

RUSS SKELTON & ANNE HOLMGREN OBTAIN UNANIMOUS DEFENSE VERDICT IN WRONGFUL DEATH CASE



Jones, Skelton & Hochuli partners [Russ Skelton](#) and [Anne Holmgren](#) obtained a

unanimous defense verdict in a wrongful death lawsuit – Keller v. Brownsberger, et al. – in May 2022.

The decedent was a chronic pain patient who was referred by his primary care physician to the defendant pain management facility where he established care with the defendant doctor. The decedent had been treating with the doctor for more than a year and a half when he was found dead in his home due to drug toxicity overdose.

The decedent's wife filed a wrongful death action in Holbrook, Arizona against multiple providers, alleging defendants' medical negligence cause decedent's death. The plaintiff alleged that the defendant doctor breached the standard of care by neglecting to assess the decedent's medical history, improperly prescribing opioids, neglecting to follow office policies related to urine drug screens, and failing to properly wean decedent from opioids.

Skelton and Holmgren represented the defendant doctor in this lawsuit. The parties called nine witnesses over the course of a two-week trial, including multiple standard of care and causation experts. During the course of the trial, the defense was able to educate the jury on the practice of pain management, the applicable standards of care, and why the defendants did not cause the decedent's death. At the close, the plaintiff requested the jury award \$2 million in damages.

Following deliberations, the jury returned a unanimous defense verdict in favor of the defendant doctor as to all of the plaintiff's claims. The defense sought and was awarded a total of \$21,261.11 for costs with statutory interest accruing.

[Russ Skelton](#) has focused his practice in the areas of medical malpractice defense for more than 50 years. He currently serves as the firm's co-chair of the Medical Malpractice and Health Care Trial Group. Skelton has worked with physicians and surgeons, hospitals, and medical groups – in matters relating to medical malpractice and workers' compensation. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and Member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. For 30-plus years, Skelton has earned the distinction of being AV Preeminent Rated on Martindale Hubbell.

[Anne Holmgren](#) has litigated, tried, and arbitrated cases for healthcare providers and institutions. She focuses her practice in claims involving alleged medical malpractice, wrongful death, medical negligence, and vicarious liability in state and federal court. Holmgren represents physicians, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and other healthcare professionals. Additionally, she represents national healthcare product manufacturers in product liability cases.