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## Boy hurt in accident gets \$1.52m in damages



The scene of the accident in Whampoa Road in 2011, when a taxi crashed into a railing that then fell onto the boy, then aged seven. He sustained head injuries which affected his cognitive ability, impairing his IQ, memory and verbal skills. ST FILE PHOTO

A 12-year-old boy who suffered severe injury five years ago when a taxi crashed into a railing that then fell on him will get \$1.52 million in damages from the driver's insurer in a court-sanctioned deal.

The consent judgment issued by Justice Andrew Ang last week, after the parties came to an agreement, averted a full trial next year to assess how much he should get.

The insurer had admitted liability for the accident two years ago, and at issue were the sums payable for pain and suffering, the extent of the boy's injuries, the impact on his future earnings and the cost of future care, among other things.

The boy, then seven, was walking with his mother, Madam Elaine Sng, on a pavement in Whampoa Road on March 16, 2011, at about 10.15pm, when the accident occurred.

Among other things, the boy sustained head injuries which affected his cognitive ability, impairing his IQ, memory and verbal skills. His eyesight was partially affected and weakness on his left side caused him to walk with a limp.

The serious injury prevented him from carrying on with his Primary 1 studies. Instead, he repeated kindergarten while he rehabilitated.

Although he recovered sufficiently to attend school and is due to sit the PSLE next year, he continues to have permanent disabilities despite extensive medical treatment.

Madam Sng, 43, sued the driver Sng Chin Wah, 50, on her son's behalf. Sng was separately convicted in 2013 of driving in a rash manner and jailed for two months and disqualified from driving for four years. He was also jailed concurrently for one month and fined \$4,000 for failing to provide a specimen for a breathalyser test at the time of his arrest.

Madam Sng's lawyers Raj Singh Shergill and Chia Aileen successfully argued in the run-up to the settlement that the boy was aware of his plight and thus felt more acutely his limitations, which deepened his pain and suffering. Moreover, his losses would span a longer period because there was no shortening of his expected lifespan. Medical reports from 18 doctors involved in his treatment were produced.

The defendants also agreed to pay about \$114,000 in costs and disbursements. Madam Sng said yesterday: "We were touched by the effort of Singaporeans who rallied around our child. These included the staff of St Andrew's Junior School, the medical team at KK Women's and Children's Hospital and neurosurgeon Keith Goh.

"His life and our lives have changed since the accident and may never be the same again, but by God's grace, we have grown closer as a family. We have learnt to see life through his eyes and be grateful for the little blessings. At least our child is still with us."

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