

JASA MEDIA RELEASE

Justice Alliance of South Africa

069-600-NPO

1 Ruskin Road, Bergvliet, Cape Town 7945

Tel: 021-713-3259 Fax: 0866 727474 jasalaw@mweb.co.za

www.jasa.za.net



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Enquiries: Mrs Linda-Jane Tippoo
072 713 1053

JASA launches High Court action on behalf of Mrs Zeenat Pillay against Marie Stopes claiming R.150,000 damages for botched abortion and failure to provide counselling

Mrs Pillay is an event coordinator living in Cape Town. On 29 December 2007 she visited Marie Stopes clinic in Bree Street, Cape Town with a view to considering an abortion. She had telephoned earlier and had been assured she would receive counselling and that her boyfriend would be allowed to be present so that the decision could be made jointly.

On arrival at the clinic, she was persuaded to sign a form and pay R.2070, and then hustled off into the procedure room. Her boyfriend was excluded despite protestations. She received no counselling whatsoever and was given no opportunity to ask questions or discuss the matter with her boyfriend.

The clinic gave her a general anaesthetic; the next she remembers is being violently shaken, screaming with pain from severe blows to her sternum, receiving an injection, nurses desperately trying to take her blood pressure and insert a drip, and hearing frantic attempts to contact the doctor who had apparently gone home on the Saturday afternoon.

Mrs Pillay complained in no uncertain terms by email of 10 January 2008. She received no reply and was subsequently told her letter had been lost in the system. After further attempts to obtain redress she received a letter dated 21 July 2008 from the CEO of Marie Stopes, Paul Cornelissen, apologising on behalf of the company and informing her that the nurse on duty had been fired.

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Quinton George, Nigel Desmond, John Smyth

Mrs Pillay consulted JASA who endeavoured to obtain redress for her. Nothing was forthcoming in spite of the admissions made by the CEO. JASA suspects the clinic's insurer's have rejected the claim following the admissions made by the CEO in his letter.

Mrs Pillay is adamant that she would not have gone ahead with the abortion had she been informed as to the stage of development of her unborn child as the law requires.

The High Court writ issued by her attorneys claims R.150,000 in damages.

JASA, Grant Gunston Inc (Attorneys) and Adv Murray Bridgman act pro bono for Mrs Pillay.

The Particulars of Claim in the case may be found on the JASA website
www.jasa.za.net

JASA

Upholding Justice in the Public Square

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