

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS

Adonis R. Mickles v. Wexford Health Source Inc., Chad Jennins, Phil
Martin, Dr. Thomas, RN Murray, and RN Brayfield

Case No. 25-cv-00957-SPM · No. 25-cv-00957-SPM · Decided December 1, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois conducted preliminary review under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A of Adonis R. Mickles's § 1983 complaint concerning alleged inadequate diabetes treatment in prison. The court dismissed without prejudice the claim based on allegedly administering the wrong insulin and dismissed claims against Wexford Health Source, Inc., Jennins, Martin, and Dr. Thomas, while allowing an Eighth Amendment medical-care claim against Nurses Murray and Brayfield to proceed provisionally. The court ordered Mickles to show cause why the case should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust administrative remedies and denied his motion for recruitment of counsel.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stephen P. McGlynn
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
DECIDED	December 1, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-00957-SPM
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 subjected to preliminary review under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The court dismissed some claims without prejudice, allowed one deliberate-indifference claim to proceed provisionally against two nurses, denied recruitment of counsel, and ordered the plaintiff to show cause why the action should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court dismisses any portion of a prisoner complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks damages from an immune defendant. At the pleading stage, allegations must satisfy the plausibility standard of Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly. For deliberate-indifference claims, the plaintiff must

allege that the defendant knew of a serious risk of harm and consciously disregarded it.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE

unpublished district-court memorandum and order; nonprecedential

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

cruel and unusual punishment

civil procedure

affirmative defenses

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner medical care

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim based on Nurse Brayfield's alleged administration of the wrong insulin on one occasion.
2. Whether the complaint stated an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Dr. Thomas, Warden Jennins, and Medical Director Martin for allegedly inadequate diabetes care.
3. Whether the complaint stated a deliberate-indifference claim against Nurses Murray and Brayfield based on their alleged knowledge of and failure to respond to problems with Mickles's insulin schedule.
4. Whether the apparent failure to exhaust administrative remedies warranted dismissal before defendants answered or instead warranted an order to show cause.
5. Whether Mickles demonstrated sufficient efforts and need to justify recruitment of counsel at the preliminary stage.

HOLDINGS

1. A general allegation that Nurse Brayfield administered the wrong type of insulin on a single occasion did not plausibly allege that she consciously disregarded a serious risk of harm; Count 1 was dismissed without prejudice.
2. The complaint failed to state an Eighth Amendment claim against Dr. Thomas because it did not allege that Thomas was later informed that the prescribed diabetes treatment was inadequate or causing Mickles's condition to deteriorate; Count 2 was dismissed without prejudice as to Thomas.
3. The complaint failed to state a claim against Warden Jennins and Medical Director Martin because it did not allege their personal involvement or actual knowledge of the allegedly inadequate diabetes care, and supervisory status alone was insufficient; Count 2 was dismissed without prejudice as to them.
4. The allegations that Murray and Brayfield were told that Mickles's insulin schedule was causing health complications and nevertheless failed to provide or ensure necessary care were sufficient at screening to state an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim; Count 2 proceeded against them.
5. The court did not finally decide exhaustion but ordered Mickles to show cause why Count 2 and the entire action should not be dismissed because the complaint indicated that he filed his grievance on May 12, 2025, and filed suit on May 16, 2025, before completing the prison grievance process.

6. The motion for recruitment of counsel was denied because Mickles did not demonstrate sufficient efforts to obtain counsel independently and appeared capable of representing himself at the preliminary stage.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Eighth Amendment prohibits the deliberate indifference to a prisoner’s “serious medical needs,” as deliberate indifference “constitutes the unnecessary and wanton infliction of pain forbidden by the Constitution.”” (Discussion)

“For a prisoner to properly exhaust his administrative remedies, the prisoner must “file complaints and appeals in the place, and at the time, the prison’s administrative rules require.”” (Show Cause)

“Before the Court will order service on Defendants Murray and Brayfield, Plaintiff is ORDERED to show cause in writing as to why this case should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust his administrative remedies prior to initiating this lawsuit.” (Disposition)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Mickles, an IDOC inmate at Robinson Correctional Center, alleged that he was diabetic and had previously monitored his blood sugar three times daily and received insulin at those intervals. He alleged that Dr. Thomas told him the facility did not perform Accu-Cheks or administer insulin at lunchtime, resulting in insulin being administered only twice daily and causing repeated blood-sugar drops, including near-diabetic-coma episodes from May 8 through May 10, 2025. Mickles further alleged that Nurses Murray and Brayfield were told about the problems but failed to correct them, and that Brayfield once administered the wrong insulin.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Adonis Mickles filed a § 1983 complaint concerning medical treatment of his diabetes while incarcerated. Before service, the district court conducted screening under § 1915A, dismissed the claims against Wexford Health Source Inc., dismissed the wrong-insulin claim and the inadequate-care claims against Jennins, Martin, and Dr. Thomas, and permitted the inadequate-care claim against Nurses Murray and Brayfield to proceed. The court withheld service and ordered Mickles to show cause because the complaint and attached exhibits suggested that he filed his grievance only four days before filing suit.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Otis v. Demarass, 886 F.3d 639, 644 (7th Cir. 2018)
- Collins v. Kibort, 143 F.3d 331, 334 (7th Cir. 1998)
- Rodriguez v. Plymouth Ambulance Serv., 577 F.3d 816, 828-29 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Giles v. Godinez, 914 F.3d 1040, 1049 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Brown v. Cascadden, No. 19-3511, 2022 WL 523083, at *1-2 (7th Cir. Feb. 22, 2022)

- Robbins v. Waupun Corr. Inst., 16-CV-1128, 2016 WL 5921822, at *3 (E.D. Wis. Oct. 2016)
- Morrison v. Utz, No. 11-CV-4110, 2012 WL 293548, at *2 (C.D. Ill. Jan. 31, 2012)
- Richmond v. Dart, No. 12 C 0954, 2012 WL 567245, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Feb. 17, 2012)
- Ehrenberg v. Wis. Dep't of Corr., No. 10 C 1022, 2010 WL 5089484 (E.D. Wis. Dec. 7, 2010)
- Davis v. Baker, No. 08 C 1310, 2010 WL 779502 (S.D. Ind. Feb. 26, 2010)
- Kirkwood v. Sirin, No. 06 C 0139, 2006 WL 587698, at *3 (E.D. Wis. Mar. 9, 2006)
- Ingram v. Brewer, 7-cv-00176, 2009 WL 464491, at *1-2 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 24, 2009)
- Pierson v. Hartley, 391 F.3d 898, 902 (7th Cir. 2004)
- Sanville v. McCaughtry, 266 F.3d 724, 740 (7th Cir. 2001)
- Pavey v. Conley, 544 F.3d 739, 740 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Pozo v. McCaughtry, 286 F.3d 1022, 1024-25 (7th Cir. 2002)
- Dole v. Chandler, 438 F.3d 804, 809 (7th Cir. 2006)
- Ross v. Blake, 578 U.S. 632, 639 (2016)
- Pavey v. Conley, 663 F.3d 899, 903 (7th Cir. 2011)
- Walker v. Thompson, 288 F.3d 1005, 1009 (7th Cir. 2002)
- Pruitt v. Mote, 503 F.3d 647, 654 (7th Cir. 2007)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS ADONIS R. MICKLES, Plaintiff, Case No. 25-cv-00957-SPM v. WEXFORD HEALTH SOURCE INC., CHAD JENNINS, PHIL MARTIN, DR. THOMAS, RN MURRAY, and RN BRAYFIELD, Defendants. MEMORANDUM AND ORDER MCGLYNN, District Judge: Plaintiff Adonis Mickles, an inmate in the custody of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) who is currently incarcerated at Robinson Correctional Center, brings this civil action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1983 for violations of his constitutional rights.

The Complaint is now before the Court for preliminary review pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. Under Section 1915A, any portion of a complaint that is legally frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or requests money damages from a defendant who by law is immune from such relief must be dismissed. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b).

THE COMPLAINT¹ Plaintiff alleges that when he arrived at Robinson Correctional Center (Robinson), he told 1 Because it appears that Plaintiff is relying on statements made in the Complaint and attached exhibits in asserting his claims, the Court is construing the allegations in all of these pleadings together. See *Otis v. Demarass*, 886 F.3d 639, 644 (7th Cir.

2018). Dr. Thomas that he is diabetic and that three times a day he monitors his blood sugar with Accu- Chek and takes insulin. (Doc. 1, p. 6). Dr. Thomas told Plaintiff that they do not “do Accu-

Cheks” or give insulin at lunch time. (Id. at p. 6, 11). Since he was only being administered insulin twice a day, Plaintiff began receiving too much insulin during his morning and evening doses.

(Id. at p. 6, 11). This administration schedule caused his blood sugar to drop constantly, and he almost slipped into a diabetic coma on three occasions from May 8-10, 2025. (Id. at p. 12). Plaintiff spoke to Nurse Murray, Nurse Brayfield, and others about his situation and requested that his blood sugar level be check and that he be administered insulin at lunch time.

(Doc. 1, p. 11-12). He asserts that every time he asks Nurse Murray for help with his situation, she “finds it to be a joke and send[s] [Plaintiff] back to his housing unit.” (Id. at p. 6). Plaintiff also alleges that he was given the wrong insulin by Nurse Brayfield. (Doc. 1, p. 6). PRELIMINARY DISMISSAL Plaintiff does not assert any allegations against Wexford Health Source Inc. in the body of the Complaint.

Therefore, Wexford Health Source Inc. and any claims against it are dismissed without prejudice. See *Collins v. Kibort*, 143 F.3d 331, 334 (7th Cir. 1998). DISCUSSION Based on Plaintiff’s allegations and his articulation of his claims, the Court designates the following counts: Count 1: Eighth Amendment claim against Nurse Brayfield for administering to Plaintiff the wrong insulin.

Count 2: Eighth Amendment claim against Jennins, Martin, Thomas, Murray, and Brayfield for failing to provide adequate medical care for Plaintiff’s diabetes. The parties and the Court will use these designations in all future pleadings and orders, unless otherwise directed by a judicial officer of this Court. Any other claim that is mentioned in the Complaint but not addressed in this Order should be considered dismissed without prejudice as inadequately pled under the Twombly² pleading standard.

The Eighth Amendment prohibits the deliberate indifference to a prisoner’s “serious medical needs,” as deliberate indifference “constitutes the unnecessary and wanton infliction of pain forbidden by the Constitution.” *Rodriguez v. Plymouth Ambulance Serv.*, 577 F.3d 816, 828 (7th Cir. 2009) (internal quotations omitted). This indifference includes “intentionally denying or delaying access to medical care or intentionally interfering with prescribed treatment.” Id. at 829.

To successfully state an Eighth Amendment claim of deliberate indifference, a plaintiff must plead that the defendant knew of a serious risk of harm and consciously disregarded it. See *Giles v. Godinez*, 914 F. 3d 1040, 1049 (7th Cir. 2019). Count 1 Although not entirely clear, Plaintiff appears to claim that on a single occasion, presumably March 30, 2024, Nurse Brayfield gave him the wrong type of insulin.

(Doc. 1, p. 6, 10). Based on this general allegation, the Court cannot make the plausible inference that Nurse Brayfield “consciously ignored a risk of harm” to Plaintiff when dispensing the wrong insulin one time. See *Brown v. Cascadden*, No. 19-3511, 2022 WL 523083, at *1-2 (7th Cir. Feb. 22, 2022). See also *Robbins v. Waupun Corr. Inst.*, 16-CV-1128, 2016 WL 5921822, at *3 (E.D.

Wisc. Oct. 2016); *Morrison v. Utz*, No. 11-CV-4110, 2012 WL 293548, at *2 (C.D. Ill. Jan. 31, 2012); *Richmond v. Dart*, No. 12 C 0954, 2012 WL 567245, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Feb. 17, 2012) (prisoner did not state a claim based on allegations that the nurse failed to confirm the medication in question was being taken by the right inmate resulting in a severe allergic reaction); *Ehrenberg v. Wis. Dep't of Corr.*, 2 Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007).

No. 10 C 1022, 2010 WL 5089484 (E.D. Wis. Dec. 7, 2010) (prisoner stated no constitutional claim based on allegations that he was given the wrong dosage of medicine); *Davis v. Baker*, No. 08 C 1310, 2010 WL 779502 (S.D. Ind. Feb. 26, 2010) (granting summary judgment to defendant on claim that defendant handed inmate wrong medication one time); *Kirkwood v. Sirin*, No. 06 C 0139, 2006 WL 587698 *3 (E.D.

Wis. Mar. 9, 2006) (prisoner failed to state constitutional claim for being given wrong medication on one day); *Ingram v. Brewer*, 7-cv-00176, 2009 WL 464491, at *1-2 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 24, 2009) (prisoner failed to state a constitutional claim for being injected with the wrong medication despite telling the defendant and then becoming sick).

Accordingly, Count 1 is dismissed without prejudice. Count 2 Plaintiff has failed to state a claim against Dr. Thomas for inadequate treatment of his diabetes. Plaintiff states that he spoke with Dr. Thomas about his diabetes treatment when he arrived at Robinson, but there are no allegations that he later informed Dr. Thomas that the treatment being provided for his diabetes was inadequate and causing his health to deteriorate.

Accordingly, there is no indication that Dr. Thomas knew of a serious risk to Plaintiff's health and disregarded that risk. Count 2 is dismissed as to Dr. Thomas. Count 2 is also dismissed against Warden Jennins and Medical Director Martin. Plaintiff asserts that he tried to ask someone to speak with Martin or Jennins, but he is always told by whomever he speaks with that "they are going to get them." He still has not seen or heard from Martin or Jennins.

Based on these facts, neither Martin nor Jennins were personally involved in providing medical care to Plaintiff or "actually knew" or "was exposed to information" that Plaintiff was receiving inadequate care for his diabetes. See *Pierson v. Hartley*, 391 F. 3d 898, 902 (7th Cir. 2004). Furthermore, Plaintiff cannot assert liability solely on the fact that these individuals were in supervisory positions.

See *Sanville v. McCaughtry*, 266 F.3d 724, 740 (7th Cir. 2001). The Court will allow Count 2 to proceed against Nurse Brayfield and Nurse Murray. Plaintiff alleges that he spoke to both nurses about the problems with his insulin schedule and that it is causing him further health complications. Nurse Brayfield and Nurse Murray, however, have failed to act to provide or ensure Plaintiff is provided with the necessary care.

Plaintiff has sufficiently stated a claim for an Eighth Amendment violation against Nurse Brayfield and Nurse Murray. SHOW CAUSE Although Plaintiff has a viable claim against Nurses Brayfield and Murray, he is directed to show cause why Count 2 should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust his administrative remedies prior to initiating this lawsuit.

The Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) provides that a prisoner may not bring a lawsuit about prison conditions unless and until he has exhausted all available administrative remedies. 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a); *Pavey v. Conley*, 544 F.3d 739, 740 (7th Cir. 2008).

For a prisoner to properly exhaust his administrative remedies, the prisoner must “file complaints and appeals in the place, and at the time, the prison’s administrative rules require.” *Pozo v. McCaughtry*, 286 F.3d 1022, 1025 (7th Cir. 2002). “[A] prisoner who does not properly take each step within the administrative process has failed to exhaust state remedies.” *Id.* at 1024.

Strict adherence to the PLRA’s exhaustion provisions is required. *Dole v. Chandler*, 438 F.3d 804, 809 (7th Cir. 2006). Aside from the statutory exception to the exhaustion requirement for when administrative remedies are unavailable, “the PLRA’s text suggests no limits on an inmate’s obligation to exhaust—irrespective of any ‘special circumstances.’” *Ross v. Blake*, 578 U.S. 632, 639 (2016).

The Court recognizes that exhaustion requirement is an affirmative defense, and generally, it is appropriate to wait for a defendant to raise the affirmative defense. See *Pavey v. Conley*, 663 F.3d 899, 903 (7th Cir. 2011).

The Seventh Circuit has noted, however, that “when the existence of a valid affirmative defense is so plain from the face of the complaint that the suit can be regarded as frivolous, the district judge need not wait for an answer before dismissing the suit.” *Walker v. Thompson*, 288 F.3d 1005, 1009 (7th Cir. 2002). Such is the case here, where it appears from Plaintiff’s Complaint that he has failed to fully exhaust his administrative remedies prior to filing this lawsuit regarding his allegations that he is improperly being given insulin twice a day, instead of three times a day, which is severely impacting his health.

Here, Plaintiff claims that he became ill and almost slipped into a diabetic coma from May 8-10, 2025. According to the exhibits attached to his Complaint, he filed his grievance pertaining to his insulin schedule and his poor health on May 12, 2025. He initiated this lawsuit four days later on May 16, 2025. Based on this short timeline, it appears that Plaintiff has filed this lawsuit concerning his diabetic treatment schedule prior to full exhaustion.

Thus, before allowing Plaintiff to proceed any further with this litigation, he must SHOW CAUSE why Count 2 and this case should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust his administrative remedies³. MOTION FOR RECRUITMENT OF COUNSEL Plaintiff has filed a Motion for Recruitment of Counsel (Doc. 3), which is DENIED.⁴ In an attempt to find an attorney on his

own, Plaintiff states that he wrote to seven attorneys asking for assistance, but he has not received any responses.

The Court cannot determine that Plaintiff has made sufficient efforts to find a lawyer based on this limited information. Thus, Plaintiff has failed to meet his threshold burden of demonstrating attempts to recruit counsel on his own, prior to seeking assistance from the Court. 3 Currently, Count 2 is the only surviving claim.

Therefore, a dismissal of Count 2 would mean a dismissal of this entire case. 4 In evaluating the Motion for Recruitment of Counsel, the Court applies the factors discussed in *Pruitt v. Mote*, 503 F.3d 647, 654 (7th Cir. 2007) and related authority. Additionally, the Court finds that Plaintiff is capable of representing himself at this early stage in the case.

Plaintiff states that he is unable to represent himself because he does not “have knowledge of legal work.” Plaintiff’s limited knowledge of the law, however, is not unique to him as a pro se litigant and does not necessarily warrant recruitment of counsel at this time. Plaintiff is a high school graduate and has demonstrated that he can clearly communicate with the Court.

The Court believes that Plaintiff is capable of responding to the Court’s order to show cause without assistance. Once Defendants are served and discovery on the merits has commenced, if Plaintiff has significant difficulty, he may refile his motion. Should Plaintiff choose to move for recruitment of counsel at a later date, the Court directs Plaintiff to include additional information about his efforts, such as the names and address of the lawyers he contacted, when he contacted each firm, and also include supporting documentation, such as the letters from the attorneys who declined representation or copies of his payment vouchers for postage.

DISPOSITION For the reasons stated above, the Complaint survives preliminary review pursuant to Section 1915A. **COUNT 1** is **DISMISSED** without prejudice. **COUNT 2** will proceed against Murray and Brayfield and is **DISMISSED** without prejudice as to Jennins, Martin, and Thomas. All claims against Wexford Health Source Inc. are **DISMISSED** without prejudice.

Because there are no surviving claims against Wexford Health Source Inc., Jennins, Martin, and Thomas, the Clerk of Court is **DIRECTED** to terminate them as parties on the docket. Before the Court will order service on Defendants Murray and Brayfield, Plaintiff is **ORDERED** to show cause in writing as to why this case should not be dismissed for failure to exhaust his administrative remedies prior to initiating this lawsuit.

Plaintiff shall respond to this Order no later than December 22, 2025. Plaintiff is **WARNED** the failure to respond to this Order may result in dismissal of this action **WITH PREJUDICE**. Plaintiff further is **ADVISED** that he is under a continuing obligation to keep the Clerk of Court and the opposing parties informed of any change in his address; the Court will not independently investigate his whereabouts.

This shall be done in writing and not later than 14 days after a transfer or other change in address occurs. Failure to comply with this order will cause a delay in the transmission of court documents and may result in dismissal of this action for want of prosecution. See FED. R. CIV. P. 41(b). IT IS SO ORDERED. DATED: December 1, 2025 s/Stephen P. McGlynn STEPHEN P. MCGLYNN
United States District Judge