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Putnam County News

Tuesday July 31, 2007

Jury says Putnam hospital negligent in hiring doctor

by [The Associated Press](#)

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WINFIELD - A jury says Putnam General Hospital was negligent when it hired an osteopathic physician who later was accused of more than 100 acts of medical malpractice.

The Putnam County Circuit Court jury deliberated about an hour Tuesday afternoon before holding the hospital responsible for allowing Dr. John King to practice there. The verdict means Putnam General will be a co-defendant in 122 medical malpractice lawsuits filed against King.

The lawsuits allege that King performed unnecessary surgeries, botched operations and committed other malpractice during his six months at the Hurricane hospital.

Jurors found that Putnam General, which was sold and renamed last year, failed to meet the standard of care in considering King's applications for credentials in 2002. The jury also said the plaintiffs can seek punitive damages against the hospital.

The hospital suspended King's privileges in May 2003. He later surrendered his West Virginia license and left the state. He changed his name last year to Christopher Wallace Martin in his native Alabama, where he now reportedly lives.

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