IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA



IN RE: Bard Implanted Port Catheter Products Liability Litigation,

MDL No. 3081

CASE MANAGEMENT ORDER NO. 15

(Fourth Case Management Conference)

(Applies to All Actions)

The Court held a fourth Case Management Conference on March 1, 2024. This order reflects matters discussed and decided during the conference.

I. Proposed Case Management Orders.

The parties have proposed a Case Management Order on records collection. Doc. 456. The Court has reviewed the proposed order and will adopt it with one change to paragraph 15 that was discussed during the conference.

The parties have proposed a Case Management Order that sets forth a deposition protocol. Doc. 457. The Court and parties discussed a number of issues in the proposed protocol, including that the seven-hour time limit for fact depositions should include all parties' questioning (see ¶¶ 13, 21(c)), a typo in paragraph 14 and the need to delete the reference in that paragraph to possible three-day depositions, the need for agreement on the payment of fees for expert depositions, and language encouraging consideration of remote

depositions (see ¶¶ 18-19). The Court has also identified a typo in the heading of paragraph 15. The parties will revise the joint proposed order and resubmit it by **March 27, 2024**.

The parties have proposed a Case Management Order on Plaintiff and Defendant Fact Sheets. Doc. 458. The Court has reviewed the order and will adopt it with proofing corrections to be shared with the parties before the order is filed.

The parties have proposed a Case Management Order on evidence preservation. Doc. 459. The Court raised several issues that require clarification, including overlapping references to "Steelgate" and "The Storage Facility," somewhat inconsistent references to a chain of custody form, the need to clarify "protocols" and whether they exist or will be developed in the future, and clarifications in the final two paragraphs of the proposed order. The parties will revise the joint proposed order and resubmit it to the Court by **March 27**, **2024**.

II. Adding Port Reservoir Allegations to the MDL.

On February 5, 2024, the JPML added port reservoir claims to this MDL. Doc. 366. Plaintiffs shall file an Amended Master Complaint that adds the port reservoir claims included in the original proposed Master Complaint as soon as possible, and in any event by March 27, 2024. Plaintiffs do not believe the current Short Form Complaint requires amendment to accommodate the new claims. Plaintiff Profile Forms (PPFs) should be amended to include the original port-reservoir questions in the proposed forms. The parties shall propose a method for accomplishing this amendment as soon as possible. The amended form will be used for all PPFs due on or after March 15, 2024. Any revisions to PPFs that were produced before that date shall be submitted to Defendants by May 1, 2024.

III. Discovery Issues.

The parties submitted a joint report before the Case Management Conference that included a substantial discussion of the current size of this MDL, concerns by Defendants that proposed discovery will be disproportionate if the MDL does not grow as Plaintiffs have predicted, and various discovery issues on which the parties have been conferring. Doc. 451. Defendants also expressed concern that the bellwether process which starts on

April 1, 2024 (CMO 10, Doc. 115) will be based on an insufficient sampling of the MDL cases if the MDL does grow as Plaintiffs have predicted.

This MDL currently includes about 115 cases. Plaintiffs predicted in previous conferences that the MDL will grow to several thousand cases. Plaintiffs stated during the current conference that they still hold that belief and that many new cases are being processed for filing.

After reviewing the parties' joint report, reviewing statistics from the IVC Filter MDL previously handled by this Court, and hearing extended comments from the parties, the Court concluded that current discovery expectations should not be changed and the bellwether process should proceed as scheduled. This conclusion is based in part on the growth rate of the IVC filter litigation as determined from a review of the Court's CM/ECF system:

<u>Time Period</u>	Cases Filed
August 2015 to February 2016	225
February 2, 2016 to August 18, 20	634
August 19, 2016 to February 18, 207	698
February 19, 2017 to August 18, 2017	899
August 19, 2017 to February 18, 2018	1183
February 19, 2018 to August 18, 2018	778
August 19, 2018 to February 18, 2019	2138
February 19, 2019 to May31, 2019	<u>1748</u>
Total	8305

As these numbers show, the filter MDL grew slowly at first and faster in later years, with 81% of the cases being filed more than 18 months after the MDL began. In light of this relevant experience, the Court cannot conclude that the current case count in this MDL suggests it will be significantly smaller than Plaintiffs have predicted.

Defense counsel stated during the conference that 407 cases had been filed when the bellwether process started in the filter MDL in the Spring of 2016. This number accords

count in the filter litigation. The 115 cases pending in this MDL would be a significantly smaller sample size than in the filter MDL, but Plaintiffs predicted during the conference that significant additional filings will happen in the coming weeks, increasing the pool for bellwether selection.

In light of this discussion with the parties, and further discussions on other discovery issues, the Court reached the following conclusions during the conference:

with the numbers set forth above. While 407 cases certainly constitute a more

representative sample than 115, they still represented less than 5% of the eventual total case

A. Defendants' Proposed Limitation on ESI Custodians.

The Court will not adopt Defendants' proposal that ESI custodians be limited to 25.

B. Defendants' Proposed Limitation on Further Written Discovery.

The Court will not adopt Defendants' proposal that Plaintiffs be permitted additional written discovery only with leave of court.

C. Custodian Selection and Search Term Determination.

To promptly complete the important process of identifying ESI custodians whose records will be searched and the terms that will be used to search them, the Court established the following schedule:

- Week of March 4: The parties shall meet and confer about the custodians to be searched in this case, working off Defendants' proposed 41 custodians and Plaintiffs proposed 80. The parties shall also confer on narrowing and focusing the search terms based on the parties' current proposals.
- Week of March 11: Defendants shall run hit reports on their current proposed search terms and 300 of Plaintiffs' proposed terms (to be selected by Plaintiffs), unless the parties are able to agree on some other set of terms to use. The hit reports shall be produced to Plaintiffs by March 15, 2024. The reports should be run on custodians to which the parties have agreed. Because files of all custodians may not be available in a searchable format by the week of March 11,

Defendants should use their best efforts to run hit reports on as many agreedupon custodial files as possible, and as representative a sample as possible.

- Week of March 18: The parties shall meet and confer to see if they can reach agreement on custodians and search terms in light of their preceding discussions and the hit reports. If they cannot reach full agreement, they shall specifically identify as many of the custodians and search terms as they do agree on.¹
- By March 27, 2024, the parties shall file a report on their discussions. If they
 have not reached full agreement, they shall specifically identify the custodians
 and terms on which they have agreed and the custodians and search terms that
 remain in dispute, with general descriptions of the parties' positions on the
 disputed custodians and terms.
- At 9:00 am Phoenix time on March 29, 2024, the Court will convene a video conference with the parties to resolve any disputed items. The parties should reserve the full day for the conference to ensure there is sufficient time to complete this work. By the end of the day, the Court will decide the final list of custodians and search terms to be used in the ESI production in this case. The Court reminded the parties that they will do a better job of choosing custodians and terms than the undersigned judge, and encouraged them to reach agreement to the greatest extent possible before filing the March 27, 2024 report.

D. Production of U.S. Communications With Foreign Regulators.

The Court concludes that Plaintiffs should be permitted to obtain the results of focused searches for communications by Defendants' U.S. employees with foreign regulators. The communications have relevance on issues such as alternative designs, available safety measures, and Defendants' knowledge of hazards, but the searches for these communications should be narrowly focused on relevant topics to avoid undue burden. So

¹ Last week, Merriam-Webster announced that it is now "permissible in English for a preposition to be what you end a sentence with." Merriam-Webster, *The Words of the Week – Mar. 1*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/the-words-of-the-week-mar-1 (last visited Mar. 4, 2024).

focused, the Court concludes that this discovery is not disproportionate to the issues in this

case. Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1). The parties should include this discovery in the discussions

outlined above and report the results in their March 27, 2024 report. IV. Deadline for Substantial Completion.

For reasons discussed during the conference, the Court concludes that the production of documents in this case should occur in phases, tied to depositions Plaintiffs plan to take, to ensure that relevant documents are produced before depositions are taken and that depositions are not delayed until late in the fact discovery period. The Court proposed that the parties break the depositions into three phases, August-September, October-November, and December-January, with Plaintiffs identifying in advance the witnesses they intend to depose in each phase. The Court recognizes that preferred depositions can change as discovery progresses; Plaintiffs should make their best efforts to identify witnesses for each phase and to notify Defendants of a change in plans far enough in advance for Defendants to adjust their document production without undue burden. The Court proposed that the parties identify a substantial completion deadline for each phase, which will allow Defendants to complete their production on a rolling basis while allowing depositions to move forward in time to meet the discovery deadline. The parties are not bound by the specifics of the Court's recommendations, and should jointly propose a Case Management Order on this subject with their March 27, 2024 report.

V. Plaintiff Profile Forms.

Defendants described considerable difficulty obtaining completed PPFs in this case. Of the cases filed so far, 61 PPFs were produced in an incomplete form. Defendants have followed up with the respective Plaintiffs' counsel, but 34 remain incomplete. 24 of these Plaintiffs have produced amended PPFs, their disclosures remain incomplete, and their counsel have assured Defendants that further disclosures are forthcoming. These 24 Plaintiffs are identified in Exhibit A to this order. An additional 10 Plaintiffs have failed to produce complete information. Although some have filed amended PPFs, counsel for these

Plaintiffs have promised no additional disclosures to Defendants. These 10 Plaintiffs are identified in Exhibit B to this order.

This is a serious problem. The Court's CMO 8 (Doc. 113) sets forth a detailed procedure, with specific compliance deadlines, that applies to every Plaintiff and every Plaintiff's counsel in this case. The procedures and schedules are intended to ensure that discovery in this MDL can proceed efficiently, and that the upcoming bellwether selection process can be fair to both sides. Plaintiffs and their counsel who fail to comply with CMO 8 jeopardize the fairness and efficiency of these proceedings, and this problem will only grow as the number of cases increases. The Court will be required to take action to remedy this problem if difficulties persist. All counsel who represent Plaintiffs in this MDL are admonished to comply fully with CMO 8, and to do so promptly. Plaintiffs identified in Exhibits A and B shall complete their production of full PPFs by May 1, 2024.

Plaintiffs' leadership agrees with these concerns and stands ready to assist in securing full compliance with CMO 8. In addition to copying Plaintiffs' leadership on initial deficiency letters, Defendants should keep Plaintiffs' leadership apprised of their communications with individual Plaintiff attorneys whose clients have not made full disclosures. Plaintiffs' leadership should designate one or more attorneys to work closely with defense counsel on this issue. The parties should provide an update in their **March 27**, **2024** joint report.

Defense counsel requested leave to file motions to dismiss against (1) Plaintiffs who have produced no PPF within the time allotted in CMO 8, and (2) Plaintiffs who died before the filing of their cases. The Court directed defense counsel to confer with counsel for these Plaintiffs and provide an update in the March 27, 2024 joint report. The Court will address this issue during the March 29, 2024 hearing and will authorize motions to dismiss where appropriate.

VI. Privilege Logs.

The parties shall provide a joint proposed Case Management Order on privilege logs to the Court by March 27, 2024.

VII. Conclusion. The next Case Management Conference will be held on March 29, 2024. The Court appreciates the efforts of Plaintiffs' leadership counsel and defense counsel to work cooperatively in managing this MDL. The tone of written filings has also improved, which is appreciated as well. Dated this 5th day of March, 2024. David G. Camplell David G. Campbell Senior United States District Judge

Exhibit A

Plaintiff and Member Case No.	Date of Deficiency Notice	Date of Amended PPF	Missing information remaining
Axley, Karen 2:23-cv-02520-DGC	January 19, 2024	February 21, 2024 ¹	Incomplete PPF: • information regarding the subsequent device that was implanted on December 9, 2022
Bigsbee, Beverly 2:23-cv-2021-DGC	January 4, 2024	January 18, 2024	 Missing medical records: no removal operative report no medical records confirming product identification (although product identification provided via handwritten note)
Bradford, Tashera 2:23-cv-2123-DGC	January 19, 2024	January 29, 2024	 No product identification: no product code for device one or device two no lot number for device one or device two Incomplete PPF: Device One: no lot number, no product code, no removing physician, no date of removal, no removal records, no information regarding subsequent device Device Two: no lot number, no product code, unknown implant date, no implanting physician, no implant records, no removal information, no removing physician, no date of removal

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¹ This Amended Fact Sheet was submitted late.

			 Missing medical records: no product identification for device one or device two no implant operative report for device one or device two no removal operative report for device one or device two Verification: improper verification of Amended PPF no verification for Device 2 PPF
Canales, Sylvia 2:23-cv-1764-DGC	January 19, 2024	January 31, 2024	No product identification:
Criner, Stacey 2:23-cv-1707-DGC	N/A	N/A	Invalid product identification:invalid lot number provided
Cunningham, Jean 2:23-cv-1625-DGC	February 15, 2024	February 23, 2024	Insufficient product identification: • no lot number for Device One
Curry, Tammy 2:23-cv-1756-DGC	January 23, 2024	February 7, 2024	No product identification: no lot numberno product code
Doner, Teddy 2:23-cv-1757-DGC	N/A	N/A	Invalid Product Identification:invalid lot number provided for Device Two
Ellis, Mary 2:23-cv-1705-DGC	January 23, 2024	February 7, 2024	Missing medical records: no implant operative report
Franks, Carrie 2:23-cv-2163-DGC	January 19, 2024	January 26, 2024	Incomplete PPF:• information regarding the subsequent device

Cream Dahagas	January 4	Laman	Verification: • No verification for substantive information in amended PPF
Green Rebecca	January 4,	January	Missing medical records:no implant operative report
2:23-cv-1704-DGC	2024	18, 2024	
Hawkins, Vera	January 4,	January	 Missing medical records: no implant operative report no removal operative report
2:23-cv-02020-DGC	2024	19, 2024	
James, Peter	January 4,	January 8,	No product identification:
2:23-cv-02669-DGC	2024	2024	
Kessler, Paul	January 4,	January	Insufficient product identification:
2:23-cv-1696-DGC	2024	18, 2024	
Prentice, Lori 2:23-cv-0627-DGC	January 23, 2024	February 7, 2024	 Incomplete PPF: information regarding the subsequent device Verification: no verification for substantive information in amended PPF
McKinley, Donald 2:23-cv-1702-DGC	January 4, 2024	January 9, 2024 (First Amended) ; January 17, 2024 (Second Amended)	Missing medical records: • no removal operative report

Gay, Paisami	January 4,	February	Missing medical records:
2:23-cv-1755-DGC	2024	9, 2024	 no removal operative
			report
Reed, Auntron	N/A	N/A	No product identification:
2:23-cv-02695-DGC			• no lot number
			no product code
Russow, Hiliary	January 4,	January	Missing medical records:
2:23-cv-1701-DGC	2024	18, 2024	 no implant operative
			report
			 no removal operative
			report
Sanders, Michelle	January 19,	February	Verification:
2:23-cv-1698-DGC	2024	6, 2024	 improper verification to
			Amended PPF that
			provided substantive
			information
Smith, Tracie Lewis	January 23,	February	Insufficient product
2:23-cv-1709-DGC	2024	7, 2024	identification:
			 no lot number
Sorensen, Lloyd	January 30,	February	No product identification:
2:23-cv-2557-DGC	2024	14, 2024	no lot number
			 no product code
			Verification:
			 amended PPF with new
			substantive information
			was not verified
Sours, Jay	N/A	N/A	Invalid product identification:
2:23-cv-1706-DGC			 invalid lot number
			provided
Stone, Cindy	February 7,	February	Insufficient product
2:23-cv-02696-DGC	2024	21, 2024	identification:
			 no lot number
			Missing medical records:
			 no removal operative
			report
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Exhibit B

Plaintiff and Member Case No.	Date of Deficiency Notice	Date of Amended PPF	Missing Information Remaining
Nicosia, Danielle	January	NONE	No product identification:
2:23-cv-2122-DGC	23, 2024		 no lot number
			 no product code
			Incomplete PPF:
			• it is unclear whether
			subsequent product is at issue
			in this lawsuit and plaintiff
			did not respond to deficiency
			letter asking for clarification
Songy, Brandie	January	NONE	Incomplete PPF:
2:23-cv-1699-DGC	19, 2024		 did not provide Plaintiff's
			former name or occupation
Zumalt, Tyler	January	NONE	Incomplete PPF Device 2:
2:23-cv-1697-DGC	19, 2024		 no type of infection identified
			 no date of complication
			diagnosis identified
			 no medical provider who
			identified and/or treated the
			complication identified
			Missing medical records Device 2:
			 no records reflecting
			diagnosis of alleged
			complication
			Verification
			 no verification for Device 2
			PPF
Beltz, Dana	January	February	Verification:
2:23-cv-1640-DGC	23, 2024	7, 2024	 no verification for substantive
			information in amended PPF
Cabello, Christopher	January 4,	January	Missing medical records:
or Elizabeth	2024	18, 2024	 no implant operative report
(deceased)			PPF claims and Complaint claims
2:23-cv-01729-DGC			are not consistent:
			• it is unclear (and inconsistent)
			whether this is a wrongful
			death claim, or a survivor

			claim with loss of consortium. • The original Complaint is plead as a wrongful death claim. The SFC is improperly filed in the decedent's name and is plead as a survival claim, but no loss of consortium is alleged. The initial PPF indicates that it is a survival claim and alleges pain and anxiety, but no loss of consortium. The amended PPF alleges loss of consortium.
Divelbliss, Kimberly 2:23-cv-1627-DGC	February 1, 2024	February 9, 2024	 Medical records and claims in Amended PPF do not match: Based on our review of the medical records, Plaintiff had multiple ports implanted, and because the medical records produced and the claims in the PPF and Amended PPF do not match, Defendants cannot tell which port(s) are at issue or whether the medical records produced relate to the port at issue. In the Amended PPF, for example, Plaintiff alleges that she "seeks damages only for the failure of a device installed on 7/13/17 at Las Palmas Medical Center," but she produced medical records dated 07/13/17 showing that a port was implanted by a different doctor at a different facility. Plaintiff did not provide any implant records for any port implanted on that day at Las Palmas Medical Center.

Elwell, Shannon	January 4,	January	Missing medical records:
2:23-cv-1662-DGC	2024	18, 2024	• incomplete implant operative
			report
			• incomplete diagnostic records
Hawkins, Tiffany	January	February	Unable to determine what product
2:23-cv-1735-DGC	23, 2024	7, 2024	is at issue in the lawsuit:
			 SFC and PPF identify
			different lot numbers and
			implant dates. Medical
			records show yet a third
			possible implant date and no
			lot number.
			Verification:
			 no verification for substantive
			information in amended PPF
Hickman, LaDawn	February	February	Missing medical records:
2:23-cv-02721-DGC	19, 2024	21, 2024	 no removal operative report
			Incomplete PPF:
			 PPF is unclear with respect to
			whether catheter fragments
			were removed on 1/4/22, or
			the device as a whole was
			removed on 1/4/22
Willis, Ann	January	February	Verification:
2:23-cv-02604-DGC	30, 2024	14, 2024	 No verification for
			substantive information in
			amended PPF