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St. Michael's hospital settles lawsuit over alleged security guard violence

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A settlement has been reached between St. Michael's hospital and an aboriginal couple allegedly beaten and psychologically traumatized by the hospital's security guards two years ago.

"It's been resolved," said the couple's lawyer Barry Swadron.

The amount cannot be disclosed due to a confidentiality clause, however Cliff Hussin and Donna Oakes were suing for \$2.1 million against the guards and hospital.

St Michael's hospital was unable to comment.

The statement of claim describes how Hussin, then 36, was kicked and dragged down a flight of stairs by his ponytail, then dumped outside into sub-zero weather. Hussin suffered three broken ribs and a punctured lung.

The two security guards were fired, though never charged.

"It's not right that they haven't been charged with nothing," Hussin told *the Star* after filing the lawsuit a year after the Feb. 4, 2009 altercation. "I'm still suffering."

His clients were treated like animals, said Swadron last year.

"It's blatant racial discrimination and there's a lot that has to be accounted for. How does the hospital hire people who do that type of thing?"

The couple admitted they were drunk, but said they did not provoke the attack. They had been in the hospital to visit Hussin's cousin, and were asked to leave for being rowdy. The attack came as they were on their way out.

In a 2010 statement, St. Michael's hospital said it retrained security and reviewed its use-of-force policy, as well as improving relations with the aboriginal community, and educating staff about native culture.

With files from Jesse McLean



Cliff Hussin, along with Donna Oakes, have settled their suit with St. Michael's Hospital after an encounter with security guards that left Hussin with three broken ribs and a punctured lung, as well as lasting emotional trauma.

JESSE MCLEAN/TORONTO STAR FILE PHOTO