

Statement to the Press April 6th, 2009

Law Firm Calls for Legislation, Inspections, to Prevent Hep-C Outbreaks

Brent Coon & Associates, one of the largest plaintiff-only law practices in the country, and proponent of stricter oversight procedures for medical clinics and hospitals practicing unsanitary procedures resulting in the spread of Hepatitis-C, is now turning its attention to Miami, Florida. The announcement came as a direct response to the outbreak of Hepatitis-C cases at the Murfreesboro, TN VA Hospital and the recent admission by VA officials in Miami that, by not sanitizing colonoscopy equipment, the contamination has caused wide-spread alarm for thousands of veterans.

Managing Attorney, Dennis Weitzel, Dallas, TX, headed a team for BCA that investigated and interviewed over 400 potential clients in the Las Vegas Hepatitis outbreak case that began in March of 2008. He stated "Due to our early and ongoing role in that case, we are in the unique position to recognize the alarmingly close parallels between the Las Vegas hepatitis outbreak and what is shaping up to be a similar situation in the VA Hospitals in the Southeast just one year later".

The legislation being championed by BCA includes routine inspections and grading components, many of which are standardized in our restaurant and food service industries. They involve mandatory reporting requirements, properly funded and staffed state agencies to inspect health care facilities, a uniform grading standard and prominent displays of grading results for patients to see.

In March of 2008, a notification was released in Las Vegas by the Centers for Disease Control and the Southern Nevada Health District to approximately 40,000 patients who visited the Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada and two associated clinics alerting them that the clinics had been reusing anesthesia vials and improperly sterilizing endoscopy equipment for nearly 4 years. The clinics, run by Dr. Depak Desai, had been reusing these materials in effort to cut down on costs. The subsequent recall letter to the exposed patients represented one of the largest public health notifications in U.S. history.

On Monday, the Miami VA Hospital disclosed that the water tubes and reservoirs used in colonoscopies and endoscopies were being rinsed between procedures, but not disinfected as required by the manufacturer's specifications and proper medical practices. Whether this was due to human oversight or as a part of a cost-cutting measure is not yet known. BCA intends to investigate the occurrences in the Miami, Augusta and Murfreesboro to diagnose the scope of the problem and get actively involved to help the victims of this tragedy.

"While we commend the VA for its open disclosure and transparency on this matter, we empathize with the thousands on United States Veterans that have potentially been

exposed to Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV as a result of the hospitals negligence", stated BCA Founder, attorney Brent Coon, "it is our mission to protect the rights of those Veterans and do all that we can to ensure this matter is swiftly and properly investigated.

Mr. Coon emphasized, "If we don't learn from past mistakes, we're destined to repeat them. Our firm has dedicated ourselves to working tirelessly to expose the greed and malfeasance which resulted in the possible Hepatitis or HIV infection perpetuated on the American people in Las Vegas, and we intend to work just as hard for these new victims in Miami. We're calling for a deep investigation into this matter and we hope that this incident will finally lead to stricter oversight and regulation on the procedures that take place in these hospitals."

Founder, Brent Coon has been a longtime advocate of stricter regulations on the health care industry to further the quality of care patients receive and to help limit incidents of medical malpractice. He was instrumental in introducing new occupational safety regulations in Texas as a result of the Texas City BP plant explosion in 2005 that killed 15 workers. Mr. Coon authored the "Remember The 15" Bill that was introduced into the Texas State Legislature and he is determined do all he can to make a similar mark on the health care industry.

As with other major litigation, BCA has already created websites to provide updated information on case developments. This includes links to investigating agencies, archives of press articles, and background information on the facilities and doctors involved. These sites will also provide copies of the litigation documents, depositions and other discovery as it takes place. It is an established part of the firm mission statement to make all things discovered in civil litigation available to the public and media. An example can be found at www.texascityexplosion.com.

Dennis Weitzel, stated "We believe that the public not only has a right to know, but actually has a need to know the truth as can best be established by the writings, actions and misconduct of wrongdoers that affect our clients' rights".

For more information on this matter, and for future case updates, please reference the following websites:

www.hepatitisexposure.com
www.bcoonlaw.com

About Brent Coon & Associates:

Brent Coon & Associates was founded in 2001. Today, with 16 offices around the country, it is one of the largest trial law firms in the nation and the epitome of the 21st century law practice. Brent Coon & Associates employs over 60 aggressive litigators, with solid experience in individual and complex multi-party, occupational/environmental, health and personal injury cases. The majority of the firm's cases are referred from attorneys who have confidence in the firm's integrity, expertise and solid work ethic. The firm has a proven track record for handling complex, multi-

party cases, with an emphasis on occupational and environmental law and personal injury practice.

For additional information, contact:

Jay Jackson
Director of Communications
832.494.2810

Hep-C Media kits available for Brent Coon and Dennis Weitzel upon request.
For further information, please contact:

Jay Jackson
Director of Communications
jay@bcoonlaw.com
(312) 656-3471