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## **THE REGISTER CITIZEN**

# Judge orders VA to pay CT man \$9.47 million for medical malpractice

[Daniel Tepfer](#)

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The U.S. Veterans Administration hospital in West Haven; Liz Teitz /

BRIDGEPORT — A federal judge has ordered the U.S. Veterans Administration to pay more than \$9 million to a Manchester man after finding he was the victim of medical malpractice at the Veterans Affairs medical center where he had gone for hernia surgery.

Following a four-day civil trial, U.S. District Court Judge Victor Bolden ruled Monday that doctors at the West Haven VA violated their standard of care in their treatment of Eric March. He awarded the Navy veteran and his wife, Dina March, a total of \$9.47 million in economic and compensatory damages.

“This is a veteran who had entrusted his care to the doctors at the VA and it is clear to me something went terribly wrong during the surgery,” said March’s lawyer, Kathleen Nastri of the Bridgeport law firm Koskoff, Koskoff and Bieder.

Thomas Carson, spokesman for the U.S. Attorney’s Office which defended the VA in the case, said they are reviewing the judge’s decision but had no other comment.

March, who has two children and previously worked at a solar panel company, sued the veteran's administration in federal court in 2017. The trial took place in October and final arguments were in January.

According to the lawsuit, in June 2015, March was admitted to the West Haven VA hospital for a laparoscopic hernia repair procedure. In the days following his discharge from the hospital March complained of pain and a fever.

He went to another hospital where a CT scan determined he had a perforated abdomen, the suit states. On further investigation, doctor discovered that March's bowels had leaked out of the perforation in his abdomen and he had a severe infection, the suit states.

During testimony at trial, March's VA doctors disagreed on which one of them had inspected March's abdomen following the procedure.

Nastri said as a result of the damage done to March, he has no muscles in his core and his condition is worsening.

The Manchester community rallied around the March family, raising nearly \$1,500 for them through a GoFundMe site.