

## **Firm Begins Investigation of Lamictal Related Death**

Fischer | Goldasich has been retained by a client and is currently investigating a major drug manufacturer's alleged failure to adequately warn its consumers about the potentially devastating effects the drug Lamictal may have on individuals. Lamictal is an antiepileptic drug (AED) of the phenyltriazine class manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline to treat epilepsy, psychiatric disorders such as bipolar disorder, and other conditions. A lucrative prescription drug, Lamictal grosses approximately \$2.1 billion in sales for its manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline.

On December 16, 2008, United States officials with the FDA announced that Lamictal, as well as other anti-epilepsy drugs, must carry a new warnings about the risk of suicidal thoughts or actions. It further mandated that the manufacturers of these drugs develop a medication guide to be provided to patients, their families and their caregivers to inform them of the increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Such mandates came after clinical trials conducted by the FDA illustrated significant increases in the suicidal thoughts and behaviors experienced by individuals taking Lamictal and other AED drugs. In fact, patients receiving the drug had almost twice the risk of suicidal thinking or behavior compared to placebo groups not receiving the drug. Additionally, the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors was increased in those individuals taking the drug for epilepsy.

Fischer | Goldasich is currently investigating the alleged failure of GlaxoSmithKline to adequately test and warn its consumers about this serious and potentially devastating side effect of Lamictal. Within the United States, drug manufacturers are charged with the duty of adequately testing and warning of a drug's side effects; however, the drive to maximize sales creates an incentive to downplay any detrimental effects. In this case, alerting physicians, as well as patients and their family members to the side effects of Lamictal is crucial so that awareness and increased monitoring for the emergence or worsening of depression and suicidal behavior is provided. Had simple warnings been distributed to physicians and family members, death and injury from suicides could have been prevented.

The lack of action by a drug manufacturer cannot be tolerated by a society that relies so heavily upon a manufacturer's research and clinical testing of its marketed pharmaceuticals. If you or someone you love has been injured or has died due to suicidal behaviors while taking Lamictal, please contact Fischer | Goldasich for a free evaluation of your potential claim.