

## VERDICTS & SETTLEMENTS

### ■ DEFENSE VERDICT

# Jury sides with doctor who waited to remove tumor

BY DAVID BAUGHER



David Perron

A ST. LOUIS COUNTY JURY determined that a doctor wasn't negligent in his decision to leave an adrenal mass in place during an unrelated surgery in a patient

who would later die from cancer.

"More likely than not, she would still have had the same outcome," said defense attorney David Perron of Brown & James.

Perron represented Dr. Christopher Cronin in a case brought by the family of Ann Schroeder, who died in late 2019 from stage 4 cancer at 54 years of age.

Schroeder had been diagnosed with a ventral hernia in the spring of 2017 and was given an abdominal CT scan and MRI showing both the diagnosed condition as well as an adrenal mass. The defendant performed surgery the same month to resolve the hernia.

However, a procedure to remove the tumor was not undertaken un-

til October, by which point it had grown in size. The plaintiff's petition alleged a failure to properly diagnose the condition. Perron said the main argument at trial was whether the doctor should have addressed the adrenal issue during the hernia surgery.

"The proper thing to do was to repair the hernia and then watch the tumor," he said. "Based on how quickly it grew, it almost certainly had metastasized by the time they found it initially."

He also said trying to deal with both in the same procedure could have resulted in complications and that, given the type of cancer at issue, a partial removal would not have been enough.

Josh Tolin of Connon & Tolin, an attorney for the plaintiff, did not return a request for comment. According to Perron, during closing arguments the plaintiff introduced past medical records of about \$935,000 and suggested a verdict of more than \$1 million. **MO**

### **MEDICAL MALPRACTICE**

**VENUE:** St. Louis County Circuit Court  
**CASE NUMBER/DATE:** 18SL-CC03805/  
Nov.5,2021

**JUDGE:** Joseph Walsh III

**PLAINTIFFS' EXPERTS:** Garry Ruben, Silver Spring, Maryland (general surgery); Carl Freter, Kansas City, (oncology)

**DEFENDANT'S EXPERTS:** John Phay, Columbus, Ohio (surgical oncology); Steven Kurzweil, St. Louis (surgery)

**LAST PRETRIAL DEMAND:** \$675,000

**LAST PRETRIAL OFFER:** \$0

**CAPTION:** Michael Schroederv. Dr. Christopher Cronin and St. Louis Surgical Consultants

**PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY:** Josh Tolin, Connon & Tolin, Eureka

**DEFENDANTS' ATTORNEYS:** Philip Willman and David Perron, Brown & James, St. Louis