

Jury recommends \$1.5 million in malpractice case

The plaintiff said Radiology Associates of Roanoke misread a CT scan.

By Neil Harvey
neil.harvey@roanoke.com
981-3376

A jury has recommended that a \$1.5 million award be paid to a Roanoke patient whose illness was misinterpreted during an initial phase of his exami-

nation, and who later suffered extreme complications.

The patient, Alexander Nelson, who's now 79, filed a medical malpractice suit early last year against Radiology Associates of Roanoke, seeking \$2.25 million in damages.

Nelson's complaint said he was examined in August 2016 after he went to LewisGale Medical Center's emergency room with abdominal pain. He underwent a CT scan, supervised by a representative of Radiology Associates, and the subsequent

report made no reference to appendicitis or possible appendicitis.

According to Nelson's suit, that report ultimately prompted a misdiagnosis of mesenteritis, or inflammation near the small intestine, after which Nelson was sent home. Two days later, he returned to the hospital

with a worsening condition, and a subsequent exam showed his appendix had ruptured. During surgery to treat the health issues that resulted, he suffered a stroke, his suit maintains.

According to the complaint, the CT scan during Nelson's first visit showed "an unruptured appendi-

citis," and his attorneys argued that the condition of his appendix was misinterpreted and misreported.

"Our experts explained that it likely ruptured 24 hours after the first scan, given what was shown," Nelson's lawyer, Anthony Russell, said Tuesday.

See **VERDICT, 6**

VERDICT: 'It was a horrible ordeal for him and his family'

FROM 1

adding that his client also suffered sepsis, respiratory failure and clotting as a result.

A four-page financial state-

ment, submitted as evidence, showed that between Aug. 18, 2016, and Sept. 27, 2017, Nelson incurred about \$365,600 in medical expenses, largely stemming from three separate, extended

hospital stays, the first of which spanned 13 days, as well as follow-up therapy.

"It was a horrible ordeal for him and his family," Russell said. The civil trial began Feb. 12

and jurors received the case on Friday.

They deliberated for about three hours before returning a verdict for the plaintiff and their award recommendation.

John Jesse, an attorney representing Radiology Associates, said Tuesday he was not yet able to comment on the case. The defense has 30 days in which to file post-trial motions.