

August 21, 2008

Letter to the Community:

I wanted to personally alert you to a letter and findings from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of a complaint survey resulting from the two tragic suicides on our psychiatric unit in late July.

The result of this survey is that the Medicare provider agreement between our hospital and CMS will be terminated on September 6, 2008 unless the “immediate jeopardy” to patients’ health and safety is removed.

I was saddened, embarrassed and concerned reading the surveyor’s observations about our psychiatric unit. I am sincerely committed to taking whatever steps are necessary to prevent this from happening again. We are responding to the findings in an aggressive manner. We are modifying the physical environment, improving observation of our patients, and changing policies and procedures as cited in the surveyor’s report. We have already identified independent experts to review our approaches, provide advice on improvements that need to be made as well as oversight for the foreseeable future.

Every issue raised by the surveyors is being addressed. A plan of corrective actions and documentation will be delivered to CMS in a timely manner so that the plan can be studied and discussed and modified as needed.

A copy of the CMS survey can be found on our website tgh.org.

All of the employees, physicians and volunteers understand that the community must have absolute trust in the operation of our Psychiatric unit. Restoration of that trust is our number one goal.

Sincerely,

Ron Hytoff
President & CEO
Tampa General Hospital