Expat Vows to Sue Luxury Moscow Clinic in Strasbourg

April 10, 2012

A woman accused an upscale Moscow clinic of accidentally leaving her blinded in the left eye during a treatment gone wrong. **Andrei Makhonin**

An Australian expat vowed on Tuesday to turn to the European Court of Human Rights after a Moscow court granted her only 350,000 rubles ($11,000) in a malpractice lawsuit against a posh private clinic.

Alyona Kojevnikov, 67, who works as a translator in the Moscow office of international law firm Baker McKenzie, had accused Guta Clinic of accidentally leaving her blinded in the left eye during a treatment gone wrong and sued for 3.5 million rubles ($112,000).

"So now we know the price of one permanently damaged eye in today's Russia," Kojevnikov told The Moscow Times. "In my opinion, the sum of 350,000 rubles is simply adding insult to injury."

The Moscow City Court made the ruling on appeal Tuesday, upholding a February decision by the Tverskoi District Court.

"I am determined to fight on," Kojevnikov said. "It's my future that worries me. I can't work without using my eyes, and now I only have one that has to bear a double burden.
... Strasbourg, here I come."

Guta, which Kojevnikov said initially offered a settlement of 200,000 rubles, has not commented publicly on the case. Earlier phone calls for comment went unanswered.

The clinic was founded in 1998 among a wave of private clinics that were opened to cater to foreign and well-heeled patients who did not trust state-run medical centers. It is part of Guta Group, which is involved in banking, insurance, hotels, construction, health and beauty and the candy business.

Medical malpractice lawsuits are a relatively new but growing area of law in Russia. In a landmark case in 2006, a mother-to-be in St. Petersburg won a $7,100 award from a maternity hospital where her infant son died.

(Related story: Luxury Clinic Sued After Expat Left Blinded in One Eye)

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/04/10/expat-vows-to-sue-luxury-moscow-clinic-in-strasbourg-a13967