

St. Petersburg Woman Wins Unparalleled Sum Over Tragically Botched Birth

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After a botched childbirth led to the death of her baby and left her with severe injuries, a St. Petersburg woman was awarded 15 million rubles (\$289,000) in damages, a sum believed to be unprecedented in medical malpractice cases in Russia, news agency RBC reported Wednesday.

Mother Irina Razina suffered serious injuries while giving birth at the First Pavlov State Medical University's hospital in September 2010. Her baby was severely brain damaged during the operation, leading to the child's death two years later.

An inspection carried out by regional and federal health agencies concluded that doctors' errors had indeed been responsible for the injuries of the patient and her child.

A lawyer quoted by RBC, Alexander Bolomatov, said it was rare for courts to award more than 400,000 rubles (\$7,700) in serious but non-fatal malpractice cases. Medical errors that lead to death can often lead to awards of about one million rubles, he said.

The plaintiffs in other recent malpractice cases have received significantly less in compensatory and punitive damages for their suffering. In February of last year, a Chelyabinsk hospital was ordered to pay 1 million rubles (\$19,000) to a woman whose thyroid gland was accidentally removed during surgery for an unrelated medical issue, the Rosbalt news site reported at the time.

A hospital in the Siberian city of Surgut was ordered to pay 3.5 million rubles (\$67,000) in compensation after a misdiagnosis led to the death of a 2-year-old girl, local news site In-news.ru reported at the time.

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