

National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program⁴ (the Act or the Program), 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10, et seq. Petitioners filed an amended petition on June 13, 2007, alleging that “[t]he MMR [(measles, mumps, rubella)]⁵ vaccination that Yates Hazlehurst received o[n] February 8, 2001, or a combination of the MMR vaccination and the Thimerosal containing vaccinations that he received during the first 12 months [of life], caused Yates Hazlehurst to develop [regressive] autism.” Amended Petition (Am. Pet.) ¶ 5 (footnote added); see also id. at ¶ 8 (specifically alleging that “[b]y Summer 2001, his speech skills had begun to regress”). Petitioners also consented to the public disclosure of their claim as the second test case on the first theory of causation addressed in the Omnibus Autism Proceeding.⁶ See Petitioners’ Status Report dated July 26, 2007.

A four-day hearing was held in Charlotte, North Carolina, in October of 2007. The undersigned heard testimony from four fact witnesses and four expert witnesses. On February 12, 2009, a decision denying entitlement was issued.

On March 3, 2009, petitioners filed an Interim Petition for Attorney Fees and Costs (Fee Pet.). In the petition, petitioners represent that respondent has reviewed the draft interim petition and “does not object to an interim award of attorney fees and costs in the amount requested.” Fee Pet. at 2 (emphasis removed). Petitioners’ counsel seeks an award of \$221,977.57 in interim attorneys’ fees and costs of which \$168,082.00 are attorneys’ fees, \$30,800.00 are expert witness costs, \$17,282.09 are other costs incurred by petitioners’ counsel, and \$5,813.48 are costs incurred by petitioners.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs. 42 U.S.C. § 300 aa-15(e). Based on the reasonableness of petitioners’ request and on respondent’s counsel’s agreement not to object to petitioners’ counsel’s fee request, the undersigned **GRANTS** the attorneys’ fees and costs as outlined in the Interim Petition for Attorney Fees and Costs.

The undersigned awards petitioners \$221,977.57 in fees and costs.

and an election to opt into the OAP proceeding. Id. at 1. The petition “would not contain a detailed account of the relevant vaccinations and the history of [the] vaccinee’s disorder.” Id. In addition, the vaccinee’s medical records would not be required to accompany the petition. Id.

⁴ Hereafter, for ease of reference, all “section” references to the Vaccine Injury Compensation Act will be to the pertinent subsection of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2000).

⁵ The MMR vaccine is “a combination of live attenuated measles, mumps, and rubella viruses, administered subcutaneously for simultaneous immunization against measles, mumps, and rubella.” Dorland’s at 1999.

⁶ The Hazlehursts’ willingness to present their case as a test case in the OAP litigation is very much appreciated.

Petitioners are entitled to an award of interim attorneys' fees and attorneys' costs. The undersigned determines that there is no just reason to delay the entry of judgment on interim attorneys' fees and attorneys' costs. Therefore, in the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court **SHALL ENTER JUDGMENT** in petitioner's favor in the amount of \$221,977.57 in interim attorneys' fees and attorneys' costs.⁷ The judgment shall reflect that the Webb, Webb & Guerry law firm may collect \$216,164.09 from petitioners and petitioners may retain \$5,813.48.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Patricia E. Campbell-Smith
Patricia E. Campbell-Smith
Special Master

⁷ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment is expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.