

18 September 2008

Letter sent to each Individual Board Member of:
Exempla
Community First Foundation and
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Healthcare System

Dear Board Member,

This letter is being sent to each Board member of the Community First Foundation (CFF), The Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Healthcare System (SCLHS), and Exempla Inc. advising you of our Citizen Group's opposition to the sale of CFF's Sponsorship Rights to SCLHS. Regardless of what is stated by the two sponsors that CFF is not selling Lutheran Medical Center (LMC), the result is the same. If this occurs, LMC will lose its heritage as a non-sectarian community hospital and will become a sectarian hospital, Catholic, and subject to the Ethical and Religious Directives (ERDs) of the Catholic Church and the local Archbishop's interpretation of them.

We are representing a group of citizens who think of LMC as **our community hospital**. Many of our citizen volunteers involve multiple generations as patients and volunteers. We feel very strongly that if we seek healthcare, it must be provided based on the dictates formed by our own religious convictions within the privacy of our family and according to our values and traditions. We should not be denied this service because of someone else's religious beliefs, which is what will happen if LMC becomes a Catholic hospital. People living on the west side of Denver, including the foothills, would ultimately have three hospitals, St. Anthony, Lutheran Medical Center, and Good Samaritan, all Catholic.

We believe the financial information that has been published regarding this transaction is misleading in several respects. Exempla, which has a \$250 million project underway at LMC, has the financial capacity for all planned projects except the rebuilding of SJH; SCLHS obviously has the resources to solve that problem, as they should, if they can pay CFF \$311 million for their sponsorship and commit to spend an additional \$300 million for Exempla projects. This transaction is simply not necessary to address the financial needs of Exempla.

We are aware of the quotation made by the sponsors "that only 1% of the procedures" would be affected by the ERDs. This does not take into consideration patients visiting the Exempla owned physician practices or outpatient service facilities and the effect ERDs may have on them. However, as you know, that is misleading, especially if your medical needs fall into the 1%. Even if it impacts a relatively low number of patients, the idea of the "greater good" is appalling, especially when it comes to healthcare. What if it were said that because of a certain uncommon affliction or that a certain isolated population group should not be offered healthcare because so few are affected? Also, the idea of referring this 1% to another hospital or off property site is offensive causing a possible change of doctors and/or change of location resulting in possible additional medical risk. A "carve out", **if doable**, would be inefficient, could add to the discomfort of the patient, and increase the risk. Lutheran Medical Center is in **our** community with **our** physicians and should take care of all **our** medical needs.

Citizens have expressed their anger at CFF's apparent abandonment of its historic responsibility to LMC and its responsibility as a sponsor to preserve LMC's heritage as a non-sectarian community hospital. A significant amount of CFF's assets came from employees, volunteers, patients, friends, and medical staff donations. In addition, CFF assets contain the proceeds of the sale of property transferred to CFF at the time Exempla was formed. These assets will likely not be used to support LMC.

Our volunteer citizen's group felt it was important that more people in our community become aware of this possible sale and that they should be provided with information that will allow them to make the decision whether to support or oppose it. That became our goal.

Our first effort to do this was a series of community meetings with a very large attendance at each. There were very few expressing support for the sale. Many volunteered to help get information to the public and let them express their disapproval if they were so inclined. It became clear that the community was not informed before the two sponsors entered into this transaction. There has been no effort to do this until recently, probably as a result of the efforts of our group. Interestingly, individuals at these meetings not only volunteered their time, but offered cash, unsolicited, to help defray any costs that might be incurred in our effort. This is how we obtained the funds to get started and we continue to receive donations.

As an expression of opposition to the sale, petitions were developed. Keep in mind this has been a "people talking to people" effort. We now have over 3,500 signatures and, with the implementation of the Website, the number is growing daily. These signed petitions are available to you upon request.

In July, two volunteers developed a web site at www.savelutheranmedicalcenter.org. This site was available in late July. We have included the website addresses of CFF, SCLHS, and Exempla to insure all visitors to the site have access to all sources of information. The number of visits has grown daily and averaged 350 visits a day in August. During the first 15 days of September that number has grown to 450 a day.

Service clubs continue to ask for speakers, petition signatures are now coming in from the Website, petition forms are now in many physician offices, neighbors are talking to neighbors and the subject certainly is being discussed in social settings. A large home owner association is considering putting an article about this transaction in their monthly paper. The Jefferson County League of Women Voters has publically opposed this sale. One of the chapters of American Association of University Women has voiced opposition. We are told other groups are considering making public statements.

We have also received many, many letters offering support for what we are trying to do. We are told that 80% of the letters received by Exempla and LMC from recipients of CFF's mass mailing have been supportive of our group's efforts even though the mailing asked they do just the opposite.

The momentum continues to grow in opposition to this sale now that more people are becoming aware of it. It would appear to us that the only way of stopping it is to find a resolution to the apparent impasse between the sponsors and Exempla. This needs to be resolved so that both Lutheran Medical Center and Saint Joseph Hospital will retain their heritages and **never again** should LMC be threatened to lose theirs. How would the community supporting Saint Joseph Hospital feel if they were to lose their heritage? Reasonable people with good intentions can find a way to retain the heritages as promised.

LMC should continue to serve its community as it has in the past and not be sold/acquired to serve other purposes.

Sincerely,

Save Lutheran Medical Center Citizen's Group
P. O. Box 7
Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80034