

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.  
COUNTY OF BRONX : CIVIL TERM : IA-35

-----x  
FELICIA WATSON,

Index:  
31065/2020E

Plaintiff,

-against-

OLR ECW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FUND COMPANY,  
INC., OLR ECW, L.P., OMNI NEW YORK, LLC,  
And RELIANT REALTY SERVICES, LLC,

Defendants.  
-----x

**TESTIMONY**

**Dr. Ali E. Guy**

851 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, New York 10451  
December 17, 2024

B E F O R E:

HONORABLE RAYMOND FERNANDEZ,  
Justice of the Supreme Court

A P P E A R A N C E S:

FOR THE PLAINTIFF:

HARRIS, KEENAN & GOLDFARB, PLLC  
233 Broadway, 9th Floor  
New York, New York 10279  
BY: SHERI HOLLAND, ESQ.  
SETH HARRIS, ESQ.

FOR THE DEFENDANT:

PERRY, VAN ETEN, ROZANSKI & KUTNER, LLP  
14 Wall Street, Suite 4D  
New York, New York 10005  
BY: JEFFREY VAN ETEN, ESQ.  
PATRICK DOWNEY, ESQ.

Maggie J. Klasen  
Senior Court Reporter

1                   THE COURT: Good morning, everyone. Trial  
2 continued. The appearances remain the same. Just before --  
3 before you start, Mr. Van Etten, I will ask of counsel, on  
4 both sides, for a clean copy of your proposed verdict  
5 sheets, and your requests to charge. I know they've been  
6 e-mailed to me. I had a marked up copy on my desk, but I  
7 like to mark them as a Court Exhibit. So a clean copy, on  
8 both sides, that I can mark as a Court Exhibit.

9                   MR. VAN ETTEN: Okay.

10                  THE COURT: Just -- I think that's all I have.  
11 That's my only request.

12                  Go ahead, Mr. Van Etten. What would you like to  
13 say?

14                  MR. VAN ETTEN: Sure. Yes. Yesterday, Judge, we  
15 had closed out at the end of the day, and right before,  
16 there was a question asked of the investigator for the  
17 defendants. And the question came out:

18                  "QUESTION: And did you go to the same ethical  
19 school as Dr. Feuer?"

20                  Which I objected, and you sustained the objection,  
21 and the question was withdrawn. Just before we left, we  
22 were going to -- I was going to make this motion for a  
23 mistrial, at that point, but the court reporter had shut  
24 down -- not Maggie, because she wouldn't have -- had shut  
25 down the set.

1           As you're aware, we did put the omnibus motion on  
2       reptile-type tactics before you. Point-5 of that motion  
3       addresses a number of things, including something like that,  
4       where you ask questions that which you do not expect answers  
5       to, and that's improper. That happened throughout the cross  
6       of Dr. Feuer, and we had multiple, blatant questions being  
7       asked, some without responses, where Mr. Harris just kept  
8       going on, and was, essentially, testifying for the witness.

9           Yes, it's cross-examination, yes, there's ways to  
10      do that, but it went beyond the pale when he went and did  
11      that, and other comments throughout there. You know, so  
12      that -- and as well, a prime examples, of course, were when  
13      he was talking to Dr. Feuer about the pricing for what he  
14      charges, which we all know that there's Medicaid rates,  
15      there's Workers' Comp rates, and all that. And we objected  
16      to it. And, again, the Court rightfully sustained it, but  
17      he asked it three different times about, you price to what  
18      the patient can afford.

19           He knew enough that the first two objections, that  
20      it wasn't coming in, you told him to go on, he then asked it  
21      a third time because you charged about what the patient  
22      affords. Clearly, that was done in an attempt to make Dr.  
23      Feuer look bad. That is a pure, prime example of reptile  
24      tactic, which we had asked in advance, and not be done. The  
25      Court had directed us all to behave an accordingly after

1       this was done.

2               You know, one of the other things that we talk  
3       about is speaking objections. You know, we've made requests  
4       throughout the trial, whatever. These are the tactics that  
5       are being used. Once they did that with the ethical comment  
6       to the investigator, saying, did you go to the same, you  
7       know, ethical school as Dr. Feuer, that was deliberately  
8       done, intentionally done, in contravention of the  
9       instructions you gave us all beforehand, based upon the  
10      motion in limine. And, clearly, that was done to prejudice  
11      the defense. So we move for a mistrial.

12             THE COURT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Van Etten. So I  
13      will just say, Mr. Harris is known for making gratuitous  
14      remarks. That said, I sustained every objection made. I'm  
15      -- your microphone must have been off when you asked for a  
16      curative instruction, because had you asked me for a  
17      curative instruction, I would've admonished Mr. Harris in  
18      front of the jury. Okay?

19             And if Mr. Harris does that today or Ms. Holland or  
20      either of you, and I'm asked, I will tell the jury, what you  
21      say is not evidence, and it will interrupt the entire flow  
22      of your questioning. So it would be who of you guys not to  
23      do it.

24             But a mistrial, I don't think so. Okay? Motion  
25      denied.

1                   MR. VAN ETTEN: All right. Second part, Judge,  
2                   based upon the manner in which the cross of Dr. Feuer took  
3                   place on these issues, and the retention of this expert with  
4                   the repeated references after the first one, two times of  
5                   he's getting paid, and then the continued reference back on  
6                   the opinions to how much he's getting paid, trying to do  
7                   that negative inference, which defendants are entitled to  
8                   have their own expert come in, that is a follow-up to what I  
9                   just made the motion on. But at the same time, we had made  
10                  the request on being able -- sorry.

11                  We were precluded from being able to say that  
12                  plaintiff was referred to PMR by the attorneys. By taking  
13                  this type of tactic and approach, and attacking the defense  
14                  witness, I believe we have now opened the door where we can  
15                  go back to the issue of the referral to PMR by plaintiff's  
16                  counsel. And I'd asked that the Court renew and look at  
17                  that, and allow us to inquire.

18                  THE COURT: Okay. I respectfully disagree, and  
19                  that application is denied. Again, if you suspect something  
20                  is improper, you ask for a curative instruction, and we see  
21                  where it goes. Okay?

22                  MR. VAN ETTEN: Okay.

23                  THE COURT: I never heard that. I never gave one.  
24                  I let both of you put your cases on. I try to stay out of  
25                  this as much as possible. I give a ruling when I'm asked.

1 MR. VAN ETTEN: The final one, Judge, we got served  
2 with another subpoena last night --

3 THE COURT: For who?

4 MR. VAN ETTEN: -- for the investigator for the  
5 camera. We reached out to the investigator, as we know, she  
6 is in Florida. She will be in Florida until February. The  
7 camera, when she leaves, is in her office, locked up. She  
8 will not be able to get that camera before this trial ends.

9 So I renew my application for the video to be put  
10 into evidence, based upon the testimony of the witness.

11 THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Harris, do you want to die  
12 on this hill? Do you want an adjournment until January?

13 MR. HARRIS: No.

14 THE COURT: Okay. So what do we want to do about  
15 this camera? They can't -- they literally can't get you the  
16 camera.

17 So, what would you like to do?

18 MR. HARRIS: Your Honor, their inability to get the  
19 camera -- I mean, we researched this last night. We could  
20 -- I could not find any Panasonic cameras that don't have an  
21 SD card or some type of memory card, and I would ask the  
22 Court to take judicial notice of that fact.

23 What she said is just incredible, and we can't --  
24 now, there's no -- there is not a proper foundation laid to  
25 introduce a video, based on that testimony. I heard the

1 Court yesterday indicate that the Court felt that Mr. Van  
2 Etten or the witness had checked off all the boxes.

3 THE COURT: Yes.

4 MR. HARRIS: I don't think that particular box was  
5 checked. And given that she had 38 hours of billing, and  
6 only four and a half minutes or five minutes, when you add  
7 up both days, between 38 hours of actual filming, it's just  
8 incredible. So, you know, I don't think that they should be  
9 rewarded by putting in the four minutes of film, that they  
10 got her walking around, you know -- and, by the way, the one  
11 point that I pointed out during the video at 9:10 a.m., you  
12 see her limping in between the cars, and all of a sudden,  
13 she shuts off the video, and she's standing right there.  
14 Now, I get -- I understand that's a summation point.

15 THE COURT: I was going to say, it sounds like your  
16 summation.

17 MR. HARRIS: And it will be. Okay? But, that  
18 being said, I don't think that we should have to get that  
19 far because they shouldn't be -- they shouldn't be benefited  
20 by hiding the medium and the original source that the  
21 material was recorded on. And there is substantial case law  
22 on that subject, which I don't want to belabor the record,  
23 at this point, with that, but I have it, if the Court wants  
24 it.

25 THE COURT: Mr. Harris, I don't need the case law.

1 If you want the camera, you can have it. But this case gets  
2 kicked until January. It delays the case. You can have it  
3 if you want it. That's why I asked you, is this what you  
4 want, because what we can do is, I will allow it in over  
5 objection. You'll have an Appellate issue, and you'll have  
6 a lot of talk about in summation. Or I kick this case to  
7 January, and we hope the jurors come back.

8 You know, I didn't say you're not entitled to the  
9 camera. Sure, produce the camera. I'd love to see this  
10 thing, too. But what do you want me to do? I'm trying to  
11 get this case over and done with this week. You know, what  
12 would you like me to do? Present me with a solution.

13 MR. HARRIS: I love the practical aspect of the  
14 Court here, and I, frankly, wish more Justices, in that  
15 regard, thought the way you did. With that being said, no.  
16 I don't -- I would not ask the case to be kicked to January.  
17 That would make no sense at all, on multiple levels.

18 However, I'm not buying what they're selling, that  
19 the camera is locked up somewhere. These cameras typically  
20 go on the market for 65 and \$200. Okay? That she locks it  
21 in the safe, and that nobody has access to this safe but  
22 her, and she's in Florida, we -- listen. She could have  
23 come up here. We could have made her come up here. We  
24 agreed, hey, you know, your husband is sick. We don't want  
25 you to have to travel.



1           But, I mean, we shouldn't now be prejudiced of the  
2 fact that, you know, she's now claiming she's in Florida.  
3 Maybe she is in Florida. I don't know where she was.

4           THE COURT: Let's do this, Mr. Van Etten, I want an  
5 affidavit to the effect that this camera can't be produced.

6           MR. VAN ETTEN: Can I just ask --

7           THE COURT: You can add whatever you want, but just  
8 acknowledge what I just said to you. I want an affidavit  
9 that it can't be produced. Okay?

10          MR. VAN ETTEN: Before I do -- I will do that,  
11 Judge.

12          THE COURT: Thank you. Now say what you'd like to  
13 say.

14          MR. VAN ETTEN: However -- here's my point, Judge.  
15 In the original subpoena served on our witness for  
16 everything that they wanted for this appearance, they did  
17 not ask for the camera.

18          THE COURT: They didn't think it would be at issue.

19          MR. VAN ETTEN: Well, is that my fault? That's  
20 their fault. And to now say they need this, and in the  
21 middle of a trial, we have to get an affidavit to this, I  
22 actually would say they should be precluded from referencing  
23 that the camera wasn't available, since they didn't ask for  
24 it prior to the witness's appearance.

25          And as the Court is aware, from the first day after

1 jury selection, when we were discussing the issue with the  
2 investigator, I said, I've given you the identification,  
3 I've told you to serve me with a subpoena. That was on  
4 December 3rd. They didn't serve a subpoena until  
5 December 12th, Judge, or 11th. They waited over a week.

6 And, now, they're trying to say, we didn't produce  
7 it, now we have an affidavit, now they question all these  
8 defenses. They waited until the last minute to do it. They  
9 didn't request the information, and now they are calling  
10 foul.

11 THE COURT: Okay. It's -- my understanding is that  
12 Mr. Harris's application is based on what the witness just  
13 said to him.

14 MR. HARRIS: Exactly.

15 THE COURT: That's what it's based on. Okay? So  
16 that -- you know, I once again, here we are again with me  
17 reserving decision. I reserve decision. Get an affidavit  
18 to the effect that that camera cannot be produced sometime  
19 this week, and I will go forward, which I -- you know, I  
20 have no problem saying on the record, it's probably going to  
21 be let in over your objection, once I see an affidavit to  
22 that effect. And that's just where we go. That's just how  
23 this goes. Okay? There's a lot of -- I'm just trying to be  
24 practical here.

25 Everybody is done making their records? Hi, Ms.

1 Holland.

2 MS. HOLLAND: I just didn't want to interrupt. I  
3 just need to go over to the computer --

4 THE COURT: Go ahead. Go ahead, Ms. Holland. Do  
5 what you need to do.

6 MR. HARRIS: If the film comes in over my  
7 objection, I just don't want to object in front of the jury.  
8 So I'm objecting now to it.

9 THE COURT: Of course.

10 MR. HARRIS: In front of the jury, I'm not going to  
11 say anything.

12 THE COURT: That's fine. They saw it already. So,  
13 I mean, why would you? You know, I get it. I get it.  
14 Everyone can make their records. I'm totally fine with --  
15 do we have all the jurors?

16 COURT OFFICER: Yes.

17 THE COURT: Okay. All jurors --

18 MR. HARRIS: The affidavit can't just say that we  
19 can't get to a camera, it's in a safe. It's got to also say  
20 that there is no SD card, no sim card. He's not listening.

21 THE COURT: Mr. Van Etten?

22 MR. VAN ETTEN: I'm sorry. Sheri was asking me a  
23 question.

24 MR. HARRIS: Well, we're arguing something before  
25 the Court here.

1           THE COURT: Okay. We're discussing the substance  
2 of the affidavit. Continue, Mr. Harris. You might want to  
3 restart, actually. He didn't hear you.

4           MR. HARRIS: And it was very convenient, you know,  
5 counsel brought up that, you know, I challenged their  
6 comments about they rely on their ethics. It was  
7 interesting that both witnesses, in order, gave the same  
8 answer when I challenged their credibility, as to their  
9 rendition with no eye witnesses or anything else to support  
10 their position, that, you know, well, the reason why you can  
11 trust me is because I always tell the truth except when my  
12 wife has a dress on that I don't like, I tell her I like it.

13           I had every right to ask that question, and, by the  
14 way, there was no answer to it because he sustained the  
15 objection. But it wasn't like, gee, to move for a mistrial  
16 based on some reptilian nonsense --

17           THE COURT: His motion was denied. His motion was  
18 denied. So we don't have to --

19           MR. HARRIS: It's just an outrage, Judge.

20           THE COURT: His motion was denied, so we don't have  
21 to hash all of that out.

22           MR. HARRIS: He's a double talker.

23           THE COURT: Okay. Okay. Can we -- okay. The jury  
24 is not here. All right?

25           MR. VAN ETEN: Judge, this is --

1           THE COURT: I will give an instruction, now, on the  
2           record, that both of you will refrain from making gratuitous  
3           comments when cross-examining witnesses. Okay? On both  
4           sides. Okay? Let's not make it an issue. I don't like  
5           admonishing lawyers in the middle of their examination. I  
6           like to just sit here and listen. Okay? I rule on  
7           objections, but I sit here and I listen. I let you both put  
8           your cases on. I do. What's good for both --

9           MR. HARRIS: Judge, if he attacks me on the record,  
10          I'm going to respond. Okay? I guarantee that.

11          THE COURT: You will both refrain from attacking  
12          each other. Okay?

13          MR. HARRIS: He just does it in a lower tone of  
14          voice, so he thinks it's okay.

15          THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Holland, we need to get this  
16          going because it is -- are you ready? Can I bring in this  
17          jury? Is the witness -- so IT is coming.

18          Do you need this for the examination of your first  
19          witness?

20          MR. HARRIS: Yes, Judge.

21          THE COURT: Okay.

22          MR. HARRIS: You raise a great point. The answer  
23          is, yes, based on your ruling last night about Dr. Sapan  
24          Cohn being able to discuss the 2019 MRI. So it is my intent  
25          and full disclosure to as Dr. Guy about that.

1 THE COURT: It's fine. What now?

2 MR. HARRIS: He's going to get to it now, Judge.

3 In other words, he wants his cake and to eat it, too. He  
4 wants his experts, who he just exchanged, to be able to give  
5 testimony on a '19 film, but he doesn't want my expert to do  
6 that. And, yes, it was not in his report, but I'm still  
7 going to ask the doctor the question because of your ruling  
8 last night. That's all. Or I've got to call a radiologist  
9 on rebuttal. One or the other.

10 THE COURT: Go ahead.

11 MR. VAN ETEN: I was waiting for him to finish.

12 THE COURT: Thank you. Go ahead.

13 MR. VAN ETEN: Every expert --

14 THE COURT: Can we just hold on. Is that the  
15 witness right there?

16 MR. HARRIS: Yes.

17 THE COURT: Doctor, can I just ask you to take a  
18 seat in the hallway while we hash a few things out, sir.  
19 Thank you.

20 MR. VAN ETEN: As the Court is aware, every time  
21 we've gotten a piece of information from an expert on  
22 something that they would testify to in court, we have  
23 disclosed it to plaintiff's counsel promptly, with the  
24 information they are going to do, and reports on what they  
25 were going to be testifying to.

1           So Mr. Harris just came in now and said he's going  
2           to have him review 2019 films. This is an expert. This is  
3           not a treating. Again, where is the expert disclosure from  
4           this witness as an expert, as to this film that he was going  
5           to review, to allow us to prepare for cross? Please. I  
6           mean, I don't understand why we have to do it, then get  
7           subject to preclusion, and they don't --

8           THE COURT: Why do you keep saying that? Why do  
9           you -- you love to say I preclude you. I read every --

10          MR. VAN ETEN: No. I --

11          THE COURT: Stop. Stop.

12          MR. VAN ETEN: I apologize.

13          THE COURT: I had the occasion yesterday to read  
14          every word of every single transcript. And despite your  
15          aversions that I keep precluding you, about 90 percent of  
16          evidentiary rulings have gone in your favor. So I don't  
17          know what you are talking -- you are putting up a very good  
18          defense here, and you have elicited all the little buzzwords  
19          you need for a good summation. So you keep saying I  
20          preclude you left and right, and it is completely  
21          disingenuous.

22          Second, I'm willing to bet -- can I have the  
23          3101(d)? I'm willing to bet that the 3101(d) says that the  
24          expert will refer to exhibits at trial, what's in evidence.

25          MR. HARRIS: And, well, Judge, I would just point

1 out, counsel incorrectly referred to Dr. Guy as an expert.  
2 There was a 3101(d) because he did a life care plan.

3 THE COURT: There wasn't?

4 MR. HARRIS: No, there was.

5 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

6 MR. HARRIS: Well, let me just finish, Jeff,  
7 because you keep holding up your hands, talking over me with  
8 your hands. Dr. Guy was a treating physician. He treated  
9 this patient. And he called -- he says, no, he's only  
10 exchanged as an expert. Why does he keep conflating the  
11 treating and the experts? He knows better than that.

12 Now, go ahead and respond.

13 MR. VAN ETEN: First, Your Honor, when I was  
14 talking about preclusion, I said we were being subject to  
15 preclusion, and I must not have continued. On my motions on  
16 my disclosures, I gave prompt timely disclosures, and then I  
17 got three preclusion motions, which the Court issued an  
18 order on and --

19 THE COURT: Denying all three. So what are you  
20 talking about?

21 MR. VAN ETEN: Correct. So I'm saying, why is it  
22 we disclose what the expert talks will testify to, they do  
23 not have to? Point one. Point two, yes, I got an expert  
24 disclosure as a life care plan expert, not as a treating,  
25 not as a radiologist, not as somebody who has reviewed any



1 of the films.

2 All of his records and reports says all he did was  
3 look at reports. He's never said that he looked at those  
4 films. If he's a treating, it is the same objection that we  
5 had with Dr. Macagno, that he didn't use it as part of his  
6 treating diagnosis and care.

7 THE COURT: Stop right there. Stop right there.

8 Answer that point, Mr. Harris, that Dr. Guy, in  
9 treating the plaintiff, reviewed the 2019 MRI?

10 MR. HARRIS: I don't know.

11 THE COURT: Okay. You have to ask him, and you  
12 know where this goes if he didn't. Okay?

13 MR. HARRIS: Well, here's my point, Judge. Let's  
14 assume he didn't review the 2019 MRI, which is what I  
15 believe the answer is. I will check, but I believe that's  
16 the answer. My point, and the reason why we were going to  
17 show him that film now, was in anticipation of -- again,  
18 practical. Not having to then call another witness on  
19 rebuttal, which I believe, as a matter of law, we would be  
20 entitled to do, in light of the Court's rulings last night.

21 THE COURT: You would. I'll tell you right now,  
22 you would be able to. Except, prepare for your rebuttal  
23 witness to testify in January. But you absolutely --

24 MR. HARRIS: No, because there's tomorrow  
25 afternoon, Judge.

1 THE COURT: Okay.

2 MR. HARRIS: In other words, we have their ortho  
3 tomorrow, then they're going to rest.

4 THE COURT: You can bring back Dr. Macagno, too,  
5 while you're at it.

6 MR. HARRIS: What's that?

7 THE COURT: You can bring back Dr. Macagno, too,  
8 while you're at it. I never foreclosed that line of  
9 inquiry. You can bring Macagno, too. You can rebut your  
10 case all you need to. I didn't hear from you yet.

11 If he is a treating, and he did not review the 2019  
12 MRI as the treating, I still haven't heard from you any  
13 legal authority that will allow him -- because, otherwise,  
14 it circumvents 3101(d), which I don't allow in my courtroom,  
15 which everybody knows. Okay? Because what is the purpose  
16 of the statute if you would just call a treating and not  
17 ever give a disclosure? So I don't allow treating  
18 physicians to go through all the evidence and start giving  
19 opinions. But if you did disclose under 3101(d), and the  
20 3101(d) says that his opinion will be based on, among other  
21 things, the exhibits at trial.

22 MR. HARRIS: It does say that, and we're pulling it  
23 out now for you, Judge.

24 THE COURT: Then that's it. He will be permitted  
25 to review the exhibit. And Mr. Van Etten will have his

1 exception. That's all. Okay? We have got to get this  
2 started. It is about to be 10:30.

3 (Whereupon, a discussion was held off the record.)

4 THE COURT: Bring them down.

5 COURT OFFICER: All rise. Jury entering.

6 (Whereupon, the sworn jurors enter the courtroom  
7 and take their respective seat.)

8 THE COURT: Take a seat. Go ahead. Good morning.  
9 Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Go ahead and  
10 take your seat. Good morning, everyone. Everyone take your  
11 seats. Good morning, everyone.

12 I want to apologize. This one was on me. The  
13 computer decide this morning that it just wouldn't work.  
14 The TV wouldn't plug in, I mean -- okay? So I apologize for  
15 the late start, but we're going to get right underway. I  
16 believe Mr. Harris has a witness.

17 MR. HARRIS: Yes.

18 THE COURT: Would you like to call your witness?

19 MR. HARRIS: I do.

20 THE COURT: Please, do.

21 MS. HOLLAND: Good morning, everybody. We're  
22 calling Dr. Ali Guy to the stand.

23 THE COURT: Dr. Guy, please just watch your step.  
24 Okay, sir?

25 COURT OFFICER: Just remain standing. Sir, raise

1 your right hand.

2 A L I E. G U Y, M D, a witness called by and on  
3 behalf of the Plaintiff, upon being duly sworn, took the  
4 witness stand, and testified as follows:

5 COURT OFFICER: In a loud, clear voice, please  
6 state your full name and your title for the record.

7 THE WITNESS: Yes. My name is Dr. Ali Guy, MD,  
8 office address is 7 Gramercy Park West, New York, New York  
9 10003.

10 COURT OFFICER: Thank you, Doctor.

11 THE COURT: Okay. Good morning, Doctor.

12 THE WITNESS: Good morning, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: Okay. What I need for you is to just  
14 speak right into this microphone. Okay? Get right up on  
15 that microphone. All right?

16 Mr. Harris, you may inquire when you're ready.

17 MR. HARRIS: Thank you so much.

18 DIRECT EXAMINATION

19 BY MR. HARRIS:

20 Q Good morning, Doctor.

21 A Good morning, sir.

22 Q Tell us, are you duly licensed to practice medicine in  
23 the State of New York?

24 A Yes, sir. I'm licensed to practice medicine and  
25 surgery in the State of New York.

1 Q And when did you become so licensed?

2 A 1985.

3 Q Briefly, tell us your educational background that led  
4 up to achieving that license.

5 A Yes. College, I went to Queens College, Flushing, New  
6 York, medical school. I graduated from University of North East  
7 Dominican Republic in June of 1981. Thereafter, I did three  
8 separate residencies. I did 18 months of internal medicine at  
9 Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Mount Sinai Medical Center. I  
10 did one year of general surgery at Cabrini Medical Center in  
11 Manhattan. I completed a three-year residency training program  
12 in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Mount  
13 Sinai School of Medicine, Mount Sinai Medical Center.

14 I'm board certified in the field of physical medicine  
15 and rehabilitation. I was the former director of the department  
16 of rehab medicine at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New  
17 York, from 1997 until 2002. That would be five years. My  
18 duties were to teach the orthopedic residents, the general  
19 surgical residents, the internal medicine residents, supervise  
20 the work of ten other doctors in my specialty, teach the  
21 physician assistants, the speech therapists, and do  
22 consultations for other doctors in my hospital.

23 And from 1990 until 2006, I was a clinical instructor  
24 of physical medicine and rehabilitation at NYU School of  
25 Medicine, NYU Medical Center. I was the director of the

1 neuromuscular equipment clinic at NYU's Hospital for Joint  
2 Diseases, where my duties were to teach the residents from NYU  
3 rotating through that clinic, to take care of patients with  
4 birth defects, with spinal cord injuries, with multiple  
5 traumatic injuries, take care of the patients, and teach the  
6 residents from NYU, and to prepare them for the Board Part 1 and  
7 Part 2.

8           And from 2007 until 2019, I became -- continued  
9 clinical instructor at NYU School of Medicine. And in 2019, I  
10 was promoted to assistant professor of physical medicine and  
11 rehabilitation at NYU School of Medicine, where my duties are to  
12 teach, and to do quality assurance evaluations, and help with  
13 the credentials committee to determine which candidates are  
14 eligible to apply for NYU, for residency training program.

15           And I'm also the director of the department of rehab  
16 medicine at Med-Alliance in the Bronx, which is an Article 28  
17 facility. Article 28 facility is like a small hospital. We  
18 have about 50 different doctors, four operating rooms. My  
19 duties are to teach and to take care of patients. I am also the  
20 chief of the pain center at the North Queens Surgery Center,  
21 where I supervise the work of about 50 other doctors. I  
22 supervise their work, and when indicated, I discipline and I  
23 teach.

24           And, also, I'm a member of the New York State Pain  
25 Society. I'm on the board. And I teach medical students, I

1 teach other doctors. We have medical debates, and I'm a three  
2 out of four time a winner of the medical debates.

3 And I have private practices in Manhattan, Westbury,  
4 Long Island, and in the Bronx. And I'm also a former captain  
5 with the New York State -- New York Guard, where my duties were  
6 to take care of the soldiers, do their annual examinations, make  
7 sure they're fit for duty. And if they get hurt, I help take  
8 care of them.

9 Q Thank you, Doctor. You mentioned a few times in your  
10 background there, physical medicine and rehabilitation?

11 A Yes.

12 Q That's a field of study within medicine?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q And just explain, briefly, what does that mean to the  
15 jury?

16 A Yes. This specialty was founded shortly after World  
17 War II by Dr. Howard Rusk. That's why the Rusk Institute is  
18 named after him. This field deals with traumatic injuries,  
19 covering the whole body from head to toe. In fact, in the  
20 beginning, the specialty was called orthopedic medicine and  
21 rehabilitation, but because of the all the chaos and confusion  
22 between orthopedic surgery and the specialty, the name was  
23 changed to physical medicine and rehabilitation.

24 It's probably the most comprehensive of all of the  
25 medical specialties because, before you apply to the specialty,

1 you have to have prior training in the residency, in a field  
2 other than physical medicine and rehabilitation, preferably one  
3 year of internal medicine and/or one year of general surgery.  
4 And the specialty covers neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic  
5 surgery, neurology, muscle neurophysiology, disability, and  
6 impairment evaluations, which means that we have training to  
7 evaluate a patient, to see if that patient is disabled, whether  
8 it's totally disabled or partially disabled, and what the future  
9 holds for that patient.

10 We have training in pain management, both  
11 pharmacological and interventional pain managements. I do  
12 microdiscectomies of the lumbar spine, minor surgeries. I do  
13 epidurals, nerve blocks, so and so forth. And we have training  
14 in electrodiagnostics, the study of muscle and nerves by way of  
15 a special test. We have training in interpretations of x-rays,  
16 MRIs, other radiological studies. And we work with all the  
17 other medical specialties. We refer patients, back and forth,  
18 to just about every medical specialty there is.

19 Q Thank you, Doctor.

20 A You're welcome.

21 Q Now, have you also come to court, from time to time, on  
22 behalf of a patient?

23 A Yes, many times.

24 Q How frequently, over the years, would you say you are  
25 in a courtroom like this, testifying on behalf of one of your



1 patients?

2 A Between my three office locations, on the average,  
3 eight to ten times per year. Sometimes, yes -- except during  
4 COVID, where the courts were shut down, there was no testimony.  
5 That would constitute less than one percent of all the patients  
6 I treat.

7 Q By the way, were you a treating doctor for Felicia  
8 Watson?

9 A Yes, sir.

10 Q And was that earlier this year?

11 A I started treating her January 8th of 2024.

12 Q Have you also come to court, on occasion, you say  
13 around ten times per year, for other patients where myself or my  
14 law firm was representing that patient?

15 A Yes, sir.

16 Q Okay. And how many times would you say that's occurred  
17 over the years?

18 A I can't give you an exact number, but I can take a  
19 guess. About a dozen times. It could be slightly less,  
20 slightly more, but not much more than that.

21 Q And how many years have you been in practice where,  
22 also, you will come to court, on an average, say once a month  
23 call it, or a little -- maybe once every five weeks on behalf of  
24 a patient?

25 A Since 1989.

1 Q So over the last 35 years?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Okay. And what is your fee for your time here in  
4 court?

5 A My fee is 5,000 for half a day.

6 Q Okay. And are you -- did you have to cancel patients?

7 A Yes. That's for canceling all my patients and pretrial  
8 preparation.

9 Q Okay. And, by the way, I assume that you have staff in  
10 your offices that you mentioned -- you said Med-Alliance and a  
11 Queens location?

12 A Westbury, Long Island, and Gramercy Park.

13 Q So four locations?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Okay. And who is -- are all those employees being paid  
16 while you're here in court, Doctor?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Now, did -- in addition to treating Ms. Watson, did my  
19 office ask you to prepare what's called a life care plan in  
20 connection with this case?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q Okay. We will get to that in a minute. But just so  
23 the jury knows, generally, what is a life care plan?

24 A A life care plan is usually produced by a doctor in my  
25 specialty, physical medicine and rehabilitation, called a

1   physiatrist and/or a life care planner. A life care planner is  
2   not a doctor. They have only about 120-hour training in how to  
3   prepare life care plans. They -- most of it is online, and it's  
4   mostly on a weekend or one week. And they use the reports of  
5   other doctors to form their opinions. But a physiatrist, like  
6   myself, I am an MD, and I do a lot of these procedures myself.  
7   I don't need to review any other doctor's medical reports to  
8   formulate my life care plan.

9           Life care plan is a special report prepared to indicate  
10   all of the patient's treatments, injuries, diagnoses, their  
11   future prognosis, what the future medical needs and expenses for  
12   that patient would be. And this report is used in a legal  
13   sector because jurors don't have medical knowledge. They don't  
14   really know what the future holds for the patients, so my job is  
15   to explain all of these future medical needs and expenses  
16   through a life care report.

17       Q     And, Doctor, in preparation for today, did you also  
18   review the emergency room record connected with this case of  
19   Bronx-Lebanon?

20       A     Yes, sir, I did.

21       Q     Okay. And can you just briefly summarize the patient  
22   complaints, and what they did for her in the emergency room,  
23   please.

24       A     So on 8/24/20, patient was in her apartment. The  
25   ceiling collapsed on her. Her daughter found her, woke her up,

1 took her to Bronx-Lebanon Hospital. Now, it's referred to as  
2 BronxCare Hospital. She had complaints of headaches, dizziness,  
3 neck pain, upper back pain, lower back pain.

4 At the hospital, they gave her three medications. They  
5 gave her a Ketorolac, which is a fast acting pain medication,  
6 which is very strong. It's not a narcotic. It's anti  
7 inflammatory, but it works like a narcotic. They gave her,  
8 also, medication for nausea, Zofran, because she was vomiting.  
9 She vomited twice. And they gave her methocarbamol for muscle  
10 spasm.

11 Q And, Doctor, with the vomiting, what would that be  
12 related to, medically?

13 A From the head trauma.

14 Q And you mentioned that she woke up, but was there  
15 different notes about whether or not she lost consciousness  
16 throughout the notes?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Why is that, typically?

19 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

20 THE COURT: I'm sorry, I didn't hear the question.

21 MR. HARRIS: Why is that, typically, was the  
22 question.

23 MR. VAN ETEN: Different notes, why is that  
24 difficult.

25 THE COURT: I'll allow the question.

1           A     Common sense. When a patient gets hit in the head,  
2 they're not really sure what happened. In fact, she was out of  
3 it. Her daughter woke her up, so she wasn't sure what had  
4 happened to her at first.

5           Q     Now, with regard to -- I want to move forward in her  
6 treatment.

7                     Well, first of all, did you review the physical  
8 medicine and rehab records in connection with this case?

9           A     Yes, sir, I did.

10          Q     Okay. And there was a lot of physical therapy there,  
11 yes?

12          A     Yes, sir.

13          Q     Do you know how many visits, by the way, of physical  
14 therapy?

15          A     50-plus.

16          Q     Okay. And, generally, without going in through every  
17 note, can you just generally summarize what the range of motion  
18 findings were and what your her care and treatment was there.

19          A     To the best of my recollection, the range of motion, by  
20 every physician that treated, her was abnormal. It was normal  
21 only by one physician that never treated her.

22          Q     Who was that?

23          A     Dr. Feuer.

24          Q     Oh. Dr. Feuer, who testified yesterday in this case?

25          A     Yes.

1           Q     Okay. Well, asides from Dr. Feuer, hired by the  
2 defense --

3                     MR. VAN ETTEN: Objection.

4                     MR. HARRIS: I haven't finished the question.

5           Q     As far as all the treating doctors, like yourself, can  
6 you tell us what the general disabilities were, as it relates to  
7 her neck and back.

8                     MR. VAN ETTEN: Objection.

9                     THE COURT: Overruled.

10          A     They all found her to be totally disabled, and the  
11 range of motion, by all the physicians, was abnormal.

12          Q     Thank you, Doctor. Now, if we move forward to the MRI  
13 studies, okay, I want to first turn to the 2019 study, which I  
14 know you also looked at this morning.

15                     THE COURT: Are you --

16                     MR. VAN ETTEN: Objection. Form. Also, "looked at  
17 this morning"?

18                     THE COURT: Overruled. Are we showing him the TV  
19 or are you handing him a document or what are we doing?

20                     MR. HARRIS: On the TV.

21                     THE COURT: Very good.

22                     MR. VAN ETTEN: Your Honor, just foundation first.

23                     THE COURT: He is going to ask the question.

24                     MR. VAN ETTEN: But if we are going to show it --

25                     THE COURT: Okay.

1 MR. HARRIS: Okay. So we are going to use 2020 --  
2 I'm sorry -- Plaintiff's Exhibit 20, with the 2019 film,  
3 which is in evidence.

4 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

5 THE COURT: I believe he asked the witness if he  
6 reviewed this.

7 MR. VAN ETEN: Before he turns it on, it would be  
8 -- right?

9 THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Harris, can you just elicit,  
10 again, that he saw this, that he's reviewed this before you  
11 show it to him?

12 MR. HARRIS: Of course.

13 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

14 Q And, by the way, Doctor, this 2019 film, which we're  
15 about to put up on the screen, did you have an opportunity to  
16 review this film this morning?

17 A Yes, sir.

18 Q Okay. And, by the way, Doctor, while Sheri is putting  
19 the film up, was this particular study something that you had  
20 seen before this morning, as a treating doctor, in connection  
21 with this case?

22 A The 2019, no.

23 Q Okay. And why was that not necessary, in terms of your  
24 care and treatment for this patient?

25 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection. Leading.

1 THE COURT: I'll allow it.

2 A It was not part of this 2020 accident.

3 Q Understood. Okay. So, we are going to, I believe, 6  
4 of 12 on the axial view there.

5 A Sagittal.

6 Q Sagittal. Sagittal? I may need your help, Doctor.

7 THE WITNESS: Judge, may I step down?

8 THE COURT: Just one second.

9 MR. VAN ETEN: I have no problem with the doctor  
10 coming down to help find it.

11 THE COURT: Oh, that's true, too.

12 MR. HARRIS: You are probably better at this than  
13 us.

14 THE COURT: Doctor, do you mind stepping down and  
15 seeing if you can locate the 2019 film that you are going to  
16 be asked questions about, sir.

17 MR. HARRIS: Great. So before -- just for the  
18 record, we have, actually, 7 of 12 -- plate 7 of 12 from the  
19 MRI.

20 THE COURT: One second, sir.

21 You can't see? Is it that the doctor is in the way  
22 or the court reporter?

23 JUROR: Both.

24 THE COURT: Okay. It's both. Okay. Let's see. I  
25 permit you to move around in the jury box, just for purpose



1 of seeing this. Okay. Good back there? Okay.

2 Q Additionally, Doctor, are you holding some partial  
3 models of the cervical spine that will assist you in  
4 demonstrating your forthcoming testimony to the jury with this  
5 MRI?

6 A Yes, sir.

7 Q Okay. And are they anatomically correct?

8 A Yes, sir, they are.

9 Q All right. With the Court's permission, I would ask  
10 that you proceed, and explain the 7 of 12 plate, from the 2019  
11 MRI of this patient.

12 A Okay. May I begin?

13 THE COURT: Yes, please.

14 A So, just to direct everyone, this is a model of the  
15 spine. This is the vertebra. Each vertebra is named and --  
16 according to its anatomic location. In the cervical spine,  
17 there are seven vertebrae. Each vertebra is numerated according  
18 to its anatomic location. If I say C2, it means the second  
19 cervical vertebra. If I say C3, it means the third cervical  
20 vertebra, so on and so forth, all the way up to C7.

21 Between each vertebra, we have a disc, which functions  
22 as a shock absorber. A disc has two portions. Inside, we have  
23 the nucleus pulposus, P-U-L-P-O-S-U-S. The outside, we have the  
24 annulus fibrosus. They are, approximately, 100 rings of this  
25 fibro cartilage material. And right behind the disc is the

1 nerve roots. These nerve roots innervate all the muscles in the  
2 arms. So the biceps is innervated by the C5-C6 nerve root level.  
3 And everything below the elbow is C6-C7, and the first thoracic  
4 vertebra.

5           So what we're looking at here is the side view.  
6 Sagittal means the side view. Axial view means this view. So  
7 when we look at an MRI, we look at it both axial and sagittal.  
8 For laypeople, the side view, the sagittal, is much easier to  
9 understand. And the very first vertebra that we see on an MRI  
10 is the second cervical vertebra. This is C2, C3, C4, C5, C6,  
11 C7, T1. This is the brain. This is the spinal cord.

12           The spinal cord transmits the messages from the lower  
13 portion of the body, and from the nerve roots, all the way to  
14 the brain. These are the discs. These are the discs. So, what  
15 we see is we see a small disc herniation at C2-C3, another small  
16 disc herniation at C3-C4, another herniation at C4-C5, C5-C6,  
17 and C6-C7. There's nothing at C7-T1. So these are small disc  
18 herniations.

19           In layman's terminology, the disc herniation means a  
20 complete rupture of a disc, where a disc material leaks out,  
21 like so. And what's behind the disc is the nerve root. It  
22 pinches the nerve root. And I have another diagram, which I  
23 will show later on, explaining what happens at this level, at a  
24 microscopic level. So, an extruded disc is defined where a  
25 piece of this herniation breaks off, and lands in the spinal

1 canal. There are no disc extrusions here, just mild disc  
2 herniations.

3 Q Now, Doctor, is -- in 2019, before this accident,  
4 that's from when this film was, correct?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay. Do we see any evidence of trauma or degenerative  
7 conditions or anything like that, other than the normal aging  
8 process?

9 A No, sir, we do not.

10 Q Okay. Now, I want you to assume that Dr. Sapan Cohn, a  
11 radiologist, is being called by the defense either this  
12 afternoon or tomorrow, and she will opine that there is  
13 degenerative conditions here. Meaning that there is arthritic  
14 conditions and conditions that preexisted this accident, with  
15 regard to her neck, there.

16 Do you agree or disagree with that anticipated  
17 testimony, Doctor?

18 A First of all, a picture speaks a thousand words. We do  
19 know there are small herniations before this accident. How do  
20 we know? We have the MRI of May 24th, 2019, predating this  
21 accident. Okay? There is no significant disc herniations here.  
22 There is no significant arthritic changes here, other than the  
23 normal, small, natural, aging process that occurs into the spine  
24 from age.

25 Q Okay. If we took an MRI of anyone here in this room,

1 how would you expect it to look, as compared to what we're  
2 looking rite at right now?

3 MR. VAN ETTEN: Objection.

4 THE COURT: I mean, someone of similar age or --  
5 ask it a different way.

6 MR. VAN ETTEN: Age, weight?

7 THE COURT: Yeah. Someone similarly situated? Can  
8 we ask this question more specific.

9 MR. HARRIS: Sure. Someone of similar age and  
10 weight of Mr. Van Etten.

11 THE COURT: All right. Overruled.

12 MR. VAN ETTEN: I'm not objecting. I just want to  
13 see if he guesses my weight.

14 A So, from the white hair, with no hair, I conclude you  
15 probably have some disc bulges, protrusions, and herniations,  
16 and some disc desiccation as part of the normal, natural, aging  
17 process, but you don't have to have symptoms. It could be  
18 asymptomatic in over 90 percent of the patients. Now, trauma  
19 makes a pre-existing condition more symptomatic -- and/or  
20 symptomatic, and makes it worse. So everybody here, over the  
21 age of 50, probably has some disc protrusions in their spine.

22 Q Understood. And when you say asymptomatic, can you  
23 just explain what that word means to the jury.

24 A Just because you have a disc herniation doesn't mean  
25 you have symptoms, doesn't mean you have neck pain, back pain,

1 doesn't mean you have shooting pain down your arms with numbness  
2 and tingling. That's symptomatic. Asymptomatic means you have  
3 no symptoms.

4 Q Okay. Let's jump now to Plaintiff's 21, which I think  
5 is that next cartridge there. I will just pull this out. I  
6 think it's 1 of 12 on the axial.

7 So now, we are at Plaintiff's 21 in evidence, of the  
8 September 18th, 2020, MRI that was taken three weeks,  
9 approximately, after this accident, right, Dr. Guy?

10 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

11 THE COURT: I'm sorry. Can I have the question  
12 again.

13 MR. HARRIS: Sure.

14 Q I'm referring to Plaintiff's 21 in evidence, plate 6 of  
15 12, dated September 18th, 2020, that was taken, approximately,  
16 three weeks after the accident.

17 Dr. Guy, is that what is before you on this screen?

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q Okay.

20 THE COURT: Overruled.

21 MR. VAN ETEN: I withdraw. I'm sorry. I didn't  
22 hear it either. Same thing, Judge.

23 Q All right. Now, can you now explain the comparison,  
24 Doctor, from the prior film that was just up here, using your  
25 models if necessary, to explain the difference in her cervical

1 spine -- her neck, from before to after.

2 A Right. So what we're looking at, this is the front  
3 portion of the neck, this is the back portion of the neck, this  
4 is the brain, this is the spinal cord, this is the vertebra,  
5 these are the discs. First thing we see is the C2, second  
6 cervical vertebrae. You don't see the first one because it's  
7 called the atlas, it's completely flat. C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7.

8 Between C2-C3, you see the sides of the disc herniation  
9 bigger than it was before, C3-C4, bigger than before, C4-C5,  
10 bigger than before, C5-C6, bigger than before, and C6-C7 is  
11 about the same. So the major, for us, is 2, 3, 4-5, 5 and 6.  
12 These are the two levels that has increased in size of the level  
13 of the disc protrusion or disc herniation from it's normal  
14 origin.

15 MR. VAN ETEN: Can I just have the answer read  
16 back. I'm not sure if he said decreased or increased.

17 THE WITNESS: Increased.

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Increased. Got it. Okay. Never  
19 mind. Thank you, Doctor.

20 Q Now, when you say increase, the difference in the  
21 increase of that -- those discs at those top three or four  
22 levels there, is the fluid in the discs that you pointed out,  
23 and you said it was like a jelly donut, is that the jelly that's  
24 coming out in there, Doctor?

25 A Yes, sir. That was --

1 Q Point that out for us on the film, as well.

2 A Here, here, here, here, here, and here.

3 Q Now, when that jelly leaks out towards the spinal cord  
4 -- where's the spinal cord there, Doctor?

5 A (Pointing.)

6 Q How does that affect somebody who is asymptomatic  
7 without pain in 2019, when the prior film was done, to this  
8 situation, right here, now, after this accident?

9 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection. Assumes facts not into  
10 evidence and it's contrary to the evidence that was  
11 presented yesterday.

12 THE COURT: Can you ask it a different way.

13 MR. HARRIS: I'm not sure what he means by contrary  
14 to the evidence yesterday, but regardless --

15 THE COURT: Ask it a different way, please.

16 MR. HARRIS: Sure.

17 Q Doctor, can you explain to us why what we're looking at  
18 here, would generally cause symptoms, as compared to what we had  
19 on the screen before, the 2019, where the patient said she had  
20 no symptoms?

21 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

22 THE COURT: Overruled. Overruled. Why is this  
23 different?

24 A Yes. Well, the more level of disc sticking out, out of  
25 where it's supposed to be inside, the more it pinches the nerve

1 root. The more you pinch the nerve root, the more shooting pain  
2 you get down the arms with numbness, with tingling, and  
3 sometimes even dropping objects. In the medical records, the  
4 patient was found to have been dropping objects from weakness  
5 from the herniations in the neck.

6           So the more protrusion you have, the more symptoms  
7 you're going to have at -- this level of herniation was all the  
8 way out here causing cord compression. That would be an  
9 indication for an immediate surgery, otherwise, the patient will  
10 lose immediate function of power in the arms, et cetera. So the  
11 level of herniation increased in size, the symptoms began, and  
12 they continued to worsen over time.

13           Q     By the way, how long does it take a disc to herniate  
14 like this, typically, after a trauma like Ms. Watson had?

15                     MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

16                     THE COURT: Overruled.

17           A     Some cases, it could happen right away. Some cases, it  
18 can happen slowly. In the medical field, we have what is called  
19 the incubation period. That means that every condition, every  
20 disease, from the time of exposure to time of symptoms, there is  
21 a time gap. For example -- may I give a couple examples?

22           Q     Please, yeah. Thank you.

23           A     The common cold has an incubation period of 48 to  
24 72 hours. If someone who is sick sneezes on a person's face,  
25 he's not going to have symptoms right away. His symptoms may



1 begin two to three days later, sometimes longer. Same thing  
2 with a disc herniation symptoms. The herniation may happen  
3 immediately, but the symptoms take several weeks, sometimes  
4 several months, to occur.

5 Nerve injuries take, usually, 14 to 21 days, minimum,  
6 to occur. That's a Board exam question. I give the Boards to  
7 the students and residents, and that's one of the questions. So  
8 it takes, sometimes, longer for all the symptoms to manifest.  
9 And in this case, from reviewing the records, the symptoms began  
10 slowly, and they progressively worsened over time. Failed  
11 conservative treatments necessitated surgical intervention.

12 Q Doctor, do you have an opinion, within a reasonable  
13 degree of medical certainty, as to whether the film that's now  
14 before you, Plaintiff's 21 in evidence, 6 of 12, shows any  
15 evidence of degeneration or arthritic conditions that we expect  
16 to hear from Dr. Sapan Cohn later today, from the defense, or  
17 possibly tomorrow?

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

19 THE COURT: Overruled.

20 A Nothing significant. Nothing other than a normal,  
21 natural, aging condition of the spine.

22 Q Okay. And by the way, Doctor, do you see any -- with  
23 arthritic conditions or degeneration, do you often see what's  
24 called a bone spur?

25 A Yes, sir.

1 Q What is a bone spur?

2 A This is an example of a bone spur. This is an example  
3 of -- they call a bone spur or osteophytes, and this is an  
4 example of that severe disc degeneration. Look at the disc  
5 base. It is completely gone. This is a normal disc. This is a  
6 severely desiccated or degenerative disc. I don't see them.  
7 Nobody sees them. The disc space is well maintained, with a  
8 little bit of minor disc desiccation in some other areas. But  
9 it's so minor, that it's part of a normal, natural, aging  
10 process.

11 Q Well, Doctor, assuming that Dr. Sapan Cohn comes in,  
12 who is a radiologist, and says, oh, no, no, no, there's bone  
13 spurs there, there's desiccation there on that film, and she  
14 points to certain areas, how would you respond to that?

15 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

16 THE COURT: Overruled.

17 THE WITNESS: May I?

18 THE COURT: Yes, please.

19 A Anybody can come in here and say anything. Okay? It  
20 doesn't mean it's truthful. Okay? I showed you --

21 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

22 THE COURT: Overruled. Let him finish his answer.

23 Please, continue, Doctor.

24 THE WITNESS: Yes, Your Honor.

25 A I showed you what a bone spur and osteophyte looks

1 like. Does anybody see anything here of that nature? No.  
2 Because it doesn't exist. So anybody can come and say, I see a  
3 red balloon here, nobody sees it except that person. You can  
4 say it, but there's no osteophytes here.

5 MR. HARRIS: Thank you. Lastly, while we have this  
6 up. Since it's up -- can we do the 24 -- my mistake. Okay.  
7 Talking to myself, Judge. I apologize.

8 Q I would like to now turn in this exhibit to the lumbar  
9 spine now, Doctor. Let's cover it that while we have it up here  
10 on the screen.

11 A Okay.

12 Q Okay. Now, Doctor, I'm directing your attention, on  
13 the same exhibit, to the patient's lower back, also known as the  
14 lumbar spine.

15 Can you tell us, on this 1 of 1 impression here, from  
16 September 18th, 2020, what we're seeing?

17 A Yes. The lumbar spine -- lumbar means the lower back.  
18 It has five vertebrae. It ends with the sacrum. This the  
19 sacrum, S1, L5, L4, L3, L2, L1. These are the vertebrae, these  
20 are the discs, and these are the nerve roots. The spinal cord  
21 ends between the L1-L2 level, and it continues with what is  
22 called a cauda equina, C-A-U-D-A E-Q-U-I-N-A. It resembles a  
23 horse's tail. That's why it's called the cauda equina.

24 So what you're looking at, these are the nerve roots.  
25 And at L5-S1, there's a disc herniation touching the nerve root.

1 At L4-5, there's another disc herniation touching the nerve  
2 root. This is more significant than this one. The L5-S1 is  
3 more significant than the L4-L5 level.

4 Q I appreciate that. You anticipated my question. All  
5 right. Now, Dr. Macagno has testified before this jury that a  
6 fusion is indicated for the lumbar spine.

7 Do you have an opinion, within a reasonable degree of  
8 medical certainty, as to whether you agree or disagree with that  
9 opinion?

10 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

11 THE COURT: Overruled.

12 A I do have an opinion for a variety of good reasons.

13 Q What is your opinion, Doctor, and please explain.

14 A I do surgeries of the lumbar spine, myself. I do know  
15 the medical indications. The patient has had persistent lower  
16 back pain radiating down both lower extremities. I placed three  
17 epidurals in the patient's spine myself, and I know the  
18 response, short, temporary. It has not -- I gave her an  
19 adequate relief of pain.

20 What is the next step? There's many types of  
21 surgeries. There's microsurgery you can do, but that is also  
22 temporary. You could do open surgery, where you actually  
23 replace these discs with artificial discs, that, hopefully,  
24 gives the patient longer lasting relief, but you have to fuse it  
25 from the front and the back. So the disc -- the new artificial

1 disc doesn't pop out. But then you lose -- for every level you  
2 fuse, you lose about 5 to 10 percent range of motion.

3 Q When you say lose 5 to 10 percent range of motion, can  
4 you demonstrate what you mean by that for the jury.

5 A For the lower back?

6 Q Yes.

7 A So we have lumbar flexion. Okay? My hands are  
8 touching the floor. That's lumbar flexion, it's 0 to 90  
9 degrees. Lumbar extension is 0 to 50. I'm at 0 to 20. I'm a  
10 little bit more flexible. Okay? Left lateral flexion is 0 to  
11 50 degrees. I'm a little bit more than 50. I'm at 0 to 20.  
12 Right lateral flexion and right lateral rotation, left lateral  
13 rotation, is 0 to 50 degrees. So you will lose about 5 to  
14 10 degrees of that range of motion with every one level of  
15 fusion.

16 Q Thank you, Doctor. So now, we're going to turn to the  
17 '24 MRI study, which -- I forget which number in evidence. It's  
18 the same. I'm sorry. Okay.

19 A Okay.

20 THE COURT: One second, Doctor. Ask a question,  
21 please. What are we looking at? Ask a question.

22 Q Now, I'm directing your attention, Doctor, within the  
23 same exhibit, Plaintiff's 21 in evidence, to the January 18th,  
24 2024, earlier this year of her neck, plate 7 of 12.

25 What do we see here, Doctor?

1           A     So, this is, again, the brain. This is the front of  
2 the neck. This is the back of the neck. C2, C3, C4, C5, C6,  
3 these are black objects, you see on the screen, these are the  
4 artificial disc placements.

5           Q     That Dr. Macagno did, right, that's the surgery?

6           A     Correct, correct. And there's hardware back here.  
7 Okay? So C2, C3, C4, there is still a disc herniation here with  
8 an extruded disc. Extruded disc means part of the disc  
9 herniation breaks off, and winds up in the canal. Okay? As you  
10 can see, there's a slight indentation on the spinal cord at this  
11 level.

12          Q     What level is that?

13          A     C3-C4.

14          Q     C3-C4. Okay.

15          A     Yes, sir. At C2-C3, we see a disc protrusion, still  
16 sticking out, but not as bad as before. And over here, now, we  
17 see some evidence of disc desiccation, some drying out of the  
18 disc. When the disc receives trauma, the water content leaks  
19 out. When the water content leaks out, the disc begins to  
20 shrivel up a little bit. Now, we're seeing early signs of disc  
21 desiccation and traumatic arthritis at these disc levels, C2-C3,  
22 C4-C5, C6. The other discs, there's nothing really significant  
23 to show, so that's what we see after the surgery.

24          Q     Well, Doctor, now that we're in 2024, which is two and  
25 a half years, all right -- two and a half years since the

1 accident, approximately?

2 A More or less.

3 Q Okay. You mentioned that there is now some evidence on  
4 this film, two and a half years later, of, you said, arthritis?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Do you have an opinion, within a reasonable degree of  
7 medical certainty, as to what the cause of the arthritis is that  
8 we now see in the 2024 film, at the adjacent levels of the  
9 surgery?

10 A The accident of December of 2020.

11 Q Well, how long does arthritis take to develop,  
12 typically, in the --

13 A It depends on the patient's age, their overall  
14 condition, the level of exercise, but it does not happen over  
15 night. It takes several months to several years to set in.

16 Q Thank you, Doctor. Okay. We are just -- the last  
17 thing we're going to do on this exhibit is the lumbar spine from  
18 earlier this year.

19 So, Doctor, I'm now directing your attention to, again,  
20 earlier this year, January 18th, 2024, a -- of the lower back  
21 again. Now, we're going back to the lower back.

22 A Right.

23 Q Plate 6 of 12, can you tell us what you see there?

24 A Yes. So this is the first sacral vertebra, L5, L4, L3,  
25 L2, L1. The spinal cord ends somewhere between here and here,

1 and continues with the nerves roots.

2 Q Continues with what?

3 A With the nerve roots.

4 Q Nerve roots. Okay. And, by the way, the nerve roots,  
5 at that point, start to look like spaghetti in real life at the  
6 bottom there?

7 A Horse's tail.

8 Q A horse's tail. Okay. Got it.

9 A So before, if you remember, if you were paying  
10 attention, I said L5-S1 was more pronounced. Now, it's the  
11 L4-L5 more pronounced, the herniation. So we have a herniation,  
12 gotten worse, now, and the L5-S1 is about the same. So that's  
13 what we see, herniations at these two levels.

14 Q Now that we see this in 2024, Doctor, the L4-5  
15 significant herniation that you just mentioned, what would the  
16 typical symptoms be, in terms of somebody's ability on ambulate,  
17 walk around, with that level of herniation?

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

19 THE COURT: Overruled.

20 A To answer your question, can I use this chart?

21 Q Would it help you -- is it anatomically correct?

22 A Yes.

23 MR. VAN ETEN: May I see the chart?

24 THE COURT: Yeah. I just want to know what it is.

25 Yeah. Show it to Mr. Van Etten and then let's --



1           Q     Will it assist you in explaining the lumbar spine to  
2 the jury?

3                     MR. VAN ETEN:  Objection.

4                     THE COURT:  I'm sorry.  May you approach.

5                     (Whereupon, a discussion was held off the record.)

6                     THE COURT:  Five minutes.  We will take five  
7 minutes.  Okay?  Let's use the restroom.  Take five minutes.  
8 Don't discuss the case.  Okay?

9                     COURT OFFICER:  All rise.  Jury exiting.

10                    (Whereupon, the sworn jurors exit the courtroom.)

11                    COURT OFFICER:  All rise.  Jury entering.

12                    (Whereupon, the sworn jurors enter the courtroom  
13 and take their respective seat.)

14                    THE COURT:  Take your seat.  Take your seat.  Go  
15 ahead.  All right.  Thank you for that.  All right.  We will  
16 get right back into it.

17                    Doctor, you remainder oath.

18                    THE WITNESS:  Yes, Your Honor.

19                    THE COURT:  Mr. Harris, question, please.

20            Q     I think we broke off there, Doctor, about the exhibit  
21 for demonstrative purposes that would help you explain certain  
22 aspects of the lumbar spine, in connection with the MRI film  
23 that we had up there.  Let's zip that back on.  Let me just ask  
24 you a couple of preliminary questions, Doctor.

25                    First, would -- with respect to the absence of bone

1 spurs, would the diagram help you, as it relates to the lumbar  
2 spine?

3 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection. Leading.

4 THE COURT: I'll allow it.

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay. And with respect to radiating pain down any of  
7 her extremities, would the diagram also help you explain that,  
8 Doctor?

9 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

10 THE COURT: I'll allow it.

11 A Yes, sir.

12 MR. HARRIS: So, with the Court's permission, now  
13 that we've redacted the exhibit, can the doctor use it to  
14 explain to the jury?

15 THE COURT: Yes.

16 MR. VAN ETEN: There's the easel. I just brought  
17 it over there.

18 MR. HARRIS: Thank you.

19 MR. VAN ETEN: You're welcome.

20 A May I begin?

21 Q Yes.

22 THE COURT: Ask a question, actually.

23 MR. HARRIS: Oh, sure.

24 Q Doctor, using -- with respect to the exhibit now,  
25 that's on the easel, can you use the exhibit to explain what

1 we're looking at, in terms of the MRI of the lumbar spine, from  
2 January 18th, 2024.

3 A Yes. So, once again, this is the sagittal, or the side  
4 view, of the lower spine. This is the front portion. This is  
5 the back portion. This is the first sacral bone, L5, L4, L3,  
6 L2, so on and so forth. On the screen, I showed you the L4-L5  
7 had worsened. This is L4-L5. This is what a disc herniation  
8 looks like. The disc is completely torn. The gelatinous  
9 material leaks out, pinches the nerve, which is right behind it.

10 When you pinch this nerve behind it, you get referred  
11 or shooting pain into the hip, the buttocks, down the legs. If  
12 there is pain in the leg, the problem is not in the leg. The  
13 problem is coming from the back. If there is numbness and  
14 tingling in the leg, the problem is not here. The problem is  
15 coming from the back. So L4-L5 gives you referred pain into  
16 this area. L4-L5 is mostly to the anterior portion of the leg,  
17 and on the top of the foot. L5-S1 is mostly into the buttock  
18 area, and the calf muscle. That's mostly the S1 distribution.

19 So every muscle is innervated or supplied by a specific  
20 nerve root from the lower back. If you have a problem here,  
21 you're going to have a problem in the lower back. The L5-S1 and  
22 the L4-L5 are your two major foundations. Imagine a skyscraper.  
23 If the foundation is cracked, what happens if you go higher up?  
24 You're going to have a toppling effect. So if your foundation  
25 is cracked or herniated, as you go higher and higher up, you get

1 the domino effect, the discs above will do more work, and they  
2 will you become slowly, gradually, decompensated. They begin to  
3 bulge and/or herniate.

4 And I have the other side, that shows where the bulge,  
5 herniation is.

6 Q Yes.

7 A May I?

8 Q Yes.

9 A Okay. Just to orient everyone, this is the axial view.  
10 Sagittal is the side view. This is the axial. This is the  
11 axial view. I call it the salami view. This is the spinous  
12 process, which is here. This is the transverse process, which  
13 is here, here. If you take your fingers, touch the back of your  
14 neck, you're touching your spinous process. So, this is the  
15 disc herniation. The annulus fibrosus -- you have 100 rings of  
16 a fibrocartilage material called an annulus fibrosus.

17 Inside, you have the nucleus pulposus, which is water  
18 and a gelatinous material. It is this structure that gives you  
19 your ability to have range of motion. And, also, when you jump  
20 up and down, it is this structure that prevents bone from  
21 hitting bone, and causing bone fractures. So the outer  
22 one-third of a disc has nerve fibers. We have, what is called,  
23 the nociceptors, N-O-C-I-C-E-P-T-O-R-S. Comes from the branch  
24 of the nerve root.

25 So if the outer perimeter of your disc is torn, there's

1 -- nerve fibers causes pain. It also causes the secretions of  
2 over 100 different chemicals. Some of the important chemicals  
3 are listed here. I just named a few. We have prostaglandin,  
4 P-R-O-S-T-A-G-L-A-N-D-I-N-S. You have phospholipase,  
5 P-H-O-S-P-H-O-L-I-P-A-S-E. And you have prostaglandins. You  
6 have nitric oxide, N-I-T-R-I-C O-X-I-D-E, and the list goes on.  
7 If I give you the whole list, I'll put you all to sleep. I  
8 won't do that.

9 I continue, so it causes release of these chemicals,  
10 which will continuously irritate the nerve root. That's why,  
11 even if you do surgery, at the C4-C5, C5-C6, just because you  
12 remove the disc, the nerve damage remains because of this  
13 process. Once the nerve root has been damaged, in most cases,  
14 it is permanent and irreversible. That's why you still  
15 continuously have shooting pain down the arms with numbness and  
16 tingling and dropping objects.

17 So a bulge is a partial tear. Partial tear, partial  
18 tear, partial tear. Herniation is a complete tear, when a disc  
19 material passes the disc margin. Extruded disc is when this  
20 little, tiny piece falls off, the disc herniation material winds  
21 up in the spinal canal.

22 Q Thank you, Doctor.

23 A Okay.

24 Q Thank you.

25 A Do you still need me to stand or can I sit down?

1 Q Well, while you're standing here, I just have a  
2 separate exhibit that's in evidence. I just wanted to --

3 MR. VAN ETEN: It's over here.

4 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Jeff.

5 MR. VAN ETEN: You're welcome.

6 Q All right, Doctor. I want to bring out a page that the  
7 jury saw yesterday of the op report from Dr. Macagno. And  
8 direct you to -- there's a lot of description of what he did  
9 during the fusion procedure in December of 2022.

10 But, specifically, as to what he sees, what are you  
11 pointing to here?

12 A At the C5-C6. He is talking about the C5-C6 here. And  
13 at the C5-C6, he's doing the procedure, and he sees a  
14 significant disc herniation was evident at this level, indenting  
15 the dura, that's the carving of a nerve root, and compressing  
16 the nerve roots. And it was removed completely, so --

17 Q What does that mean?

18 A There was a large disc herniation at C5-C6 compressing  
19 the nerve roots.

20 Q But now, he takes that disc out, like you just said?

21 A Right.

22 Q He puts in all that hard work, and she still is  
23 dropping objects and complaining of --

24 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

25 MR. HARRIS: I haven't finished the question yet.

1                   THE COURT: Finish the rest of the question,  
2           please.

3           Q     Do you have an opinion, within a reasonable degree of  
4     medical certainty, assuming that was the prior testimony, and  
5     assuming those are what the records support in evidence,  
6     including Dr. Macagno's record, where she continues complaining  
7     of dropping objects, postsurgery, do you have an opinion,  
8     Doctor, as to why, when you remove that disc, she still has  
9     those problems?

10                  MR. VAN ETTEN: Objection.

11                  THE COURT: Overruled.

12           A     Yes, I do have an opinion, based on a few reasons.

13           Q     Sure.

14           A     Number one, I did an EMG, a nerve test, on the patient.  
15     There is still evidence on an EMG nerve test that there is  
16     radiculopathy at C5-C6 level, although the disc was removed, but  
17     the nerve root was not removed. The nerve root has been  
18     damaged.

19           Q     What's the nerve root again on that --

20           A     This is the nerve root.

21           Q     The yellow piece of --

22           A     Yes, this is the nerve root. The nerve root has been  
23     damaged, has not been removed, it remains damaged, as confirmed  
24     by the EMG that was performed by me in 2014. So, these are the  
25     main two reasons.

1           Q     Now, I want you -- you mentioned that you did any EMG,  
2     which we're going to -- I guess we could just talk about that.

3           A     Yes.

4           Q     That was done earlier this year?

5           A     Yes, sir.

6           Q     Okay. And it found what?

7           A     It found electrical evidence of a C5-C6 cervical  
8     radiculopathy, damage to the nerve root at the C5-C6 level.

9           Q     Okay. Now, there was another EMG done a couple of  
10    years ago by a Doctor -- I want to make sure I get his name  
11    right -- Dr. Almentero, which is in evidence, and found nerve  
12    damage at C8-T1.

13                   Is that consistent with your EMG findings, and the MRI  
14    studies that you've explained to the jury?

15           A     No, sir. At the C8-T1, that radiculopathy was  
16    transient. It was temporary. It got better. As all the MRIs  
17    showed, there was no damage. There was no herniation at those  
18    levels, C8-T1. Therefore, it was a short, temporary, which got  
19    better on its own, but not the C5-C6 level.

20           Q     Thank you, Doctor. All right. Now, you can resume  
21    your spot on the witness stand there, and I will get to your own  
22    examination and findings.

23           A     Okay.

24                   THE COURT: Watch your step, Doctor.

25           Q     Doctor, I want to direct your attention to earlier this



1 year.

2 How many times did you see this patient in January?

3 A Three times.

4 Q Okay. And what were her complaints?

5 A Persisting neck pain with radiation down both upper  
6 extremities, with numbness, tingling and weakness, lower back  
7 pain radiating down both lower extremities, with numbness and  
8 tingling, headaches, trouble concentrating, trouble thinking  
9 clearly, and having difficulty sleeping.

10 Q Thank you, Doctor. And did you then perform an  
11 examination?

12 A I did.

13 Q Okay. And what did -- what do your examinations  
14 generally consist of?

15 A I check the vital signs, that's the blood pressure, the  
16 pulse, respiration. Her blood pressure was very high, 170 over  
17 110. I advised her that she has to go to the emergency room to  
18 get that treated because it can cause a heart attack. It can  
19 cause a stroke, and other complications. And then I examined  
20 the areas she complained, the neck and the back.

21 The neck, there was a six centimeter, that's about two  
22 and a half inch, surgical scar in the front with a keloid  
23 formation. A keloid formation is when the skin bubbles up.  
24 This is common in the African American race after a surgery,  
25 their skin forms keloid formations. It's an ugly scar. The

1 range of motion was diminished. Bending side to side was 30  
2 degrees out of 45. Lateral rotation, rotating from side to  
3 side, was 50 degrees out of 80. Bending forward and backwards  
4 was 40 out of 60. There was moderate amount of spasm. Spasm is  
5 defined as a prolonged, involuntary contraction of a muscle  
6 fiber, where the patient has no control over it.

7           When you touch a neuro muscle, it's soft to touch.  
8 When a muscle gets injured, it goes into protective measure. It  
9 goes into spasm. The fiber is short. And I also found evidence  
10 of trigger points. Trigger points are caused by trauma. When  
11 you touch the neck muscles, you find these palpable modules, the  
12 size of a little marble, that are caused by trauma. It's an  
13 area of muscle scarring, muscle fibrosis.

14           And I found the same thing with the lumbar spine.  
15 There was tenderness. There was spasm. There were numerous  
16 trigger points. Bending backwards was 15 degrees out of 30.  
17 Bending forwards was 60 degrees out of 90. Bilateral flexion,  
18 lateral rotation was 20 degrees out of 30. Straight leg  
19 raising, which is a test to see if there's any disc herniations  
20 or if there's any pinched nerve in the lower back, was abnormal,  
21 was 60 degrees out of 90. Normally, it's 90 out of 90 or  
22 better.

23           Muscle power testing for the left leg was 4+ out of 5.  
24 Normally, it's 5 out of 5. Next is 5- out of 5. Then comes 4+  
25 out of 5, so it was two grades weaker. Sensation was diminished

1 to pinprick and touch. Left biceps and left medial calf --  
2 biceps comes from C5-C6. Medial calf comes from S1-S2  
3 distribution from the lower back, and reflexes were normal, and  
4 gait was normal.

5 Q Okay. And did you examine her on two other occasions?

6 A I did.

7 Q Without going into such great detail, because I don't  
8 want to --

9 A Right.

10 Q Were those examinations similar, in terms of what your  
11 findings were, to the first examination?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

14 THE COURT: Overruled.

15 Q Yes. Okay. Now, can you tell us, generally, as a  
16 result of those examinations, did you formulate a treatment  
17 plan, Doctor?

18 A I did.

19 Q And what was your treatment plan?

20 A The treatment plan was to start on the course of  
21 physical therapy, and to schedule her for new MRIs of the  
22 cervical lumbar spine, new EMG, and epidural injections.

23 Q Well, we discussed the EMG and MRI, so I don't want  
24 repeat ourselves here. But with regard to the injections, you  
25 briefly mentioned epidural injection earlier in your testimony,

1 but we haven't explained what that is, and how -- what it's  
2 supposed to do. So let's do that now.

3 A An epidural injection for the lower back is an  
4 injection of lidocaine and cortisone. And when you give  
5 medication next to a nerve root, next to a spine, it works much,  
6 much better than if you take it orally. To give an example, one  
7 milligram of morphine given into the spine equals 100 milligrams  
8 of morphine by mouth. If you give a patient 100 milligrams of  
9 morphine by mouth, what do you think is going to happen to them?  
10 They're going to die.

11 One milligram into the spine does nothing. It is a  
12 tremendous pain killer. So when we give lidocaine and cortisone  
13 into the spine, the medication goes directly to where the  
14 problem is. And you can give the epidural into the spine in  
15 three places. In the middle of the spine, where the women that  
16 have a pregnancy get their epidurals, in the middle of the  
17 spine. That's dangerous because you can have leakage of the  
18 spinal fluid and have pounding headaches for life. The patient  
19 can curse you for life. I never go there. I go to either -- I  
20 do a transforaminal or I do a caudal.

21 And that diagram shows it nicely, what I do. If I can  
22 explain that through that diagram --

23 Q Do you want this back, with the Court's permission?

24 THE COURT: Which diagram? I don't know which --  
25 that's the one?

1 MR. HARRIS: Yeah.

2 I'm just handing it to the witness.

3 THE COURT: Okay.

4 A So this is an epidural needle. You can put it in the  
5 middle of the spine.

6 THE COURT: I'm sorry. One second, Doctor.

7 Doctor, can you try to turn the -- okay. Now? You  
8 can go back to your seat. Yes.

9 Q I'm sorry, Doctor. The needle you're holding, that's  
10 an epidural needle?

11 A Yes, sir.

12 Q How much of that goes into the spine when you inject  
13 this medication?

14 A It depends on the patient's size. If the patient is  
15 very, very skinny, probably a half. If the patient is not so  
16 skinny and they're muscular, maybe three quarters.

17 Q Three quarters of that needle?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. And how do you -- how do you -- just curious.

20 How do you do that procedurally to make sure you don't  
21 cause some other damage to the --

22 A Good question. So you have a thoracoscopy machine,  
23 which is like an x-ray machine, that guides you where your  
24 needle goes. Before we do anything, we have a long pointer. I  
25 point to where I'm going to go. Again, you can do the epidural

1 in three places. This is called inter -- transforaminal  
2 epidural. This is transforaminal. This is a caudal epidural.  
3 A caudal epidural injection is much for effective because with  
4 one stick, the medication goes all the way up the spine, gets  
5 rid of the redness, the swelling, the inflammation around the  
6 nerve root. And there's nothing in the caudal space to cause  
7 damage. Here there is, here there is. This caudal epidural  
8 does not.

9 So you put your needle over here. The thoracoscopy  
10 confirms where you are. And you get a little contrast, a little  
11 dye to confirm that you are in the right place. And if the  
12 contrast dye goes all the way up the spine, without any  
13 blockage, it means you are in the right place. Now, you are  
14 free to remove the stylet. You remove the stylet, and from the  
15 other end, you put the lidocaine and the cortisone in, and it  
16 goes in. And then you observe the patient because, usually,  
17 this is done under twilight sedation, the patient is sleeping.

18 When they wake up, they have immediate numbness and  
19 tingling in the legs. That means it worked. And then the  
20 response from pain and inflammation varies from patient to  
21 patient. It is temporary. It is designed to give the patient  
22 short, temporary relief so they can start to exercise and build  
23 the bottom -- the body better, and get themselves into better  
24 shape.

25 Q Well, Doctor, how many of these injections did you give

1 Ms. Watson?

2 A Three.

3 Q Why so many?

4 A Because they are -- they're for short, temporary  
5 relief. They're not designed to cure. They're not designed to  
6 give long-term relief. Short-term relief.

7 Q Ant typically, when you say short-term, how many days  
8 or weeks are we talking?

9 A It varies from patient to patient. It varies from the  
10 time of the year you give it. If you do these epidurals earlier  
11 on, within the first six months of trauma, it works better. But  
12 after two years, it still works, but not as good.

13 Q Understood. Okay. Thank you, Doctor. And --

14 MR. VAN ETEN: Can we just approach the Judge,  
15 Seth, for a second. Just real quick, Judge. It's not --

16 THE COURT: Okay.

17 (Whereupon, a discussion was held off the record.)

18 Q Okay. We were -- we finished discussing the epidurals.  
19 Did you prescribe any other treatment, besides physical  
20 therapy, Doctor?

21 A I prescribed --

22 MR. VAN ETEN: Can we know what he's looking at.  
23 What is he looking at?

24 THE COURT: Doctor, what are you looking at?

25 THE WITNESS: My progress note of 4/8/24.

1 THE COURT: Is that in evidence or is it marked?

2 MS. HOLLAND: The records are in evidence.

3 MR. VAN ETTEN: That's what I'm asking. I would  
4 like to know what he is referring to.

5 Q Okay. Doctor, we've marked your copy of your records  
6 as Plaintiff's 5 in evidence, so if you need to refresh your  
7 recollection -- well, they're in evidence, so I guess you can  
8 read them if you need to.

9 THE COURT: If you need to. We just needed to know  
10 what it was. Your next question. Go ahead.

11 Q What was the medication, Doctor?

12 A Meloxicam, M-E-L-O-X-I-C-A-M, 15 milligrams, once a  
13 day. It's a long-lasting pain medication and anti inflammatory  
14 for pain and inflammation. I also prescribe cyclobenzaprine,  
15 C-Y-C-L-O-B-E-N-Z-A-P-R-I-N-E, for muscle spasm.

16 Q Did the patient report taking those medications?

17 A Yes.

18 Q And, Doctor, I believe earlier, as part of your exam,  
19 you mentioned her gait?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Okay. And did she have a normal gait on those days?

22 MR. VAN ETTEN: I believe it's asked and answered.

23 The first response was normal on that first exam.

24 MR. HARRIS: Why is he making a speaking objection?

25 THE COURT: Stop. Was it?



1           A     On the first exam, was normal. And subsequent, it has  
2     been antalgic, she walks with a limp.

3           Q     Now, the patient -- I want you to -- I want you to  
4     assume that Ms. Watson testified for the jury that the cane that  
5     she uses is more just to secure her balance, sometimes her leg  
6     gives out, but there are times where she can walk normally --

7                     MR. VAN ETEN: Objection. It's his witness. This  
8     is insanely leading.

9                     MR. HARRIS: I haven't finished the question yet.

10                    THE COURT: Finish the question.

11           Q     -- do you have an opinion, Doctor, within a reasonable  
12     degree of medical certainty, as to whether patients can, with  
13     these sorts of injuries that you've described to the lumbar  
14     spine, on occasion, walk normally, and on occasion, walk with a  
15     limp?

16                    MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

17                    THE COURT: Overruled.

18           A     Yes. That is usually the course.

19           Q     And so how does that work? I mean, patients, sometimes  
20     they need their cane, and they have it, and they're just kind of  
21     moving it around, other times, they're actually leaning on it.

22                    Why is that?

23                    MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

24                    THE COURT: Overruled.

25           A     Laws of physics. Cold contracts, heat expands. During

1 winter months, rain, snow, humidity, there's more pressure on  
2 the nerve roots, so there's more disfunction. So her gait may  
3 be more abnormal during those times.

4 When she's had epidurals, she's had treatments, the  
5 pain and the gait will be a little bit better. When she's  
6 taking meloxicam and/or cyclobenzaprine, her pain would be  
7 level. Her gait will be better.

8 Q Are there any side effects to those medications?

9 A Yes.

10 Q What are they?

11 A Meloxicam causes upset stomach, can cause gastritis,  
12 gastric ulcer, it can affect the kidney, the liver.  
13 Cyclobenzaprine causes drowsiness and cognitive disfunction,  
14 ability to think clearly.

15 Q So, generally speaking, do you find that your patients  
16 sometimes use these medications, but sometimes stop because of  
17 the side effects?

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

19 THE COURT: Does that happen?

20 THE WITNESS: Yes. Yes, Your Honor.

21 Q And -- all right -- okay. Doctor, with regard to your  
22 impressions, can you tell us what your specific impressions  
23 were, as it relates to her head, neck, and lower back, please.

24 A Yes. Those are the diagnoses. Is that what you mean?

25 Q Yes.

1           A     Yes.  So she has multiple cervical disc herniations in  
2 her neck.  She has multiple disc herniations in her lower back.  
3 She has cervical and lumbar radiculopathy.  And she also has  
4 bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome in both her hands.  She has an  
5 exacerbation of a prior, preexisting asymptomatic spinal  
6 spondylosis.  She's -- C4 to C6 disc herniation removal with  
7 artificial discs, with an ugly, keloid scar in the front of her  
8 neck, which is about two and a half inches long.  She had a head  
9 trauma with postconcussion syndrome -- with postconcussion  
10 symptomatology, and that's essentially it, with my diagnosis.

11           Q     Thank you, Doctor.  And Doctor, do you have an opinion,  
12 within a reasonable degree of medical certainty, as to whether  
13 the accident of August of 2020 was a substantial factor in  
14 causing these injuries that you've herein described?

15                     MR. VAN ETEN:  Objection.

16                     THE COURT:  Overruled.

17           A     Yes, sir.

18           Q     What is your opinion?

19           A     It was causally related by the accident of 8/24/20.

20           Q     And, Doctor, do you further have an opinion, within a  
21 reasonable degree of medical certainty, as to whether the  
22 injuries to her neck and back, not her head, the neck and back,  
23 are permanent in nature?

24           A     They are permanent and progressive in nature, based on  
25 the diagrams I showed, and based on the explanations I gave

1 earlier. Yes. There is no cure for disc herniation. It's a  
2 permanent, progressive condition. It only has treatments.

3 Q And with regard to the radiculopathy, or as you've  
4 described as nerve damage, do nerves regenerate over time and  
5 heal on their own? Or how does that work?

6 A The nerves in the brain, the neurons, do not  
7 regenerate. Once you have a closed-head injury, a traumatic  
8 brain injury, you lose thousands, hundreds of thousands,  
9 millions of neurons. But we have a lot -- so many neurons that  
10 they can take their place. Nerve roots, once they have been  
11 permanently injured, they are not curative. It's going to be a  
12 permanent, progressive condition.

13 Q Doctor, do you have a prognosis for the patient?

14 A Yes. The prognosis is that she's left with a  
15 permanent, total disability. In fact, she had a functional  
16 capacity done in my office to see if she can do any work. She  
17 could not. That test proved she cannot do any type of work.

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection. I don't believe that's  
19 the claim right now in front of this --

20 THE COURT: Ask another question.

21 Q Do you think that she could return to work, Doctor?

22 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

23 THE COURT: Overruled.

24 A No, based on many factors.

25 Q What are the factors?

1           A     Based on the fact that the condition is permanent and  
2     progressive, as I explained earlier. Based on the fact her new  
3     MRI showed there is still pathology in the cervical spine and  
4     the lumbar spine. Based on the EMG that shows there is it still  
5     nerve root damage at the bilateral C5-C6 level. And based on a  
6     test, called a functional capacity evaluation, which is a test  
7     that is done to see if the patient can do any work. You mimic  
8     how much they can lift, how much they can pull, push, how long  
9     they can sit, how long they can stand. Based on that test, she  
10    is not able to do any type of work.

11          Q     Doctor, earlier, you defined what a life care plan is?

12          A     Yes.

13          Q     And my office asked that you create one as it relates  
14    to this case?

15          A     That's right.

16          Q     Can you now take us through your life care plan for  
17    this patient, please.

18          A     Yes so a life care plan for this patient is based on  
19    optimal level of care. It is not based on what she's had. It  
20    is based on what she will medically need. I'll give one  
21    example, if I may.

22          Q     Sure.

23          A     If a patient is a diabetic, they need 20 units of  
24    insulin in the morning, and 20 units at nighttime. If they  
25    don't take it, it doesn't mean they don't need it. If they

1 don't take it, they're going to have the ill effects to the  
2 body. Same is happening here.

3           So, based on medical indications and optimal level of  
4 care, the patient will need to see a spinal surgeon at least  
5 three to four time per year to look for evidence of beginning  
6 formation of traumatic arthritis and/or adjacent segmental  
7 pathology. That means, in the neck, the C4-C5, C5-C6 was  
8 operated. We want to see if the levels above and below showing  
9 any evidence of bulging, herniations that are getting  
10 progressively worse. If they are, you have to have early  
11 intervention. Early intervention, you'll have a good result.  
12 If you sit on it and you wait a long time, even with a proper  
13 intervention, may not get good results. So three to four time  
14 per year. And because each visit is about 300 to \$400,  
15 depending on how much time the doctor spends with the patient.

16           And the patient will need future surgery for the lower  
17 back, as opined by Dr. Macagno. And that future surgery depends  
18 on how many levels the patient will have operated on. There  
19 will be at least two-level surgery. The surgeon's fee will be  
20 about 100,000. The surgical assistant fee will be about  
21 \$10,000. A one to two-day hospital stay will be anywhere from  
22 150,000 to \$200,000. At NYU, it's 300 to 400,000. Anesthesia  
23 fee is \$4,000. Neuromonitoring fee to monitor the spine during  
24 surgery is about \$3,000. Postsurgical brace, to give the  
25 patient a brace, to not reinjure themselves, that would be

1 \$1,000.

2           Afterwards, they will need physical therapy three times  
3 a week for four to six months at a cost of \$200 for set -- for  
4 each comprehensive session of physical therapy. Next, the  
5 patient will need periodic MRIs of the cervical spine, lumbar  
6 spine every two years to make sure there is no pathology setting  
7 in. The cost for an MRI is 1,500. And the patient will need  
8 EMGs on the neck and the back every one to two years to make  
9 sure the nerve damage does not worsen over time. The cost of an  
10 EMG is 2,500.

11           The patient would need nerve conduction studies for the  
12 carpal tunnel every two to three months. That would be about  
13 \$1,000 a period. Patient will need medications for pain, spasm,  
14 and inflammation. Oral medications will cost about 3,000 to  
15 \$5,000. Topical compounding cream medications for long-term  
16 management, what has the least amount of side effects, that will  
17 cost much higher, it will be about 700 to \$900 per month  
18 additionally. And the patient will need a complete blood count,  
19 basic chemistry profile, liver function test, urinalysis every  
20 four months to monitor the patient's vital organs, make sure  
21 they're not getting any side effects from these medications.  
22 That costs is about \$400 per test.

23           The patient will need the following interventional pain  
24 management procedures for the next three to five years. The  
25 patient should have three cervical epidural injections per year,

1 three lumbar epidural injections per year. The cost for each  
2 epidural is about \$2,000, and the outpatient surgical facility,  
3 to give the patient anesthesia, monitor the patient, is an  
4 additional \$3,000 for each one. The patient would need three  
5 sets of cervical, medial branch block injections, three sets of  
6 lumbar medial branch block injections, which will cost \$3,000  
7 each. The outpatient surgical facility for each is \$3,000.

8           The patient would need two sets of cervical radial  
9 frequency ablation procedures to burn the sensory nerves in the  
10 neck, to give the patient long-term relief. That would be  
11 \$5,000 for each, and the outpatient surgical facility for each  
12 is also \$5,000. The same will be needed for the lower back, two  
13 per year, the cost, again, is \$5,000. The outpatient surgical  
14 facility fee is \$5,000. The patient needs and should have 12  
15 sets of trigger point injections per year for the muscle pain,  
16 for the trigger points, neck, upper back, and lower back, and  
17 the cost is \$400 per set.

18           And, also, as time goes on, the average longevity of a  
19 cervical surgery is about seven years, plus or minus two years.  
20 She will need another surgical -- surgery to the neck. This  
21 time, it will be three to four levels, and the cost would be --  
22 the surgeon's fee would be about \$100,000, the surgical  
23 assistant fee would be about \$10,000. A one to two-day hospital  
24 stay would be about \$200,000, anesthesia fee would be about  
25 \$4,000, a neuromonitoring fee to monitor the spine during



1 surgery would be \$3,000. And afterwards, the patient would need  
2 postsurgical bracing at \$1,000, and physical therapy three times  
3 per week, four to six months, at a cost of \$200 per session.

4 Also, the patient should also have a home health aide  
5 to assist with household chores, shopping, cooking, and  
6 cleaning, things that she should avoid, such as lifting,  
7 pulling, or pushing anything more than five pounds occasionally.  
8 She will need such home health aide at least 30 hours per week.  
9 The cost is \$35 per hour.

10 Q Thank you, Doctor. And is your life care plan, as  
11 you've enumerated it in your prior answer, all within a  
12 reasonable degree of medical certainty?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q You mentioned one thing I just want to touch upon  
15 there. The future surgery to her neck, as well as the indicated  
16 surgery for her lumbar spine by Dr. Macagno, could you explain,  
17 with regard to the neck -- future neck surgery, why you believe  
18 the adjacent levels will require -- you said something about  
19 seven to ten years.

20 Could you explain about that.

21 A Well, the average longevity of any surgery in the neck  
22 is about seven years, plus or minus two years, because traumatic  
23 arthritis sets in, adjacent segmental pathology sets in, the  
24 discs above and below get more pressure, and they become more  
25 dysfunctional, they become more herniated, and the nerves get

1 more damaged as time goes on. So, how do you relieve it?

2 Another surgical procedure.

3 Q Doctor, what is the term medical -- maximum medical  
4 improvement mean?

5 A MMI, maximum medical improvement, in the medical field,  
6 means that the patient has reached maximum improvement from the  
7 treatments given. It doesn't mean the patient cured. It  
8 doesn't mean that the patient doesn't need any future  
9 treatments. It means just, at that time, temporarily, the  
10 patient has plateaued. So you have to try something else or  
11 give the patient a little weight, a little rest period, and then  
12 reevaluate. The reevaluations must continue, and not stop.

13 Q So when a doctor -- when a surgeon, like Dr. Macagno,  
14 completes a fusion like he did in this case, at the conclusion  
15 of that fusion, from a surgical perspective, has maximum medical  
16 improvement been reached, only insofar as the surgeries are --

17 A Yes.

18 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

19 THE COURT: Overruled.

20 A Yes. Yes, for that time. Yes.

21 Q And so can you explain how that dovetails into your  
22 life care plan, and what you're recommending for this patient.

23 A Just what I said earlier. The condition is permanent.  
24 It is progressive. It is not going to be curative. The  
25 condition will worsen over time with traumatic arthritis,

1 adjacent segmental pathology. All these treatments will be  
2 indicated. Without them, the patient will not be comfortable,  
3 and will not be able to function properly.

4 Q Doctor, do you have an opinion, within a reasonable  
5 degree of medical certainty, as to giving a life care plan that  
6 you're recommending for this patient, as her treating doctor,  
7 could you explain to the jury, from your experience as a  
8 physical medicine and rehabilitation doctor, what you expect her  
9 loss of enjoyment of life to be like over the next 25 years,  
10 let's say.

11 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

12 THE COURT: Overruled.

13 A Sadly enough, this condition is progressive. It will  
14 slowly worsen. Her level of function will slowly deteriorate,  
15 and there will be more pain, there will be more spasm. And when  
16 that comes in, there will be a less happily life structure, and  
17 she will be able to do her activities of daily living less and  
18 less. That's why I said she needs a home health aide, as well.

19 Q How does that affect somebody's, you know, mental  
20 wellbeing?

21 MR. VAN ETEN: Objection.

22 THE COURT: That's too speculative. Ask another  
23 question.

24 MR. HARRIS: I have no further questions. Thank  
25 you, Doctor.

1 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

2 MR. VAN ETTEN: Do you want to see if they need a  
3 break? If not, I'm ready to go.

4 THE COURT: You good? You good? We're all good.

5 Mr. Van Etten, take it away.

6 CROSS-EXAMINATION

7 BY MR. VAN ETTEN:

8 Q All right. I will start it out this way, Doc.

9 Ms. Watson has had a neck surgery, true?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And from what you just said, the neck surgery will not  
12 get better, true?

13 A True.

14 Q And you said that the average is seven to whatever  
15 years, you have to have another neck surgery?

16 A That is correct.

17 Q Okay. So when a patient goes to a doctor for surgery,  
18 they never get better, that's your testimony?

19 A That is not what I said. I'm talking about Ms. Watson.  
20 I'm here --

21 THE COURT: The answer is no. Ask the question.

22 Q Doctor, you said, in general, it's -- the practice is,  
23 in seven years, the average, she is not the average.

24 That would've been referencing to her, correct? You  
25 said the average, fair?

1           A     I am referring to Ms. Watson.  If I wasn't clear, let  
2 me clarify.

3           Q     No.  I'm just asking, you said the word average, yes or  
4 no?

5           A     If I said it, I'm referring to Ms. Watson.

6           Q     Okay.  And then if she gets a back surgery, which you  
7 would agree hasn't happened, true?

8           A     True.

9           Q     That's not going to get better either?

10          A     I don't know.  I don't have a crystal ball.  I'm a  
11 physician, I'm not a magician.

12          Q     Then why does she need a home health aide if we don't  
13 know if she's going to get better?

14          A     As of right now, she needs a home health aide.  As a  
15 right now, because she has weakness, she has disfunction, she  
16 has intermittent bouts of antalgic gait, and the condition is  
17 going to slowly, progressively worsen over time.

18          Q     And that would -- and she's able to travel down to your  
19 office, true?

20          A     Yes.

21          Q     And needs a home health aide to escort her to do that  
22 because she is physically unable to go down to your office?

23                   MR. HARRIS:  Objection.

24                   THE COURT:  Sustained.  I don't -- I didn't hear  
25 the --

1           Q     What I'm trying to figure out, because here's an  
2 interesting thing, too Doc, you're not an orthopedic spinal  
3 surgeon, correct?

4           A     I am not.

5           Q     You're not a neurosurgeon, correct?

6           A     I am not.

7           Q     The fusion that was done by Dr. Macagno, that's an  
8 orthopedic spinal surgery?

9           A     It is.

10          Q     And neurosurgeons sometimes could do that too,  
11 depending on the complications involved?

12          A     Correct.

13          Q     Particularly, with the neck?

14          A     That is correct.

15          Q     There was no neurosurgeon that was required because of  
16 any complications of the neck, correct?

17          A     A spinal surgeon is sufficient. You don't need a  
18 neurosurgeon.

19          Q     This was elective surgery, correct?

20          A     It is -- was.

21          Q     Okay. Because you said before, the conditions can  
22 worsen with the neck, where it might be an emergency, and they  
23 have to do it, right?

24          A     That is correct.

25          Q     And in this circumstance, that wasn't the situation,

1 fair?

2 A That is correct.

3 Q Okay. And the interesting thing is, with you not being  
4 a surgeon, in all of these treatments that need to be done, as a  
5 physical medicine rehabilitation person, you are the one who is  
6 going to do them, right?

7 MR. HARRIS: Objection to --

8 THE COURT: I just didn't understand.

9 Q Well, you are now treating her, correct?

10 A Correct.

11 Q And you are making all of these projections for all of  
12 the care she needs, correct?

13 A Correct.

14 Q Other than the home health aide, heck of a lot of money  
15 there, right?

16 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

17 THE COURT: Sustained.

18 Q Well, you just gave it up. You didn't add it up.  
19 Somebody else came in and did that.

20 Would it be over \$10,000 worth of treatments you're  
21 projecting into the future?

22 A Absolutely.

23 Q Over \$100,000 that you're projecting into the future?

24 A It would be in the vicinity of 2 to 3 million.

25 Q And that's going to be paid to you treating her, right?

1           A     No, sir.

2                     MR. HARRIS:  Objection.

3                     THE COURT:  Overruled.

4                     MS. HARRIS:  I withdraw my objection.

5           A     No.

6           Q     Aren't you treating her for physical therapy now?

7           A     If she decides to treat with someone else, she can go  
8 to anybody she wants.  If she wants a three-level fusion  
9 surgery, I don't do that.  Okay?  I don't do the lumbar fusion  
10 surgery.  I don't do that.  Physical therapy, I do.  
11 Interventional pain management procedures, I do.  So some of it  
12 yes, I do.  Do I do all of it?  I do not.

13          Q     And the surgeries you do are the, like, percutaneous  
14 discectomies, where you stick a needle in and you pull out some  
15 --

16          A     No, I do more than that.  I do endoscopic lumbar  
17 microdiscectomy annuloplasty.

18          Q     Okay.  So, Doctor, let me ask you this, though, if Dr.  
19 Macagno came and told this jury about maybe needing a future  
20 revision, which he said she does not need now, and he couldn't  
21 project it, would he be the person doing the future cervical  
22 surgery?

23                     MR. HARRIS:  Objection.

24                     THE COURT:  Speculative.

25                     MR. VAN ETTEN:  Everything he's testified to is



1 speculative, Judge.

2 THE COURT: Come on.

3 MR. HARRIS: Now, we need a curative, Judge,  
4 because he shouldn't be saying --

5 MR. VAN ETTEN: This was the expert, Dr. Macagno,  
6 that came in, was asked if he thought that she needed a  
7 surgery --

8 MR. HARRIS: Speaking objection.

9 THE COURT: Stop.

10 MR. VAN ETTEN: I will do it this way then.

11 Q On December 11th, the last question asked of Dr.  
12 Macagno by Ms. Holland:

13 "QUESTION: What does maximum medical improvement  
14 mean?

15 ANSWER: Maximum medical improvement means that at  
16 this time, I will not make her better with any kind of  
17 surgery. That is maximum medical improvement, not that the  
18 patient is perfect after surgery. Happens all the time. We  
19 still have pain somehow. Well, that is maximum medical  
20 improvement. That is to say nothing to do right now. More  
21 exercise, but no surgery for you."

22 That's what he testified. There is no future  
23 surgery for her. Do you do you disagree with that  
24 testimony? That's my question, yes or no. If you can  
25 answer yes or no.

1 A That question --

2 Q Can you answer yes or no. You've done this. Yes or  
3 no.

4 A I've done this, but you've got to let me talk.

5 Q Yes or no?

6 A It cannot be answered with a yes or no.

7 Q Thank you. That's what I needed to know. Okay.

8 So would you agree with Dr. Macagno as the surgeon?

9 A This cannot be answered with a yes or no. It's a trick  
10 question.

11 Q Sure. A trick question, you said?

12 A Yes, sir. Would you like to know why?

13 Q No, Doctor. He will give you that opportunity.

14 THE COURT: Wait for the question.

15 Q So the question I have for you, Doctor, are you board  
16 certified in orthopedic surgery?

17 A I am not.

18 Q Are you board certified in neurology?

19 A I am not.

20 Q Are you board certified in radiology?

21 A I am not.

22 Q Okay. Those are experts that treat particular  
23 conditions or make various diagnoses; is that true?

24 A So do I. I make the same diagnoses, and I have -- and  
25 I note the same medical indications.

1           Q     You cannot schedule Ms. Watson to go in for a future  
2 cervical fusion surgery, that would be the operating surgeon who  
3 does that, correct?

4           A     That's correct.

5           Q     Okay. Same with the lumbar spine surgery, that would  
6 not be you, that would be the orthopedic surgeon who would make  
7 those recommendations?

8           A     I can make the same recommendations. The surgeon will  
9 perform them. I am qualified to make those medical indications.  
10 I don't have to be a radiologist to look at an x-ray to see a  
11 fracture, look at an MRI to see there's a herniation.

12          Q     But you defer to radiologists, don't you?

13          A     I send the patient to the facility, they automatically  
14 read it. Sometimes I agree with the reading, sometimes I  
15 disagree with the reading. I call them, and sometimes, they  
16 make revisions.

17          Q     But you are the one who refers them, that's what you  
18 did in 2024 in January, you sent her out to get an MRI?

19          A     Right. But also -- but I also read them myself.

20          Q     Well, Doc, in your report, right, you still have that  
21 in front of you?

22          A     I do.

23                   MR. HARRIS: Objection to the "Doc". We're not in  
24 a playground here, Judge.

25                   MR. VAN ETEN: I apologize. Dr. Guy, he's

1 correct. I was being rude to you. I apologize.

2 Q Dr. Guy, do you still have your report in front of you?

3 A I do, yes.

4 Q Okay. And when you did your initial assessment or your  
5 report -- by the way, I'm sorry. I withdraw it all.

6 Ms. Watson did not come to you to treat, correct, she  
7 was referred to you by her attorneys --

8 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

9 Q -- to do the life care plan, correct?

10 THE COURT: It's -- break up the question.

11 MR. VAN ETTEN: Sure.

12 Q When you first saw Ms. Watson, it was on the referral of  
13 her attorney to get a life care plan done, correct?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And that was for the purpose of this litigation,  
16 correct?

17 A If it went to litigation, yes.

18 Q Well, it was in litigation, you're aware of that?

19 A The answer is yes. Not every case goes into  
20 litigation.

21 Q Well, Doctor, we were on the trial calendar in January  
22 of 2024. Are you aware of that?

23 MR. HARRIS: Objection. Woah, woah, woah.

24 Objection.

25 THE COURT: Move on.

1           Q     Well, Doctor, why would Mr. Harris and his firm ask for  
2 a life care plan. He's not a consulting doctor, is he?

3                     MR. HARRIS:   Woah, woah, woah. As to why what we  
4 would do?

5                     MR. VAN ETTEN:   Ms. Holland opened on this issue.

6                     THE COURT:   Stop, stop, stop.

7                     MR. HARRIS:   Mr. Van Etten knows better than to ask  
8 what I'm thinking, Judge.

9                     THE COURT:   Okay. It was sustained. Ask another  
10 question.

11           Q     Are you aware, when you spoke with your attorneys, that  
12 Ms. Holland opened and told everybody that they had retained you  
13 to put a care plan together for their client?

14                     MR. HARRIS:   Objection, Your Honor. That's another  
15 silly question.

16                     THE COURT:   Come up here, please. Come up here.

17                     (Whereupon, a discussion was held off the record.)

18                     THE COURT:   When you're ready, Mr. Van Etten.

19                     MR. VAN ETTEN:   Thank you.

20           Q     So, what I would like to know, Dr. Guy, when did the  
21 relationship change from when you were a hired doctor for the  
22 plaintiff's attorneys, to becoming the treating doctor for Ms.  
23 Watson?

24                     MS. HOLLAND:   Objection.

25                     THE COURT:   I'll allow it.

1 A After the first visit.

2 Q Okay. And so would that have been -- when would that  
3 have been?

4 A After January 8th, '24.

5 Q And at that first visit, was that purpose to provide  
6 the life care plan?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And at that time, did you then know everything that she  
9 would need into the future?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And at that -- doesn't that present a conflict then, as  
12 we just discussed it, now you are treating her for what you were  
13 projecting she needs?

14 A Absolutely not.

15 Q So you would normally get patients by consults with  
16 other doctors, correct?

17 A That's one source, doctors, patients, NYU Medical  
18 Center. I get referrals from NYU. I get referrals from every  
19 walk of life.

20 Q Okay. So then, again, doctors, NYU, NYU Medical  
21 Center, that would be from other doctors at the medical center,  
22 correct?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And a patient -- another patient may recommend? Ms.  
25 Watson may have had a friend who says, hey, go see Dr. Guy, I

1 like him, right, that happens?

2 A Yes. Go see the good guy, yes. That would be me.

3 Q And in this case, she went to you to treat, based on  
4 the recommendation of her attorneys, true?

5 A No.

6 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

7 THE COURT: Overruled.

8 A No. The answer is no. Would you like to know why?

9 Q No, Doctor.

10 THE COURT: Doctor, wait for another question.

11 Q Do you have the Bronx -- let me get to Bronx-Lebanon  
12 Hospital records.

13 A I have them right here.

14 Q Bronx-Lebanon?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Okay. Is that the full set that's in evidence?

17 A I don't know what's in evidence, but --

18 THE COURT: Take a look.

19 THE WITNESS: Okay. The full 21 page? Oh, no. I  
20 don't have that. I have the 21 --

21 MR. HARRIS: There's other treatment he's holding  
22 up there, too.

23 MR. VAN ETTEN: I'm just showing the document in  
24 evidence.

25 MR. HARRIS: You're holding it up as if that's

1       representative -- never mind. Keep playing your games,  
2       Jeff.

3                   THE COURT: Stop. Come on.

4       Q     I will try to pull out the emergency rooms records for  
5     you, Doctor.

6       A     I have them right here. Sure. Whatever you like.

7       Q     Just check and see if those are the emergency room  
8     records.

9       A     Yes, it is. This is what I have.

10      Q     Okay. Perfect. Can you show me, in the emergency room  
11     records, where you testified on direct by Mr. Harris, where it  
12     says her daughter woke her up.

13      A     It's not in the medical records from the emergency  
14     room. It's in my history.

15      Q     Okay. Mr. Harris asked you, did you review the  
16     Bronx-Lebanon Hospital records, and what did it say in their  
17     findings. And you said that she came there after her daughter  
18     woke her up, and then he followed up and asked you questions  
19     about the, maybe, inconsistencies on loss of consciousness.

20             I'm asking you: Does it say the daughter woke her up  
21     there?

22      A     No, that's in my history.

23      Q     Okay. So when he asked you that, you were wrong?

24      A     Apparently so.

25      Q     Okay. Fair enough.



1           A     Okay.

2           Q     That would have been something in the history given to  
3 you by Ms. Watson when she first saw you the first time,  
4 correct?

5           A     That is correct.

6           Q     And at that time, that was not as a patient, that was  
7 as a client of Mr. Harris for the purpose of her lawsuit, true?

8           A     Wrong. Wrong. Would you like to know why?

9           Q     Doctor, you said wrong. I will follow up.

10          A     Okay.

11          Q     You will get your chance. So when she came to you the  
12 first time, you said that she was there for Harris Law Firm to  
13 get the consult, or sometimes you call it assessments when  
14 you've testified previously, correct?

15          A     Assessment or diagnosis, that's synonymous.

16          Q     Okay. And then and you didn't start treating her until  
17 the next visit, correct?

18          A     Yes.

19          Q     Okay. So when she gave you that first history, she was  
20 not your patient? That was my question. True?

21          A     She was because I gave her medical advice. When you  
22 give a patient medical advice, the patient becomes your patient.

23          Q     Absolutely, you did. You told her to go to the  
24 emergency room because of some type of increased blood pressure  
25 that worried you?

1           A     Correct.

2                     MR. HARRIS:  Wait.  Is that a question or a  
3     statement?

4                     THE COURT:  I understood it.  He understand the  
5     question and said yes.  Continue.

6                     MR. VAN ETTEN:  Sure.

7           Q     And can you show me in your notes any follow ups you  
8     did about her blood pressure while you treated her?

9           A     I don't treat blood pressure.  That is left for the  
10    primary physician to treat.  I don't treat blood pressure.

11          Q     Well, show us your next visit, when she came in then,  
12    did you check her blood pressure, at that point, to make sure  
13    your patient was okay and not in fear of a possible heart  
14    attack?

15          A     Okay.  Let me see my next note, so I can answer your  
16    question.  Am I done with the all the records you piled up on my  
17    chart?

18          Q     Sure, Doctor.  Absolutely.

19          A     Okay.  I did not do any follow ups with the blood  
20    pressure afterwards, as I am not the person that takes care of  
21    blood pressure problems.  I told her what to do.  I gave her  
22    clear cut, informed consent.  The rest is up to her.

23          Q     So a patient comes into your office with high blood  
24    pressure that is so concerning, you recommend that she go to an  
25    emergency room, but you do not follow up to see that she did it,

1 fair statement?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Her care is your primary concern?

4 A You can make faces, counselor. I don't -- I'm not  
5 treating --

6 Q I'm not making faces. Her care is your primary  
7 concern, was my question. That's not a face.

8 A I gave her informed consent, witnessed by my office  
9 manager. I told her exactly what to do, and I told her I am not  
10 going to be taking care of bloods pressures. If she came in  
11 with vaginal bleeding, I don't take care of vaginal bleeding.  
12 Okay? That is done by the appropriate specialist, the primary  
13 care physician.

14 Q And if she had a heart attack and fell on the ground,  
15 you wouldn't treat her, you would just say, get yourself to the  
16 emergency room?

17 A If she had a heart attack in my office, I would call  
18 911.

19 Q You wouldn't treat her?

20 A That is the treatment, 911.

21 Q So if you, as a physician, saw a patient having a heart  
22 attack in front of you, you wouldn't administer CPR?

23 MR. HARRIS: Objection. Now we're getting --

24 THE COURT: Sustained. Let's ask another question  
25 now.

1           Q     Okay. And you talked about the inconsistencies in the  
2 hospital records. That's because there were two prior notations  
3 of no loss of consciousness, correct?

4           A     I don't know how many prior notations, but it was  
5 inconsistent in the hospital records.

6           Q     And the ambulance people who came in first, also  
7 recorded no loss of consciousness?

8           A     That is correct.

9           Q     And in the hospital records, am I correct that the only  
10 positive findings by the treating physician and others were,  
11 essentially, tenderness in various areas of the body?

12          A     That is correct.

13          Q     Okay. And that was to the neck area, correct?

14          A     Yes.

15          Q     And they actually did a CAT scan of the neck?

16          A     Yes, that's correct.

17          Q     And the CAT scan was negative for any fractures,  
18 subluxations, or anything like that?

19          A     That is correct.

20          Q     And they also did a CAT scan of the shoulder -- no,  
21 sorry. The head. The head?

22          A     That is correct.

23          Q     And the head was normal?

24          A     As expected.

25          Q     As expected. And, Doctor, in those notes, did they

1 also say that they saw no evidence of trauma to the neck, to the  
2 head?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And trauma, if someone is struck by a falling object,  
5 you could expect to see a laceration, that would be a  
6 possibility, correct?

7 A Yes and no.

8 Q Okay. Could you expect to see, after somebody gets  
9 struck by something, they might have swelling in the area where  
10 they were struck? Would that be something you can expect to  
11 see?

12 A Yes and no.

13 Q Okay. Are there other types of signs that, yes and no,  
14 you might expect to see besides a laceration or swelling?

15 A I explained the incubation period. Okay? That  
16 explains it all. That's why you don't always have symptoms  
17 right away, but in case -- in this case, she did have symptoms,  
18 but no findings, except for the neck.

19 Q And what is the incubation period for a person to start  
20 bleeding after they've been struck by an object?

21 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

22 A That's not what I said.

23 MR. VAN ETTEN: That is what he just said.

24 THE COURT: Sustained. Ask another question,  
25 please.

1 Q Is there an incubation time for bleeding?

2 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

3 THE COURT: Sustained. What's the relevance? Move  
4 on.

5 Q So, the ambulance attendants, the hospital personnel,  
6 including a doctor and two nurses, saw no evidence of any trauma  
7 --

8 MR. HARRIS: Objection.

9 THE COURT: There is question coming. Finish.

10 Q -- is that true?

11 MR. HARRIS: Objection. Calls for the state of  
12 mind of people that aren't -- haven't testified.

13 THE COURT: The question is based on your review of  
14 the record. Did you understand the question?

15 THE WITNESS: I did, but that question cannot be  
16 answered with a yes or no because it requires an  
17 explanation.

18 Q Okay. You did say that one of the things you did, for  
19 your consideration of your life care plan, was review those  
20 Bronx-Lebanon Hospital records?

21 A Yes.

22 Q So you would be aware of the fact that the nurses and  
23 the doctors, as well as the EMTs, did not see any signs of  
24 injuries?

25 MR. HARRIS: Objection. Asked and answered.

1 THE COURT: I'll allow it.

2 A That is not correct.

3 Q Okay.

4 A I disagree with that for a variety of good reasons. If  
5 you'd like --

6 Q Thank you, Doctor. And you looked at other records,  
7 correct?

8 A Yes.

9 Q And what was the first set of records you saw, besides  
10 the hospital records?

11 A The records from Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

12 Q And are you aware that Ms. Watson testified that,  
13 before she went there, she retained Mr. Harris's law firm?

14 A No. How would I know that?

15 Q I just asked if you were aware.

16 A No.

17 Q Okay. Now, you said you looked at those records, and  
18 there were 50-plus physical therapy treatments?

19 A Correct.

20 Q And those 50-plus physical therapy treatments stopped  
21 in July of 2021?

22 A That's about right.

23 Q And during those treatments, she received massage and  
24 stretching, and, I think, a few times, maybe even like -- what  
25 do you call it, with the weights?

1           A     Therapeutic exercise.

2           Q     No, not -- traction. Traction, right? So it's  
3 massage, stretching, traction, right?

4           A     Heat, electrical stim.

5           Q     Okay. Those are things to -- are they called  
6 palliative?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     And palliative means you're trying to just try to take  
9 away some of the pain, this is not rehabilitation, because  
10 you're a rehabilitation --

11          A     It's part of rehabilitation.

12                   MS. HOLLAND: That was compound question.

13                   THE COURT: He answered. It's part of  
14 rehabilitation.

15          Q     Well, Doctor, when you do rehabilitation, one of the  
16 things you try to do after a surgery, for example, you want to  
17 build up strength, and do various exercises when you go to see a  
18 therapist, correct?

19          A     You do it slowly, gradually, so you don't reinjure the  
20 patient.

21          Q     Right. But there's also treatments that are done,  
22 sometimes you put hot packs and cold packs on?

23          A     Yes.

24          Q     Right. And, as I said, you give a little massage, and  
25 you help them stretch a little, that's the beginning stages of



1 therapy?

2 A After surgery or before surgery?

3 Q Before surgery.

4 A Before surgery, yes. That's part of the treatments  
5 that can be given.

6 Q And as a physical rehabilitation medical specialist,  
7 when a person comes in, possibly with a neck problem or a back  
8 problem, before you do surgery, you want to give them physical  
9 therapy to see that they can avoid surgery.

10 Would that be a fair statement?

11 A Yes.

12 Q And are there things called core exercises?

13 A Yes.

14 Q What are core exercises?

15 A Exercises to build up your abdominal -- your core  
16 muscles, which are the muscles from where I'm pointing, from  
17 here to here.

18 Q Right. And you do that for the back problems?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Because you want to strength your core, so that you can  
21 sit there and support the spine, fair?

22 A Right.

23 Q And nowhere in the records from PMR did she ever do any  
24 back exercises to strengthen her core, true?

25 A I wasn't there. I don't know what she had done. I

1 don't know what the prescription was. She just had the -- yeah,  
2 50 therapy sessions.

3 Q She just had massage, stretching, and some packs, and  
4 stuff like that, right?

5 A Let me just review the records.

6 THE COURT: Mr. Van Etten --

7 MR. VAN ETTEN: I might as well let him look at his  
8 records at lunch, and we'll come back then.

9 THE COURT: Very good.

10 MR. VAN ETTEN: Thank you:

11 THE COURT: Okay. At this time, we're going to  
12 take lunch. Okay? I'll see you guys back here at 2:00.  
13 Don't discuss the case. All right?

14 COURT OFFICER: All rise. Jury exiting.

15 (Whereupon, the sworn jurors exit the courtroom.)

16 THE COURT: Doctor, you are permitted to step down.  
17 You remain under oath, and do not discuss your testimony.  
18 Okay, sir?

19 THE WITNESS: Yes, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

21 (Whereupon, a lunch recess was taken.)

22 (Whereupon, the following was recorded and  
23 transcribed by Official Court Reporter, DANIELLE QUILES.)

24 (Continued of the next page...)

25

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