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Judge James F. Hyland

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IN RE TAXOTERE LITIGATION

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SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
LAW DIVISION – MIDDLESEX
COUNTY

CASE TYPE: MCL NO. 628
MASTER DOCKET NO.:
MID-L-4998-18-CM

CIVIL ACTION
IN RE TAXOTERE LITIGATION

ESI PROTOCOL
THIS DOCUMENT RELATES TO ALL CASES
Governing Plaintiffs' Responsibilities Relevant to ESI

This Order amends Case Management Order No. 5, dated October 17, 2019, to provide Plaintiffs with additional time and instructions to comply with the obligations set forth in Case Management Order No. 5.

This Order governs Plaintiffs' identification, preservation, collection, and production of ESI. The Court also orders all Plaintiffs and their counsel to review and familiarize themselves with the revised "Guidance Regarding Potential Sources of Electronically Stored Information," attached here as Exhibit A.

1. **Applicability.** This Order applies to all Plaintiffs in MCL No. 628 and shall govern all document requests served on Plaintiffs, including the document requests in the PFS and any future requests for production that may be served by Defendants.

2. **Sources of ESI.** To the extent a plaintiff used or maintained any of the following ESI sources within the five (5) years before her docetaxel treatment or any time since her treatment, each plaintiff shall search the following sources for responsive ESI, regardless of whether such sources are currently in use by that plaintiff: (i) any email accounts used by plaintiff;

(ii) any electronic devices used by plaintiff (e.g., desktop or laptop computers, tablets, mobile phones, digital cameras); (iii) any other hardware storage devices used by plaintiff (e.g., external hard drives, memory cards, USB or thumb drives, CDs/DVDs); (iv) any social media used by plaintiff (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, Pinterest, or other online collaboration tools such as Google+ or Yahoo! groups); (v) any website where a plaintiff made online postings (e.g., on a blog, message board, etc.); (vi) any cloud storage used by plaintiff (e.g., DropBox, Microsoft Office365 Account, Google Drive, iCloud, Amazon Drive, etc.).

3. **Search obligations.** Each plaintiff shall do reasonable searches on each of the sources identified in ¶ 2 of this Order (to the extent they exist) to identify and collect potentially responsive ESI for counsel review. Reasonably diligent searches may require running search terms; reviewing files, communications, videos, and photographs; or otherwise conducting an actual, physical search of the sources. Plaintiff's counsel shall take an active role in identifying, preserving, collecting, reviewing, and producing all responsive ESI. To the extent individual plaintiff's counsel has questions regarding these obligations, counsel shall consult with Plaintiffs' Liaison Counsel, Rayna E. Kessler and Karen Beyea-Schroeder, for clarification.

4. **Search terms.** Where feasible, each plaintiff or her attorney shall run the following terms through any available search function on the sources identified in ¶ 2. Each term should be run separately: (a) breast cancer; (b) cancer; (c) chemotherapy; (d) chemo; (e) hair loss; (f) hair; (g) bald; (h) taxotere; (i) docetaxel; (j) taxane; (k) alopecia; (l) sanofi; (m) pharmaceutical; (n) side effect; (o) warning; and any other terms likely to retrieve a ESI response to a request for production.

5. **Production format.** Plaintiffs shall produce all responsive ESI in a manner that preserves any metadata. To the extent individual plaintiff's counsel needs assistance in how to

properly preserve responsive metadata, counsel shall consult with Plaintiffs' Liaison Counsel, Rayna E. Kessler and Karen Beyea-Schroeder.¹

6. **Disclosures.** Each plaintiff shall provide a written statement to Defendants signed by the plaintiff and her attorney, which shall be produced along with responsive documents required by the Plaintiff Fact Sheet, other Requests for Production, or otherwise ordered by the Court. To the extent that a plaintiff served a PFS and responsive documents prior to the date of this Order, that such plaintiff shall have 45 days from the date of this Order to produce the written statement and responsive documents, if any. To the extent that a plaintiff's PFS and responsive documents are due within 30 days of the date of this Order, that plaintiff shall have 45 days from the date the PFS is due to produce the written statement and responsive documents. The written statement and responsive documents may be uploaded to MDL Centrality within the deadlines set forth in this Order and shall provide the following information that is within the Plaintiff's possession, custody or control:

- i. Custodians: a list of individuals likely to have discoverable electronic information concerning the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation.
- ii. General Computer Systems: A general description of systems that each Plaintiff used for electronic communications, including but not limited to email (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, AOL, Outlook, etc.), social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, other online collaboration tools such as Google+ or Yahoo! Groups, etc.), app-based messaging, blogs, webpages, and/or text messages, during the period five years prior to Plaintiffs' first infusion of chemotherapy through present day that is likely to have discoverable information.
- iii. Hardware systems: A general description of (1) the electronic communications and/or storage device(s) used by Plaintiff (e.g., computers, hard drives, external hard drives, laptops, phones, cameras,

¹ With respect to E-mail, counsel may be able to collect relevant .OST and .PST files from Outlook. See how to add email accounts to Outlook at <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Outlook-email-setup-6e27792a-9267-4aa4-8bb6-c84ef146101b>.

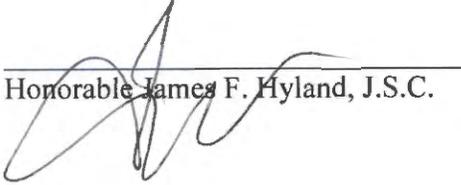
tablets, or other electronic communications or storage device listed in Paragraph 2 of this Order) during the period five years prior to Plaintiffs' first infusion of chemotherapy through present day, and (2) how the information on such device(s) is stored which is reasonably calculated to lead to relevant discoverable information concerning the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation.

- iv. Internet and Cloud-based systems: A general description of the Internet and cloud-based systems used by Plaintiff, including but not limited to iCloud, Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive, or Dropbox during the period five years prior to Plaintiffs' first infusion of chemotherapy through present day, if any, as well as how the information on the systems is stored, which is reasonably calculated to lead to relevant information concerning the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation.
- v. Document retention: A general description of each Plaintiff's practice, during the period five years prior to Plaintiffs' first infusion of chemotherapy through present day, explaining how long electronic information is maintained, their practice for when electronic information is deleted, and when electronic information is archived, which is reasonably calculated to lead to discoverable information concerning the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation.
- vi. Lost/destroyed: Whether any unique, non-duplicative electronic discoverable information related to the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation has been lost or destroyed after each Plaintiff's preservation obligation accrued in this case, if known. If a hardware-based electronic communications or storage device (as described above) is/was destroyed, please advise if the storage system for the device (e.g. hard drive) has been kept. If an Internet or cloud-based electronic communications or storage system (as described above) is no longer used, please set forth the dates the use of such system(s) was commenced or ceased, and whether such system can be reactivated or accessed.
- vii. Inaccessible: A description of any electronic discoverable information concerning the claims, allegations and defenses at issue in this litigation that each Plaintiff contends is inaccessible or only of limited accessibility and, hence, not producible by that Plaintiff without undue burden and/or expense, including:
 - 1. The location of the information;
 - 2. The reasons for each Plaintiff's contention regarding inaccessibility;
 - 3. The proposed capture and retrieval process available (if any known) for identification and/or recovery of the information deemed inaccessible (including cost estimates if readily available); and
 - 4. Whether plaintiff used any consumer backup tools (e.g., Carbonite, Backblaze, Crashplan, etc.).

7. **Deficiency Process.** The deficiency process set forth in the Plaintiff Fact Sheet and Defendant Fact Sheet Implementation Order shall apply to this Protocol.

8. **Rule 4:18-1(c) certification.** Any statement, declarations or certifications made by a plaintiff or her attorney regarding information and documents produced in discovery in this litigation, including the PFS declaration and the disclosure required under ¶ 5 of this Order, shall be subject to Rule 4:18-1(c).

SO ORDERED:



Honorable James F. Hyland, J.S.C.

EXHIBIT A

Supplemental Guidance Regarding Potential Sources of Electronically Stored Information

This document contains guidance on how a lawyer and her client can comply with their shared discovery obligations relating to Electronically Stored Information (“ESI”). Individual Counsel are reminded of their obligations under Rule 4:18-1 of the Rules Governing the Courts of the State of New Jersey to conduct a “good faith search” into ESI. Individual Counsel are reminded of the preservation requirements set forth in the initial Case Management Order, issued on August 24, 2019, and the ESI Protocol, dated August 7, 2018, including applicable amendments to such Protocol.

As a reminder, the Plaintiff Fact Sheet requires that you produce with the fact sheet certain documents and/or ESI. For instance, you must produce: “Social media or internet posts to or through any site (including, but not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Windows Live, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, blogs, and Internet chat rooms/message boards) relating to Taxotere or Docetaxel or any of your claims in this lawsuit” (see PFS Document Request at p.27); and representative photographs of your client from before her treatment, during her treatment, 6 months after her treatment, and how your client looks today (see PFS Document Requests at p. 29).

Keep in mind, this guidance does not provide an exhaustive list of sources that any individual may have, but it provides guidance on how you may discuss the information with your clients. The most important thing is to get your clients to think about how they use their computers, phones, and other technology so that searches of those sources can be conducted for potentially discoverable information.

Many times, individuals may not know what you mean with questions like “does your phone automatically synch with the cloud?” because relatives might have helped them set up their devices. When planning to talk with a client about these potential sources of discoverable information, it can be helpful if the individual brings along her own personal “tech nerd” (which may be a family member) to assist in answering questions.

Throughout your conversations with your client, you should keep in mind that your goal is to get that person to think about how they use technology now and how they have used technology in the past. If you get pushback from your client, it often helps to remind her that these are typical questions asked to everyone on both sides of the lawsuit. Assure your client of her privacy and that both sides have a legal obligation to protect confidential information produced during the course of the litigation.

Another important area to cover with your clients is replacing the hardware they use, like computers or phones. Individuals will often be involved in a case over many years and may not realize that the desktop computers, phones or other devices they want to upgrade may contain discoverable information. Have a discussion about future upgrades to devices and the importance of keeping your office informed about hardware changes. Let them know that an upgrade is fine, as long as the correct steps are taken to preserve the potentially discoverable information on the device.

Finally, you only need to concern yourself with sources of information within the scope of discovery. This can get confusing to people that are not accustomed to participating in litigation. One example is for an individual that currently works and has a work email address. You should only be interested in that email source IF the person sends or receives discoverable emails using that account.

With regard to specific sources, here are some helpful points to consider when helping your clients think about how they communicate and store information.

Traditional Electronically Stored Information. Email and user created documents are what we often associate with ESI. You should consider discussing with your clients the various email accounts they may use or may have used in the past that may contain information that may be discoverable. Also, be sure to ask about old accounts that your clients may or may not have access to anymore. In addition to email, be sure to ask your clients about where they save documents that they may create, like journals or letters. It may be on a physical device or in some cloud storage location.

If your client says that she has emailed about her hair loss, it may be easiest to walk her through searching that email for certain terms, like (by way of example), (a) breast cancer; (b) cancer; (c) chemotherapy; (d) chemo; (e) hair loss; (f) hair; (g) bald; (h) taxotere; (i) docetaxel; (j) taxane; (k) alopecia; (l) sanofi; (m) pharmaceutical; (n) side effect; (o) warning; and any other terms likely to retrieve a ESI response to a request for production. Remember, your client has probably never had to search for and turn emails over to a lawyer. So, you should do more than tell your client she needs to send you emails and pictures relating to her chemotherapy and hair loss.

Social Media. More and more individuals communicate about their lives using social media. Exploring the individual's use of social media is important. In addition to the usual questions about Facebook and twitter, try and consider asking about applications that the person might not realize are social media, like LinkedIn or Flickr. Keep in mind that some clients may say that they do not use social media, but during the course of the conversation will realize that they do. You should identify both current and past accounts that your client may have used.

Text or Instant messages. Younger people may utilize text messaging more often than older people, but you should still discuss the use of these services with everyone.

Photographs. The Plaintiff Fact Sheets calls for the production of certain photographs. Photographs that your client may have to produce with the PFS may be in electronic format. Photographs shall be collected from your client in a way that preserves the metadata with the photographs, such as the date taken. This guidance also applies to other documents or information your client may have. Discoverable information shall be produced in an electronic format in a manner that preserves the information's metadata, and uploaded through MDL Centrality.

Where possible, a copy of the original digital file of discoverable photographs shall be uploaded to MDL Centrality, for example, as a .jpeg file using a method that preserves the date the photo was taken, such as putting the date in the file name. It is not helpful to print a picture

that was originally in electronic form and scan it back in, or take a picture of an electronic picture and submit that file because all potential date information (and other metadata) is lost. Often times, the digital version of the picture will retain in its metadata the “date taken.” We have confirmed with the Centrality administrator that Centrality leaves this metadata information intact. If you want to be sure that the date information is uploaded, you can also put the date of the photograph in the name of the picture file and the “document type description” on MDL Centrality.

The Court has made clear that it is the Plaintiff’s obligation to provide photographic evidence which accurately and adequately reflects Plaintiff’s hair loss injuries. Providing sufficient photographs within 5 years prior to chemotherapy, which depict Plaintiff’s hair prior to treatment with Taxotere, and providing sufficient current photographs, which demonstrate plaintiff’s current hair loss following treatment with Taxotere, is needed to prove the client’s claim.

Technology has become so pervasive in our world that oftentimes people forget about how much they use it to communicate with their community of friends, family and others. It is incumbent on each attorney to gently but firmly probe the responses to the PFS. If a client indicates that she has no or very few photographs, probe beyond that initial answer. Were her children or spouse with her at her chemotherapy treatments? Might they have pictures on their phones from before, during or after chemotherapy treatments? Does a parent, child, or spouse have recent picture on their phones? It should be helpful if you explain to your client *why* these pictures are crucial to her case – so she understands that they are an important part of proving her case.

Having a conversation with your clients about how they communicate and store information up front will help focus your clients on areas that may need to be searched to see if they have potentially discoverable information. This process will help your clients help themselves by enabling the collection and production of the information now so as to avoid a spoliation issue down the road. **Also, as lawyers, you have all seen defense counsel ask a plaintiff about how they communicate in depositions and whether they have information that they have not given you.** Use your experience as a lawyer, having seen what defendants look for, to also help guide you through this process.

Plaintiffs’ Liaison Counsel can assist your office if your staff has general questions on how to talk to your clients about ESI, how to retrieve ESI, how to upload it to Centrality, and how to respond to deficiencies. Please use these lawyers as a resource. For ESI-related questions, you can contact Rayna E. Kessler at rkessler@robinskaplan.com or Karen Beyea-Schroeder at Karen.Schroeder@rburnettlaw.com.