressed Clark pulled it out again. The attorney said Chiodo consulted Forsythe, and she told him that if little fluid drained the second time that it was not necessary to re-insert the tube a third time.

Mazie said a nurse came to Clark's room a few hours later, at 2:30 a.m. on the next day, and found him dead. He said Chiodo had inserted the tube incorrectly the second time and that an expert testified at trial that he had drained less than half of the fluid from his stomach.

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