

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

DWAYNE ROEBUCK, SR.,
Plaintiff,
vs.
LILLIAN OVERALL, and
ATCHENSON
Defendants.
Case No. 17-cv-1219-JPG

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

GILBERT, District Judge:

Plaintiff Dwayne Roebuck, Sr., an inmate in Lincoln Correctional Center, brings this action for deprivations of his constitutional rights pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 that occurred at Vandalia Correctional Center. Plaintiff requests compensation. This case is now before the Court for a preliminary review of the Complaint pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, which provides:

(a) Screening – The court shall review, before docketing, if feasible or, in any event, as soon as practicable after docketing, a complaint in a civil action in which a prisoner seeks redress from a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity.

(b) Grounds for Dismissal – On review, the court shall identify cognizable claims or dismiss the complaint, or any portion of the complaint, if the complaint–

(1) is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted; or

(2) seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief.

An action or claim is frivolous if “it lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact.” Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989). Frivolousness is an objective standard that refers to a claim that any reasonable person would find meritless. Lee v. Clinton, 209 F.3d 1025, 1026-

27 (7th Cir. 2000). An action fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted if it does not plead “enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). The claim of entitlement to relief must cross “the line between possibility and plausibility.” *Id.* at 557. At this juncture, the factual allegations of the *pro se* complaint are to be liberally construed. *See Rodriguez v. Plymouth Ambulance Serv.*, 577 F.3d 816, 821 (7th Cir. 2009).

The Complaint

Plaintiff put in to see Lillian Overall, a dentist, in August 2015 to address his complaints of tooth pain. (Doc. 1, p. 5). Plaintiff believed that the tooth needed to be removed. *Id.* When Overall examined Plaintiff, she saw that the tooth was infected and issued him a 2-week supply of antibiotics and ibuprofen. *Id.* Plaintiff ran out of medication, but when he asked for more, Overall told him that it would “interfere” with the process and that Plaintiff should wait until she was able to see him. *Id.* Plaintiff had to wait 5 months for treatment; and when he finally got a follow-up appointment for an extraction, it was rescheduled by Atchenson, causing an additional 3-4 day delay. *Id.* During this time period, Plaintiff experienced pain, bleeding, and at times could not eat. *Id.*

Discussion

Based on the allegations of the Complaint, the Court finds it convenient to divide the *pro se* action into a single count. The parties and the Court will use this designation in all future pleadings and orders, unless otherwise directed by a judicial officer of this Court. The following claim survives threshold review:

Count 1 – Overall and Atchenson were deliberately indifferent to Plaintiff’s tooth infection and pain in violation of the Eighth Amendment when they delayed treating him and failed to refill his medication.

Prison officials impose cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the Eighth Amendment when they are deliberately indifferent to a serious medical need. *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976); *Chatham v. Davis*, 839 F.3d 679, 684 (7th Cir. 2016). In order to state a claim for deliberate indifference to a serious medical need, an inmate must show that he 1) suffered from an objectively serious medical condition; and 2) that the defendant was deliberately indifferent to a risk of serious harm from that condition. *Petties v. Carter*, 836 F.3d 722, 727 (7th Cir. 2016). An objectively serious condition includes an ailment that has been “diagnosed by a physician as mandating treatment,” one that significantly affects an individual’s daily activities, or which involves chronic and substantial pain. *Gutierrez v. Peters*, 111 F.3d 1364, 1373 (7th Cir. 1997). The subjective element requires proof that the defendant knew of facts from which he could infer that a substantial risk of serious harm exists, and he must actually draw the inference. *Zaya v. Sood*, 836 F.3d 800, 804 (7th Cir. 2016) (citing *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 837 (1994)).

“Delaying treatment may constitute deliberate indifference if such delay exacerbated the injury or unnecessarily prolonged an inmate’s pain.” *Gomez v. Randle*, 680 F.3d 859, 865 (7th Cir. 2012) (internal citations and quotations omitted); *see also Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 842 (1994). The Eighth Amendment does not give prisoners entitlement to “demand specific care” or “the best care possible,” but only requires “reasonable measures to meet a substantial risk of serious harm.” *Forbes v. Edgar*, 112 F.3d 262, 267 (7th Cir. 1997). Deliberate indifference may also be shown where medical providers persist in a course of treatment known to be ineffective. *Berry v. Peterman*, 604 F.3d 435, 441-42 (7th Cir. 2010); *Greeno v. Daley*, 414 F.3d 645, 655 (7th Cir. 2005).

Here Plaintiff has alleged that he suffered from a tooth infection. The Seventh Circuit has previously found that tooth decay, pain, and infection can be considered a serious medical need. *Berry v. Peterman*, 604 F.3d 435, 440 (7th Cir. 2010). Plaintiff has adequately pleaded the first element of a deliberate indifference claim. Plaintiff has also alleged that both Overall and Atchenson acted to delay his follow-up treatment by refusing to timely schedule an appointment for follow-up. He has alleged that Overall stopped treatment for his symptoms in the interterm. Both the delays and the failure to treat symptoms could be evidence of deliberate indifference. Therefore, **Count 1** shall be permitted to proceed against both defendants.

Pending Motions

Plaintiff has requested service of process at government expense. (Doc. 4). However, the federal courts are obligated to order service if a plaintiff is proceeding in forma pauperis. Fed R. Civ. P. 4(c). As Plaintiff was granted IFP status on November 15, 2017, (Doc. 6) his request for service at government expense is **MOOT**, because the Court is already required to serve the Defendants. (Doc. 4).

Plaintiff's Motion for Appointment of Counsel will be referred to a United States Magistrate Judge for disposition. (Doc. 3).

Disposition

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that **Count 1** survives against Overall and Atchenson. Plaintiff's Motion for Service of Process at Government Expense is **MOOT**. (Doc. 4).

IT IS ORDERED that the Clerk of Court shall prepare for Defendants Overall and Atchenson: (1) Form 5 (Notice of a Lawsuit and Request to Waive Service of a Summons), and (2) Form 6 (Waiver of Service of Summons). The Clerk is **DIRECTED** to mail these forms, a copy of the complaint, and this Memorandum and Order to each Defendant's place of

employment as identified by Plaintiff. If a Defendant fails to sign and return the Waiver of Service of Summons (Form 6) to the Clerk within 30 days from the date the forms were sent, the Clerk shall take appropriate steps to effect formal service on that Defendant, and the Court will require that Defendant to pay the full costs of formal service, to the extent authorized by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, with respect to a Defendant who no longer can be found at the work address provided by Plaintiff, the employer shall furnish the Clerk with the Defendant's current work address, or, if not known, the Defendant's last-known address. This information shall be used only for sending the forms as directed above or for formally effecting service. Any documentation of the address shall be retained only by the Clerk. Address information shall not be maintained in the court file or disclosed by the Clerk.

Defendants are **ORDERED** to timely file an appropriate responsive pleading to the complaint and shall not waive filing a reply pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(g).

Pursuant to Local Rule 72.1(a)(2), this action is **REFERRED** to a United States Magistrate Judge for further pre-trial proceedings.

Further, this entire matter is **REFERRED** to a United States Magistrate Judge for disposition, as contemplated by Local Rule 72.2(b)(2) and 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), *should all the parties consent to such a referral.*

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if judgment is rendered against Plaintiff, and the judgment includes the payment of costs under Section 1915, Plaintiff will be required to pay the full amount of the costs, notwithstanding that his application to proceed *in forma pauperis* has been granted. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(f)(2)(A).

Plaintiff is **ADVISED** that at the time application was made under 28 U.S.C. § 1915 for leave to commence this civil action without being required to prepay fees and costs or give security for the same, the applicant and his or her attorney were deemed to have entered into a stipulation that the recovery, if any, secured in the action shall be paid to the Clerk of the Court, who shall pay therefrom all unpaid costs taxed against plaintiff and remit the balance to plaintiff.

Local Rule 3.1(c)(1)

Finally, Plaintiff is **ADVISED** that he is under a continuing obligation to keep the Clerk of Court and each opposing party informed of any change in his address; the Court will not independently investigate his whereabouts. This shall be done in writing and not later than **7 days** after a transfer or other change in address occurs. Failure to comply with this order will cause a delay in the transmission of court documents and may result in dismissal of this action for want of prosecution. *See* FED. R. CIV. P. 41(b).

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: January 3, 2018

s/J. Phil Gilbert
U.S. District Judge