



November 16, 2009

Elizabeth Gill
Staff Attorney
ACLU of Northern California
39 Drumm Street
San Francisco, CA 94111

RE: UPDATE ON LGBT COMPETENCY AT COMMUNITY REGIONAL MED CENTER

Dear Ms. Gill:

Though we are still in the relatively early stages of our push to achieve higher LGBT competency – and cultural competency in general – much has happened since my letter to you in September. Here's a status report:

CULTURAL COMPETENCY TASK FORCE

As you know, in 2008 Community was funded by the California Endowment to obtain a comprehensive cultural-competency assessment. That assessment was conducted by the Center for Multicultural Competence in Healthcare Organizations (CMCHO), and recommendations were delivered to us. Among the recommendations were to enhance cultural-competency training and to further integrate cultural-competency into existing programs and policies.

A task force has been formed, and last week it met for four hours with Lawrence James, president of CMCHO, to discuss strategies for accomplishing the recommendations. At that meeting, LGBT competency was specifically discussed as one of the areas deserving attention. And Jack Chubb, CEO of the Regional Medical Center, identified a VP-level champion who will be responsible for moving these efforts forward.

LGBT-SPECIFIC TRAINING AND MEASUREMENT

Meanwhile, independently of the initiative noted above, we have been in contact with Shane Snowdon, director of the UC San Francisco LGBT Resource Center and advisory board member for the LGBT Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). Ms. Snowdon is scheduled to address medical residents and members of our medical staff in Fresno December 2. In addition, we are working to set up a meeting with her that same day to discuss employee training and steps for implementing the HEI. We have obtained detailed

information about the HEI and would like to participate in that assessment next fall. But we have not yet worked out the process or logistics for how best to participate. We hope to do that in the next month or two.

POLICY REVIEW

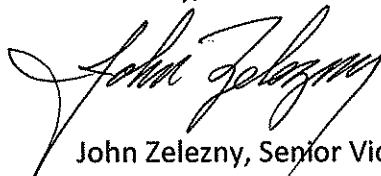
At the corporate level we have started a review of our patient-rights policy and other policies and documents. This review will include surveying best practices at other hospitals that were recommended as models by CMCHO. One place we're also focusing attention is the employee evaluation process. Last week our director for organizational development recommended to all hospital CEOs in our system that language be added to employee evaluation forms that specifically would require an assessment of competency working with LGBT patients and their families. The initial response to this recommended addition was favorable, though additional discussion and fine-tuning of the language must occur.

NEXT STEPS

The CMCHO assessment identified actual care delivery to a diverse patient population as a significant strength of Community Regional Medical Center. Yet, as noted above, the assessment also recommended significant enhancement of formal training and "policy integration." CMCHO will continue to guide us in this process. And in the past few weeks we have clarified some of the roles and specific individuals essential to doing a good job. Immediate next steps include: completing a best-practices review of other hospitals; completing our internal policy review and LGBT-specific language recommendations; beginning LGBT-specific staff training; and more aggressively dialoging with community-based cultural organizations, including the LGBT community. Along the way, we are also likely to seek additional grant funding, especially for the enhanced training program.

Again, thank you for your recommendations for how we might continue to improve and achieve our desired status as a national benchmark. I look forward to keeping you apprised of our progress.

Sincerely,



John Zelezny, Senior Vice President
Chief Communications Officer