



March 30, 2004

Mr. Alexander Neustadter
1111 University Boulevard, West
Silver Spring, MD 20902

Dear Mr. Neustadter:

I am writing to you in follow-up to our meeting on March 16, 2004 during which you expressed your concerns about the circumstances involving your father's death at Holy Cross Hospital in March of 2003. First, let me tell you again how sorry I am that your father had died. He was clearly a very much-loved man and I am sure that he is sorely missed.

We have referred your concerns about the physician care provided your father during that admission to the Internal Medicine Peer Review Committee. This committee of the medical staff is composed of internal medicine physicians who review the medical record and other available documentation to determine if appropriate care was rendered. Most often they have questions that require investigation, and may take several weeks before they can reach a conclusion about the care provided. In addition, review by independent physicians outside the Holy Cross Medical Staff may be requested. Any recommendations made by the peer review committee concerning a physician are taken under consideration by the Department of Medicine leadership, and possibly the Medical Executive Committee (leadership committee of the medical staff) and the Board of Trustees.

I also want you to know that end-of-life care is an ongoing focus of the hospital Ethics Committee. I believe that the issues you have raised will help to inform those discussions. I am hopeful that this will result in improvements involving the care of critically ill elderly patients at Holy Cross and our communication with those patients and their families.

Again, please accept my sympathy over your loss. Voicing your concerns about your father's care has added significantly to this important discussion and may yet yield improvement in this vital area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Blair M. Eig'.

Blair M. Eig, M.D.
Senior Vice President, Medical Affairs

BME:jhk