

Developmental Disability: Hospital Liable For Fall From Window.

A thirty-seven year-old developmentally disabled hospital patient pulled out his urinary catheter with the bulb still inflated, causing severe bleeding, then got out of his bed and began pounding on the window in his room.

Soon he managed to open the window, climbed out, fell six stories and was badly injured. The jury in the Superior Court, San Diego County, California awarded him \$1,074,102 from the hospital.

The evidence at trial was that the nursing staff ignored his pounding on the window, assuming he would not or could not open the window, having earlier ignored his treating physician's suggestions for a sitter and/or a bed alarm.

The hospital's facilities management was faulted for the fact that patient windows could easily be opened from the inside, with no safeguards in place to keep patients from going out. [Sanchez v. Scripps Health, 2007 WL 2197686 \(Sup. Ct. San Diego Co., California, June 20, 2007\).](#)