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Suit: Woman says doctor gave pills in exchange for sex

Nicquel Terry, [The Detroit News](#)



A former Metro Detroit doctor imprisoned on [fraud and sex charges](#) is facing a lawsuit that claims he prescribed highly addictive painkillers to a patient and then demanded sexual acts from her in exchange for the drugs.

The civil lawsuit seeking damages, filed in Macomb Circuit Court by a county resident, alleges John Verbovsky introduced her to narcotics such as morphine and OxyContin after she complained of back and knee pain.

The lawsuit states the former Southfield doctor coerced the woman to perform “degrading sexual acts” between January 2014 and April 2014.

The suit says Verbovsky prescribed the medication knowing his female patient was vulnerable due to her history of sexual abuse and mental illness.

Brian McKeen, the woman's attorney, said Verbovsky, who was a doctor of osteopathic medicine, had been her physician for about 14 years when the incidents happened.

McKeen said Verbovsky "violated the trust" a patient should be able to have with their doctor. The suit seeks at least \$25,000 as well as other costs.

"There was a prolonged period where the doctor was manipulating her and prescribing amounts of dangerous medication," McKeen said. "He created an addiction, he fed her addiction and then he exploited her addiction for his own perverse sexual interests."

It is The Detroit News' policy not to name victims of sexual assault.

The lawsuit also names Verbovsky's former clinics, Stout Family Medicine in Detroit and Progressive Family Medicine in Sterling Heights as defendants.

The woman was a patient at the Sterling Heights office. The complaint accused the offices of being negligent saying they have a duty to monitor employees and ensure policies for patient safety are followed.

A woman who answered the phone at Stout Family Medicine said the office was unaware of the lawsuit. A message left with Progressive Family Medicine was not returned.

There was no attorney of record listed for Verbovsky on the Macomb Circuit Court website.

Verbovsky is serving a prison sentence after being convicted in October 2015 of one count of running a criminal enterprise, two counts of medical fraud and two counts of third-degree criminal sexual conduct.

According to the Department of Corrections website, the earliest he can be released from prison is in 2020.

State authorities said Verbovsky was prescribing controlled

substances not based on medical need, but instead using his prescriptive authority as a physician to coerce sexual favors and money from patients.

His medical license has been revoked.

“Sex for drugs is one of the most egregious and despicable aspects of medical malpractice,” McKeen said. “It has no place in our society.”