

A Wave of Gun Violence Sweeping Through U.S. Hospitals

Family of Security Guard Killed at Hospital Sues Facility for \$35M

(AP) — The family of a security guard who was shot and killed at a hospital in Portland, Oregon, sued the facility for \$35 million on Tuesday, accusing it of negligence and failing to respond to the dangers that the gunman posed to hospital staff over multiple days.

In a wrongful death complaint filed Tuesday, the estate of Bobby Smallwood argued that Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center failed to enforce its policies against violence and weapons in the workplace by not barring the shooter from the facility, despite staff reporting threats and aggression toward them in the days before the shooting.

“The repeated failures of Legacy Good Samaritan to follow their own safety protocols directly led to the tragically preventable death of Bobby Smallwood,” Tom D’Amore, the attorney representing the family, said in a statement. “Despite documented threats and abusive behavior that required immediate removal under hospital policy, Legacy allowed a dangerous individual to remain on the premises for three days until those threats escalated to violence.”

In an email, Legacy Health said it was unable to comment on pending litigation.



Portland Police respond to a shooting at the Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center in Portland, Ore., July 22, 2023. (Maxine Bernstein/The Oregonian via AP, File)

The shooting at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center in Portland was part of a wave of gun violence sweeping through U.S. hospitals and medical centers, which have struggled to adapt to the growing threats. Such attacks have helped make health care one of the nation’s most violent fields. Health care workers racked up 73% of all nonfatal workplace violence injuries in 2018, the most recent year for which figures are available, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The gunman at the Portland hospital, PoniaX Calles, first visited the facility on July 19, 2023, as his partner was about to

give birth. On July 20 and July 21, nursing staff and security guards filed multiple incident reports describing outbursts, violent behavior and threats, but they weren’t accessible or provided to workers who were interacting with him, according to the complaint.

On July 22, nurse supervisors decided to remove Calles from his partner’s room, and Smallwood accompanied him to the waiting room area outside the maternity ward. Other security guards searching the room found two loaded firearms in a duffel bag, and his partner told them he likely had a third gun on his person, the complaint said.

According to the complaint, over 40 minutes passed between the discovery of the duffel bag and Smallwood’s death. Two minutes before he was shot, a security guard used hand gestures through glass doors to notify him that Calles was armed. Smallwood then told Calles he would pat him down, but Calles said he would leave instead. Smallwood began escorting him out of the hospital, and as other staff members approached them, Calles shot Smallwood in the neck.

The hospital did not call a “code silver,” the emergency code for an active shooter, until after Smallwood had been shot, the complaint said. Smallwood’s family said his death has profoundly impacted them.

“Every day we grieve the loss of our son and all the years ahead that should have been his to live,” his parents, Walter “Bob” and Tammy Smallwood, said in the statement released by their attorney. “Nothing can bring Bobby back, but we will not stop fighting until Legacy is held fully responsible for what they took from our family.”

After the shooting, Legacy said it planned to install additional metal detectors; require bag searches at every hospital; equip more security officers with stun guns; and apply bullet-slowing film to some interior glass and at main entrances.

Around 40 states have passed laws creating or increasing penalties for violence against health care workers, according to the American Nurses Association. Hospitals have armed security officers with batons, stun guns or handguns, while some states allow hospitals to create their own police forces.

Economy and Jobs Made Men Under Age 45 More Open to Trump

Trump Gained a Larger Share of Black and Latino Voters Than He Did in 2020

(AP) — Brian Leija, a 31-year-old small-business owner from Belton, Texas, was not surprised that a growing number of Latino men of his generation voted for Donald Trump for president this year. Leija had voted for the Republican in 2016 and 2020.

Leija’s rationale was simple: He said he has benefited from Trump’s economic policies, especially tax cuts. “I am a blue-collar worker,” Leija said. “So, tax breaks for small businesses are ideal for what I do.” For DaSean Gallishaw, a consultant in Fairfax, Virginia, a vote for Trump was rooted in what he saw as Democrats’ rhetoric not matching their actions. “It’s been a very long time since the Dem-



Supporters of for President Donald Trump with signs and t-shirts. (AP Photo/Mariam Zuhaib, File)

ocrats ever really kept their promises to what they’re going to do for the minority communities,” he said.

Gallishaw, 25, who is Black, also voted for Trump twice before. This year, he said, he thought the former president’s “minority community outreach really showed up.”

Trump gained a larger share of Black and Latino voters than he did in 2020, when he lost to Democrat Joe Biden, and most notably among men under age 45, according to AP VoteCast, a nationwide survey of more than 120,000 voters. Even as Democrat Kamala Harris won majorities of

Black and Latino voters, it wasn’t enough to give the vice president the White House, because of the gains Trump made.

Voters overall cited the economy and jobs as the most important issue the country faced. That was true for Black and Hispanic voters as well. About 3 in 10 Black men under age 45 went for Trump, roughly double the share he got in 2020. Young Latinos, particularly young Latino men, also were more open to Trump than in 2020. Roughly half of young Latino men voted for Harris, compared with about 6 in 10 who went for Biden.

Juan Proaño, CEO of LULAC, the nation’s largest and oldest civil rights organization for Hispanic Americans, said the election results make it clear that Trump’s messaging on the economy resonated with Latinos. “I think it’s important to say that Latinos have a significant impact in deciding who the next president was going to be and reelected Donald Trump,” Proaño said. “(Latino) men certainly responded to the populist message of the president and focused primarily on economic is-