



Legal team: Gerard O'Donnell

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step for him because of what happened. But he really likes Galway.

'It's where he has a lot of friends and he has a job with Boston Scientific to return to,' Mr O'Donnell added.

'I don't know the full ins and outs of where he will live but Praveen won't be returning to the house he shared with Savita.'

'He never went back, and he moved out very shortly after she died,' said the lawyer.

'It was a rented house and he never returned to it again.'

'His friends collected his belongings for him.'

It is understood the action is for damages related to the loss of his wife and the shock and distress this caused.

One aspect of the damages being sought will be the potential loss of earnings from Savita's death.

She had just qualified as a dentist in Ireland and had a promising career ahead of her.

An additional aspect of the claim

'He's been a long time away'

regards her constitutional right to life and the obligation the State had to protect that life.

Savita died on October 28, 2012, a week after she was admitted to Galway University Hospital with a threatened miscarriage at 17 weeks pregnant.

Praveen later revealed the couple's repeated requests for a termination was denied. She died of septicaemia. The shocking episode made headlines around the world and threw a spotlight on our abortion laws. The Government subsequently passed the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 as international pressure mounted.

As a result, doctors can now give the go-ahead for abortions where they believe there is a real and substantial risk to the life of the mother and that risk includes the threat of suicide.

Women who have been refused an abortion can now challenge the decision to a panel of doctors.

News of Praveen's return comes as he and Savita's family and friends mark the second anniversary today of her tragic death.

Candlelit vigils will be held this evening in St Stephen's Green in Dublin and in Eyre Square in Galway. An hour of 'silence and solidarity' will be observed from 6pm.

There will also be an 'online vigil'

Praveen 'will not find it easy to return'



Tragedy: Galway University Hospital where Savita died

for Savita on Twitter and Facebook this evening between 6pm and 7pm.

Mr O'Donnell said: 'I've no handle on exactly how he will feel returning but I can't see it will be easy on him.'

'He's been a long time away and I've no doubt that coming back will bring back a lot of memories.'

'Nonetheless, he has a full-time job.'

On the impending court case, the Galway-based solicitor added: 'The case is definitely going ahead.'

'The Notice Of Trial will be served in the next few weeks and we expect the hearing into the case to be held early next spring.'

As far as how much Praveen could expect in damages, Mr O'Donnell said: 'It is very difficult to quantify.'

'He didn't initially instruct us to sue the HSE.'

'But as he went through all the inquiries, it was another course of action that presented itself.'

As well as the civil action for dam-

ages, a fitness-to-practise hearing is likely to follow as a complaint is believed to have been made against a hospital staff member to the Irish Medical Council, which has previously declined to comment.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland has also yet to publish details of its own review of a disciplinary process that is 'still under way'

'He didn't initially instruct us to sue'

in regard to two more members of staff.

There have been three enquiries so far into Savita Halappanavar's death, including one by HIQA and an internal investigation at the hospital.

The October 2013 HIQA report was damning.

It concluded that Savita was

denied the 'most basic care' at Galway University Hospital.

It found her death from septic shock from Ecoli infection could have been prevented if the hospital had learned from the tragic death of garda Tania McCabe five years previously.

It found that staff missed 13 opportunities to intervene in her care which may have saved her life.

The probe said there were 'disturbing similarities' between Savita's case and that of Mrs McCabe, who died after developing septic shock following premature rupture of the membranes at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda in 2007.

Savita's membranes ruptured after her admission, putting her at high risk of infection but staff failed to notice the signs of the infection until it was too late.

The HIQA inquiry found that ultimate clinical accountability rested with Savita's consultant obstetrician, Dr Katherine Astbury. It stated that

Dr Astbury was the most senior clinical decision-maker and should have been suitably clinically experienced and competent to interpret clinical findings and act accordingly.

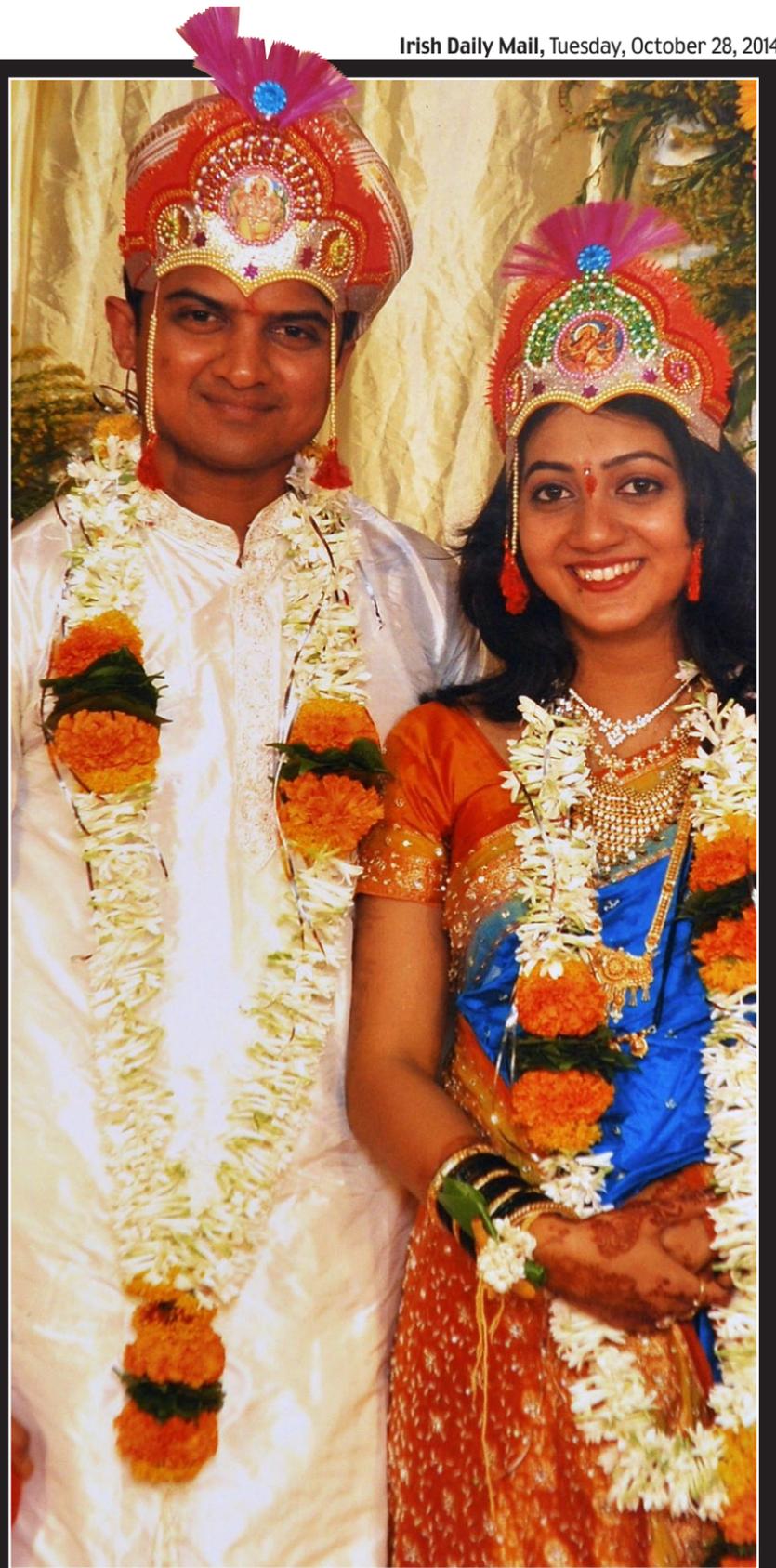
The report found the consultant and non-consultant hospital doctors as well as midwifery and nursing staff were responsible and accountable for ensuring she got the right care at the right time, but didn't fulfil their responsibilities.

The inquiry found evidence of a number of retrospective entries into her medical notes made two weeks after her death.

And in September, it emerged that Galway University Hospital had disciplined staff over what happened.

But the first time Praveen's solicitor knew any action had been taken was when he was contacted by an RTE journalist for comment at 7.30am on September 11 - days after the action had been taken.

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Active: Savita and Praveen were deeply involved in the Hindu community



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Higgins's nod to poet

PRESIDENT Michael D Higgins began his two-day State trip to Wales with a speech in tribute to famous Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

At a dinner in Swansea alongside the Welsh first minister Carwyn Jones, the President acknowledged the passing of 100 years since the birth of Thomas who died in 1954 at the age of 39.

In his speech he emphasised the Irish links with the poet's beloved

By Eamon Donoghue

wife Caitlin, 'herself the daughter of Irish parents.' He added that for the two nations, 'language has brought us, and continues to bring us, together. Through our parliaments, our scholars, our fine and unparalleled literary traditions.'

The President is set to visit the Ireland-Wales programme hosted by Swansea University today.



In praise of a poet: President Higgins with Hannah Ellis, grand-daughter of Dylan Thomas in Swansea