

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
ALABAMA, JASPER DIVISION

Michael Walker v. Wexford Health Sources, Inc., et al.

Walker · No. 6:22-cv-00043-MHH-JHE · Decided March 25, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama adopted a magistrate judge’s report and recommendation and granted summary judgment to the defendants on the plaintiff’s Eighth Amendment medical-care claims. The court declined supplemental jurisdiction over the plaintiff’s Alabama Medical Liability Act claims and dismissed those claims without prejudice. The opinion was entered in an action brought by Michael Walker against Wexford Health Sources, Inc. and several physicians.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, Jasper Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Madeline Hughes Haikala
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, Jasper Division
DECIDED	March 25, 2026
DOCKET	6:22-cv-00043-MHH-JHE
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendants' special reports were construed as motions for summary judgment in a pro se prisoner action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. After the magistrate judge issued a report and recommendation, no party filed objections, and the district court adopted the report and accepted its recommendations.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is appropriate only when it is appropriate on the record, even if unopposed. The court independently reviewed the record, considered facts in the sworn complaint, and construed the pro se complaint liberally.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

section 1983

prisoners rights

cruel and unusual punishment

summary judgment

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

medical care

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether defendants were entitled to summary judgment on Mr. Walker's Eighth Amendment medical-care claims.
2. Whether Mr. Walker established that Wexford Health Sources, Inc. maintained a custom or policy that caused a constitutional violation.
3. Whether the district court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Mr. Walker's Alabama Medical Liability Act claims after resolving the federal claims.

HOLDINGS

1. Summary judgment was warranted because Mr. Walker did not establish that Drs. Rahming, Pouparinas, and Allen provided constitutionally inadequate medical care.
2. Summary judgment was warranted for Wexford because Mr. Walker did not demonstrate that Wexford had a custom or policy that caused a constitutional violation.
3. The court declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(3) after disposing of the federal claims and dismissed those claims without prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“[S]ummary judgment, even when unopposed, can only be entered when ‘appropriate.’” (Doc. 86, p. 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Mr. Walker, a prisoner proceeding pro se, alleged that Wexford Health Sources, Inc. and four physicians violated his constitutional rights and Alabama law through inadequate medical care. He alleged that he could not continue taking Eliquis because it was too expensive and that Coumadin was substituted, but the court found no evidence from which a factfinder could infer that the substitution caused him injury. He also failed to establish inadequate medical care by the individual physicians or a Wexford custom or policy causing a constitutional violation.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Mr. Walker filed an amended complaint asserting Eighth Amendment medical-care claims and Alabama Medical Liability Act claims against Wexford Health Sources, Inc. and several physicians. The court previously dismissed claims against other defendants. The magistrate judge recommended granting summary judgment on the federal claims and declining supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims; the district court adopted that recommendation, entered judgment for defendants on the federal claims by separate order, and dismissed the state-law claims without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Caldwell v. Warden, 748 F.3d 1090, 1098 (11th Cir. 2014)
- Hughes v. Rowe, 449 U.S. 5. 9 (1980)
- United States v. One Piece of Real Prop. Located at 5800 SW 74th Ave., Miami, Fla., 363 F.3d 1099, 1101 (11th Cir. 2004)
- Weinrib v. Duncan, 962 So. 3d 167, 169–70 (Ala. 2007)

OPINION

Walker

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
JASPER DIVISION

MICHAEL WALKER,)
) Plaintiff,)) v.) Case No. 6:22-cv-00043-MHH-JHE)
WEXFORD HEALTH SOURCES,)
INC., et al.,)) Defendants.)

MEMORANDUM OPINION

In this pro se prisoner action, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Mr. Walker asserts claims against Wexford Health Sources, Inc., Dr. Wilcotte Rahming, Dr. Manuel Pouparinas, Dr. Russell Alexander, and Dr. Felix Allen. Mr. Walker alleges that the defendants violated his rights under the United States Constitution and Alabama law. (Doc. 13).¹ The defendants have moved for summary judgment, and Mr. Walker did not respond. (Docs. 34–45, 46–50, 51–68, 69, 77–84; see Doc. 86, p. 2).² In his report concerning the defendants’ motions, Chief Magistrate Judge England independently reviewed the record, considered specific facts that Mr. Walker 1 The Court previously dismissed Mr. Walker’s claims against the other defendants he named in his amended complaint. (Docs. 17, 18). 2 The defendants filed “special reports,” and the magistrate judge construed the reports as motions for summary judgment. (See Doc. 86, p. 2). pleaded in his sworn complaint, and construed Mr. Walker’s complaint liberally. (Doc. 86, p. 3) (first citing Caldwell v. Warden, 748 F.3d 1090, 1098 (11th Cir. 2014); then citing Hughes v. Rowe, 449 U.S. 5. 9 (1980)); see also United States v. One Piece of Real Prop. Located at 5800 SW 74th Ave., Miami, Fla., 363 F.3d 1099, 1101 (11th Cir. 2004) (“[S]ummary judgment, even when unopposed, can only be entered when ‘appropriate.’” (brackets added)). In his report, Chief Magistrate Judge England recommended that the Court grant the defendants’ motions for summary judgment on Mr.

Walker's Eighth Amendment medical claims because Mr. Walker did not establish that Drs. Rahming, Pouparina, and Allen provided inadequate medical care to him and because Mr. Walker did not demonstrate that Wexford had a custom or policy that caused a constitutional violation. (Doc. 86, pp. 49–51). The magistrate judge declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Mr. Wexford's state-law medical malpractice claims under the AMLA. (Doc. 86, pp. 51–52). The magistrate judge advised the parties of their right to file specific written objections within 14 days. (Doc. 86). To date, the Court has not received objections. Having considered the medical evidence in this case and in the absence of objections, the Court adopts the magistrate judge's report and accepts his recommendation.*> By separate order, the Court will enter judgment for the defendants on Mr. Walker's Eighth Amendment claims. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(3), the Court declines to exercise jurisdiction over Mr. Walker's state law ALMA claims and will dismiss those claims without prejudice. As Chief Magistrate Judge England explained, the statute of limitations for Mr. Walker's AMLA claim has been tolled while the claim was pending in this case, and the tolling will continue for a period of 30 days after the Court enters the dismissal order in this case "unless state law provides for a longer tolling period." (Doc. 86, p. 52) (citing 28 U.S.C. § 1367(d); Weinrib v. Duncan, 962 So. 3d 167, 169-70 (Ala. 2007)).⁴ DONE and ORDERED this March 25, 2026. uae E HUGHES HAIKALA

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

> Mr. Walker's allegations regarding his inability to continue his prescription for Eliquis because the drug was too expensive are concerning, but Mr. Walker has not provided evidence from which a factfinder could infer that the substitution of Coumadin for Eliquis caused him to suffer an injury. (Doc. 13, pp. 8-9; Doc. 86, p. 5). ⁴ The magistrate judge's report and recommendation did not trigger the 30-day period. The 30- day period begins to run on the date of the dismissal order in this case. See 28 U.S.C. § 1367(d).