

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS

Charles E. Thornton v. Wexford Health Sources, Inc., Alisa
Dearmond, Jane Doe Med Tech, Anthony Wills, Administrative
Review Board, John Doe #s 1-10, Grievance Office John Does

Thornton · No. 25-cv-1814-NJR · Decided April 7, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois conducts preliminary review of Charles E. Thornton’s amended 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint alleging deliberate indifference to his medical needs based on delays in renewing and providing his Neurontin prescription. The court allows an Eighth Amendment claim to proceed against Nurse Practitioner Alisa Dearmond, who allegedly failed to renew the prescription after examining Thornton. All other claims and defendants are dismissed without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Nancy J. Rosenstengel
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
DECIDED	April 7, 2026
DOCKET	25-cv-1814-NJR
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Preliminary review of a prisoner’s amended 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court screens a prisoner complaint and dismisses any portion that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks damages from an immune defendant. The court applied the Twombly plausibility standard to the pleading.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum and order; nonprecedential
PARTIES	Charles E. Thornton v. Wexford Health Sources, Inc., Alisa Dearmond, Jane Doe Med Tech, Anthony Wills, Administrative Review Board, John Doe #s 1-10, Grievance Office John Does

TOPICS

prisoners rights section 1983 health law civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights constitutional law medical care claims civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Amended Complaint stated a viable Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Alisa Dearmond based on her alleged failure to renew Thornton's Neurontin prescription.
2. Whether the generalized allegations against unidentified med-tech defendants were sufficiently specific to state a claim.
3. Whether the alleged denial or mishandling of prison grievances stated a constitutional claim against Anthony Wills and unidentified grievance officials.
4. Whether Thornton stated a claim against Wexford Health Sources, Inc. without identifying a policy or practice causing the alleged constitutional deprivation.
5. Whether Dr. Comparin could be treated as a defendant when he was not named in the case caption and the allegations did not show deliberate indifference.

HOLDINGS

1. The Amended Complaint stated a viable deliberate-indifference claim against Dearmond because it alleged that she examined Thornton, learned of his pain and prolonged lack of Neurontin, failed to renew the prescription, and thereby left him without medication for several additional weeks.
2. The claims against unidentified med-tech defendants were too generic to state a claim and were dismissed without prejudice, although a plaintiff may proceed against specifically described unknown defendants tied to particular shifts or dates.
3. The alleged denial or mishandling of Thornton's grievances by Wills and unidentified grievance officials did not state a constitutional claim and those claims were dismissed without prejudice.
4. The claims against Wexford were dismissed without prejudice because Thornton did not identify a Wexford policy or practice that caused the alleged prescription delays.
5. Dr. Comparin was not treated as a party because he was omitted from the case caption, and the allegations also failed to show that he acted with deliberate indifference; any claim against him was dismissed without prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"Liability depends on each defendant's knowledge and actions" (Preliminary Dismissals)

"At this stage, Thornton states a viable deliberate indifference claim against Alisa Dearmond." (Discussion)

"Count 1 shall proceed against Dearmond. All other claims and defendants are DISMISSED without

prejudice.” (Disposition)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Thornton, an incarcerated Illinois Department of Corrections inmate, alleged that a prior gunshot wound caused chronic nerve pain treated with Neurontin. He alleged repeated delays in receiving prescription renewals, including a lapse from February 28 to April 25, 2024, and another lapse beginning in June 2024. Thornton alleged that Alisa Dearmond examined him on July 11, 2024, learned of his severe pain and prolonged lack of medication, but failed to renew the Neurontin prescription; another doctor eventually renewed it on September 4, 2024, and Thornton received the medication on October 10, 2024.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Thornton’s original complaint alleging deliberate indifference concerning delays in prescribing and refilling Neurontin was dismissed for failure to state a claim, and he was granted leave to amend. After reviewing the Amended Complaint, the court allowed an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim to proceed against Nurse Practitioner Alisa Dearmond and dismissed all other claims and defendants without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Burks v. Raemisch, 555 F.3d 592, 594 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Owens v. Hinsley, 635 F.3d 950, 953 (7th Cir. 2011)
- Antonelli v. Sheahan, 81 F.3d 1422, 1430 (7th Cir. 1996)
- Iskander v. Village of Forest Park, 690 F.2d 126, 128 (7th Cir. 1982)
- McCormick v. City of Chicago, 230 F.3d 319, 324 (7th Cir. 2000)
- Myles v. United States, 416 F.3d 551, 551–52 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)