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7 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
8 **EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**
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10 MARIA AGUILAR,) 1: 16-CV-01883 - DAD - JLT
11 Plaintiff,)
12 v.) SCHEDULING ORDER¹ (Fed. R. Civ. P. 16)
13 MCKESSON CORPORATION, et al.,)
14 Defendants.) Pleading Amendment Deadline: 11/13/2017
15)
16) Discovery Deadlines:
17) Initial Disclosures: 3/30/2017
18) Non-Expert: 5/25/2018
19) Expert: 9/14/2018
20) Mid-Discovery Status Conference:
21) 1/5/2018 at 9:00 a.m.
22)
23) Non-Dispositive Motion Deadlines:
24) Filing: 9/28/2018
25) Hearing: 10/26/2018
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27) Dispositive/*Daubert* Motion Deadlines:
28) Filing: 11/9/2018
29) Hearing: 12/19/2018
30)
31) Settlement Conference:
32) 12/17/2018 at 9:30 a.m.
33) 510 19th Street, Bakersfield, CA
34)
35) Pre-Trial Conference:
36) 1/28/2019 at 3:30 p.m.
37) Courtroom 5
38)

1 Due to a calculation error by the Court, some of the dates here are different from those discussed at the hearing. The dates in this order control.

1 Trial: 3/26/2019 at 8:30 a.m.
2 Courtroom 5
3 Jury trial: 21 days

4 **I. Date of Scheduling Conference**

5 March 15, 2017.

6 **II. Appearances of Counsel**

7 Jeremy Shafer and Peter Lewis² appeared on behalf of Plaintiff.

8 Alicia Donahue appeared on behalf of Defendants.

9 **III. Magistrate Judge Consent:**

10 **Notice of Congested Docket and Court Policy of Trailing**

11 Due to the District Judges' heavy caseload, the newly adopted policy of the Fresno Division of
12 the Eastern District is to trail all civil cases. The parties are hereby notified that for a trial date set
13 before a District Judge, the parties will trail indefinitely behind any higher priority criminal or older
14 civil case set on the same date until a courtroom becomes available. The trial date will not be reset to a
continued date.

15 The Magistrate Judges' availability is far more realistic and accommodating to parties than that of the U.S. District Judges who carry the heaviest caseloads in the nation and who must prioritize
16 criminal and older civil cases over more recently filed civil cases. A United States Magistrate Judge
17 may conduct trials, including entry of final judgment, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), Federal Rule of
18 Civil Procedure 73, and Local Rule 305. Any appeal from a judgment entered by a United States
19 Magistrate Judge is taken directly to the United States Court of Appeal for the Ninth Circuit.

20 The Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California, whenever possible, is utilizing United
21 States Article III District Court Judges from throughout the nation as Visiting Judges. Pursuant to the
22 Local Rules, Appendix A, such reassignments will be random, and the parties will receive no advance
23 notice before their case is reassigned to an Article III District Court Judge from outside of the Eastern
24 District of California.

25 Therefore, the parties are directed to consider consenting to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction to

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28 ² The Court notes that Mr. Lewis is not a member of this Court and, it appears, he is not a member of the California
State Bar either. He **SHALL NOT** appear in any court in this District again unless he first is admitted to membership
in this Court whether by pro hac vice application or otherwise.

1 conduct all further proceedings, including trial. **Within 10 days** of the date of this order, counsel
2 **SHALL** file a consent/decline form (provided by the Court at the inception of this case) indicating
3 whether they will consent to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Judge.

4 **IV. Pleading Amendment Deadline**

5 Any requested pleading amendments are ordered to be filed, either through a stipulation or
6 motion to amend, no later than **June 12, 2017**. Any motion to amend the pleadings shall be heard by
7 the Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United States District Court Judge.

8 **V. Discovery Plan and Cut-Off Date**

9 The parties are ordered to exchange the initial disclosures required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1)
10 on or before **November 13, 2017**.

11 The parties are ordered to complete all discovery pertaining to non-experts on or before **May**
12 **25, 2018**, and all discovery pertaining to experts on or before **September 14, 2018**.

13 Plaintiff is directed to disclose all expert witnesses³, in writing, on or before **June 8, 2018**.
14 Defendants shall disclose all expert witnesses, in writing, on or before **July 2, 2018**. Plaintiff shall
15 disclose all rebuttal experts on or before **July 23, 2018**. The written designation of retained and non-
16 retained experts shall **be made pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. Rule 26(a)(2), (A), (B), and (C) and shall**
17 **include all information required thereunder**. Failure to designate experts in compliance with this
18 order may result in the Court excluding the testimony or other evidence offered through such experts
19 that are not disclosed pursuant to this order.

20 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(4) and (5) shall apply to all discovery relating to experts
21 and their opinions. Experts must be fully prepared to be examined on all subjects and opinions
22 included in the designation. Failure to comply will result in the imposition of sanctions, which may
23 include striking the expert designation and preclusion of expert testimony.

24 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(e) regarding a party's duty to timely supplement
25 disclosures and responses to discovery requests will be strictly enforced.

26 A mid-discovery status conference is scheduled for **January 5, 2018** at 9:00 a.m. before the
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28 ³ In the event an expert will offer opinions related to an independent medical or mental health evaluation, the
examination **SHALL** occur sufficiently in advance of the disclosure deadline so the expert's report fully details the expert's
opinions in this regard.

1 Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, U.S. Magistrate Judge, located at 510 19th Street, Bakersfield,
2 California. Counsel SHALL file a joint mid-discovery status conference report one week before the
3 conference. Counsel also SHALL lodge the status report via e-mail to JLTorders@caed.uscourts.gov.
4 The joint statement SHALL outline the discovery counsel have completed and that which needs to be
5 completed as well as any impediments to completing the discovery within the deadlines set forth in this
6 order. Counsel may appear via teleconference by dialing (888) 557-8511 and entering Access Code
7 1652736, provided the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Deputy Clerk receives a written notice of the
8 intent to appear telephonically no later than five court days before the noticed hearing date.

9 **VI. Pre-Trial Motion Schedule**

10 All non-dispositive pre-trial motions, including any discovery motions, shall be filed no later
11 than **September 28, 2018** and heard on or before **October 26, 2018**. Discovery motions are heard
12 before the Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, United States Magistrate Judge at the United States
13 Courthouse in Bakersfield, California. For these hearings, counsel may appear via teleconference by
14 dialing (888) 557-8511 and entering Access Code 1652736, provided the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom
15 Deputy Clerk receives a written notice of the intent to appear telephonically no later than five court
16 days before the noticed hearing date. All other non-dispositive hearings SHALL be set before Judge
17 Drozd.

18 **No motion to amend or stipulation to amend the case schedule will be entertained unless it**
19 **is filed at least one week before the first deadline the parties wish to extend.** Likewise, no written
20 discovery motions shall be filed without the prior approval of the assigned Magistrate Judge. A party
21 with a discovery dispute must first confer with the opposing party in a good faith effort to resolve by
22 agreement the issues in dispute. If that good faith effort is unsuccessful, the moving party promptly
23 shall seek a telephonic hearing with all involved parties and the Magistrate Judge. It shall be the
24 obligation of the moving party to arrange and originate the conference call to the court. To schedule
25 this telephonic hearing, the parties are ordered to contact the Courtroom Deputy Clerk, Susan Hall, at
26 (661) 326-6620 or via email at SHall@caed.uscourts.gov. **Counsel must comply with Local Rule 251**
27 **with respect to discovery disputes or the motion will be denied without prejudice and dropped**
28 **from the Court's calendar.**

1 All dispositive pre-trial motions, including *Daubert* motions, shall be filed no later than
2 **November 9, 2018** and heard no later than **December 19, 2018**, in Courtroom 5 a.m. before the
3 Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United States District Court Judge. In scheduling such motions, counsel
4 shall comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 56 and Local Rules 230 and 260.

5 **VII. Motions for Summary Judgment or Summary Adjudication**

6 At least 21 days before filing a motion for summary judgment or motion for summary
7 adjudication, the parties are **ORDERED** to meet, in person or by telephone, to confer about the issues
8 to be raised in the motion.

9 The purpose of the meeting shall be to: 1) avoid filing motions for summary judgment where a
10 question of fact exists; 2) determine whether the respondent agrees that the motion has merit in whole
11 or in part; 3) discuss whether issues can be resolved without the necessity of briefing; 4) narrow the
12 issues for review by the court; 5) explore the possibility of settlement before the parties incur the
13 expense of briefing a motion; and 6) to develop a joint statement of undisputed facts.

14 The moving party **SHALL** initiate the meeting and **SHALL** provide a complete, proposed
15 statement of undisputed facts at least five days before the conference. The finalized joint statement of
16 undisputed facts **SHALL** include all facts that the parties agree, for purposes of the motion, may be
17 deemed true. In addition to the requirements of Local Rule 260, the moving party shall file the joint
18 statement of undisputed facts.

19 In the notice of motion the moving party **SHALL** certify that the parties have met and conferred
20 as ordered above, or set forth a statement of good cause for the failure to meet and confer. Failure to
21 comply may result in the motion being stricken.

22 **VIII. Pre-Trial Conference Date**

23 **January 28, 2019** at 3:30 p.m. in Courtroom 5 before Judge Drozd.

24 The parties are ordered to file a Joint Pretrial Statement pursuant to Local Rule 281(a)(2).

25 The parties are further directed to submit a digital copy of their pretrial statement in Word format,
26 directly to Judge Drozd's chambers, by email at DADorders@caed.uscourts.gov.

27 Counsels' attention is directed to Rules 281 and 282 of the Local Rules of Practice for the
28 Eastern District of California, as to the obligations of counsel in preparing for the pre-trial conference.

1 The Court will insist upon strict compliance with those rules. In addition to the matters set forth in the
2 Local Rules the Joint Pretrial Statement shall include a Joint Statement of the case to be used by the
3 Court to explain the nature of the case to the jury during voir dire.

4 **IX. Trial Date**

5 **March 26, 2019** at 8:30 a.m. in Courtroom 5 before the Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United
6 States District Court Judge.

7 A. This is a jury trial.
8 B. Counsels' Estimate of Trial Time: 21 days.
9 C. Counsels' attention is directed to Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of
10 California, Rule 285.

11 **X. Settlement Conference**

12 A Settlement Conference is scheduled **December 17, 2018** at 9:30 a.m., located at 510 19th
13 Street, Bakersfield, California. Notwithstanding the provisions of Local Rule 270(b), the settlement
14 conference will be conducted by Magistrate Judge Thurston. The Court deems the deviation from the
15 Local Rule to be appropriate and in the interests of the parties and justice and sound case management
16 based upon the location of the parties. If any party prefers that the settlement conference is conducted
17 by a judicial officer not already assigned to this case, that party is directed to notify the Court at least
18 60 days in advance of the scheduled settlement conference to allow sufficient time for another judicial
19 officer to be assigned to handle the conference.

20 Unless otherwise permitted in advance by the Court, **the attorneys who will try the case shall**
21 **appear** at the Settlement Conference **with the parties** and the person or persons having **full authority**
22 to negotiate and settle the case **on any terms**⁴ at the conference. Consideration of settlement is a
23 serious matter that requires preparation prior to the settlement conference. Set forth below are the
24 procedures the Court will employ, absent good cause, in conducting the conference.

25 At least 21 days before the settlement conference, Plaintiff SHALL submit to Defendant via fax

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27 ⁴ Insurance carriers, business organizations, and governmental bodies or agencies whose settlement agreements are
28 subject to approval by legislative bodies, executive committees, boards of directors or the like shall be represented by a
person or persons who occupy high executive positions in the party organization and who will be directly involved in the
process of approval of any settlement offers or agreements. To the extent possible the representative shall have the
authority, if he or she deems it appropriate, to settle the action on terms consistent with the opposing party's most recent
demand.

1 or e-mail, a written itemization of damages and a meaningful⁵ settlement demand, which includes a
2 brief explanation of why such a settlement is appropriate. Thereafter, no later than 14 days before the
3 settlement conference, Defendant **SHALL** respond via fax or e-mail, with an acceptance of the offer or
4 with a meaningful counteroffer, which includes a brief explanation of why such a settlement is
5 appropriate.

6 If settlement is not achieved, each party **SHALL** attach copies of their settlement offers to their
7 Confidential Settlement Conference Statement, as described below. Copies of these documents shall
8 not be filed on the court docket.

9 **CONFIDENTIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE STATEMENT**

10 At least five court days prior to the settlement conference, the parties shall submit, directly to
11 Judge Thurston's chambers by e-mail to JLTorders@caed.uscourts.gov, a Confidential Settlement
12 Conference Statement. The statement **should not be filed** with the Clerk of the Court **nor served on**
13 **any other party**, although the parties may file a Notice of Lodging of Settlement Conference
14 Statement. Each statement shall be clearly marked "confidential" with the date and time of the
15 Settlement Conference indicated prominently thereon.

16 The Confidential Settlement Conference Statement shall include the following:

17 A. A brief statement of the facts of the case.
18 B. A brief statement of the claims and defenses, i.e., statutory or other grounds upon which
19 the claims are founded; a forthright evaluation of the parties' likelihood of prevailing on
20 the claims and defenses; and a description of the major issues in dispute.
21 C. A summary of the proceedings to date.
22 D. An estimate of the cost and time to be expended for further discovery, pretrial and trial.
23 E. The relief sought.
24 F. The party's position on settlement, including present demands and offers and a history of
25 past settlement discussions, offers and demands.

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⁵ "Meaningful" means that the offer is reasonably calculated to settle the case on terms acceptable to the offering party. "Meaningful" does not include an offer which the offering party knows will not be acceptable to the other party.

XI. Request for Bifurcation, Appointment of Special Master, or other Techniques to Shorten Trial

Not applicable at this time.

XII. Related Matters Pending

There are no pending related matters.

XIII. Compliance with Federal Procedure

All counsel are expected to familiarize themselves with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of Practice of the Eastern District of California, and to keep abreast of any amendments thereto. The Court must insist upon compliance with these Rules if it is to efficiently handle its increasing case load and sanctions will be imposed for failure to follow the Rules as provided in both the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of California.

XIV. Effect of this Order

The foregoing order represents the best estimate of the court and counsel as to the agenda most suitable to dispose of this case. The trial date reserved is specifically reserved for this case. If the parties determine at any time that the schedule outlined in this order cannot be met, counsel are ordered to notify the court immediately of that fact so that adjustments may be made, either by stipulation or by subsequent status conference.

The dates set in this Order are considered to be firm and will not be modified absent a showing of good cause even if the request to modify is made by stipulation. Stipulations extending the deadlines contained herein will not be considered unless they are accompanied by affidavits or declarations, and where appropriate attached exhibits, which establish good cause for granting the relief requested.

Failure to comply with this order may result in the imposition of sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: **March 15, 2017**

/s/ Jennifer L. Thurston
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE