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On Behalf Of:

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I am currently treating a patient for a work injury that I believe has been misdiagnosed, but we have been powerless to move forward with the correct treatment because I am not able to order diagnostic imaging, and with worker's compensation, everything has to go through the supervising physician. Her physician has repeatedly told her this is a hamstring injury, despite the fact that she did not respond to original PT treatment targeted at a potential hamstring strain. Upon further evaluation and multiple diagnostic clinical tests, I am positive the problem is actually stemming from her hip joint. For the last three months, I have attempted to contact her physician on multiple occasions to urge them to order an MRI of the hip, but I have been ignored. Meanwhile, the patient has shown signs of improvement now that we have been shifting focus in rehab to her hip, but she clearly needs additional medical management because she is still in significant pain.

However, at the patient's last follow-up visit with the physician last week, she was told that nothing else can be done to help her, she will have to learn to live with chronic pain for the rest of her life, and her case will be closed. When the patient asked about looking further into the suspected hip injury, the physician bluntly responded that it was not the hip, and reiterated that nothing else could be done. This is not patient-centered, compassionate care - this is neglect and malpractice. How could a medical doctor tell someone they have no options for pain management when there is clearly something missing that another orthopedic specialist, the PT, has pointed out? If I had been able to order diagnostic imaging myself, this patient could be well underway with more appropriate treatment that actually addresses the real problem; instead she is feeling dejected and hopeless because she is stuck in the uncaring hands of, quite frankly, a hubristic and irresponsible physician.