

4th patient infected during mold outbreak at hospital dies

February 7 2016

A fourth transplant patient who contracted a fungal infection during a mold outbreak at a western Pennsylvania hospital has died, officials said Sunday.

The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center confirmed the death of Che DuVall, a 70-year-old retired glass cutter who was diagnosed with the infection in September, a month after undergoing a [double lung transplant](#).

"We extend our deepest sympathies to his family, as well as to our doctors and nurses who have worked with great compassion and skill to care for him," UPMC spokeswoman Allison Hydzik said in a statement. "We again want to reassure our patients that we have taken every possible precaution to make our hospitals as safe as is humanly possible and have followed all recommendations made by federal and state regulators."

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said four [organ transplant patients](#) who developed a mold infection at UPMC likely got it from time spent in a "negative pressure" room normally reserved for those who already had infections. The hospital suspended its transplant program Sept. 21 but resumed it about a week later after a review of procedures and treatments.

DuVall and his wife, Karen, had filed a lawsuit in Allegheny County last month against UPMC Presbyterian, alleging that the hospital recklessly

housed him in a room that made him more susceptible to such an [infection](#), which prompted removal of parts of his new lungs.

UPMC, which declined to comment on the suit, has maintained that the deaths cannot be directly attributed to mold because transplant patients with [weakened immune systems](#) are at risk of picking up infections that otherwise healthy people routinely fight off.

Family attorney Brendan Lupetin told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review that DuVall died Saturday morning at UPMC Presbyterian. He had three children.

"Our thoughts are with the family during this very difficult time," he said.

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