

THE  
NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

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## First Lawsuit Filed in Adenovirus Outbreak at Wanaque Facility, New Outbreak Announced at Maryland University

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Thursday, November 29, 2018

[At least 35 people have been infected with the adenovirus](#), the majority of them children, at the [Wanaque Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation](#). The outbreak first began in late September, according to the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH), and since then 11 children have died.

On November 20, it was announced that a student at the [University of Maryland died](#) after contracting the adenovirus. The university learned of the first case on November 1, and since then have confirmed five more cases of the virus.

[The Wanaque facility is facing its first lawsuit](#), filed by a parent of one of the ill children, and is alleging that unsanitary practices at the facility allowed the virus to spread. The lawsuit also alleges that the facility neglected to provide the patient with the care he needed when it came to preventing such an infection from spreading.

The lawsuit specifically references the facility's health inspections going back several years, including a recent unannounced inspection on October 21 in the midst of the outbreak which found deficient hand hygiene practices among staff. The facility had received and corrected other deficiencies in the past, including improperly stored syringes and not properly cleaning over-bed tables and medication trays.

In a review by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Wanaque Center was awarded an above-average ranking for overall quality but a below-average health inspection rating. This rating is based on two years of inspections before November 2017.

According to the lawsuit, the 15-year-old patient contracted the adenovirus at the Wanaque Center on October 11 and was transferred to the intensive care unit at Hackensack University Medical Center on October 18 with "serious respiratory complications."

The ongoing adenovirus outbreak first began on September 26, but the facility did not notify local state health department officials until October 9 of a cluster of respiratory illnesses. By this time, two children had already died as a result of the outbreak.

"At the time of the initial case of adenovirus," the lawsuit alleges, Wanaque Center "did not have proper infection prevention and control programs, protocols, or procedures in place to remedy the infection and prevent it from spreading throughout its pediatric residents."

The lawsuit further alleges that the facility didn't send patients to acute care hospitals in a timely manner or notify parents earlier when the illness was first identified, until around the time when it first contacted the state health department.

Since this outbreak, questions have arisen as to the standards of health facilities for pediatric patients. The Wanaque Center is one of only four long-term care facilities in New Jersey that cater to children, according to the state health department database.

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