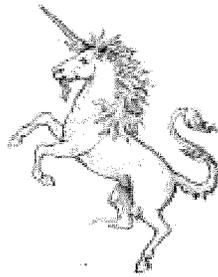


L B U C



0250 RB
Andrew J. Lecce, Executive Director
UNITY CENTER
343 Cedarville Street
Pittsburgh PA 15224
412-621-2126
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Lower Bloomfield UNITY Council

March 12, 2012

RECEIVED
Corporate & Financial Regulation

MAR 15 2012

Pennsylvania
Insurance Department

Chief Robert Brackbill
Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Proposed Affiliation of Highmark Inc., and West Penn Allegheny Health System

Dear Mr. Brackbill:

The Lower Bloomfield UNITY Council ("UNITY") is a member of the Western Pennsylvania Hospital Community Partnership (WPHP). UNITY has uninterrupted 18-year involvement in Partnership activities to advance community Wellness, and Health Care Education; while protecting meaningful issues in neighborhoods impacted by the Hospital. This in mind, I ask that you give your utmost sincere consideration to the proposed filing now under review by your office. Many support letters you've received may sound similar; as the Hospital's comprehensive outreach has benefited all of Pittsburgh's East End. However, West Penn's physical presence is in lower Bloomfield, that's my front yard, and it makes a difference.

I was born in West Penn nearly 8 decades ago. I carried my infant sons' home from its Maternity Ward. In one of its patient rooms, I gave my dad a "farewell kiss" before walking 3 blocks home, again. When I was twelve, and football helmets were made of leather, my immigrant mother, speaking only a little English, brought me to West Penn's Emergency Room to fix a broken nose. West Penn Emergency was where my 3 year-old, injured by an automobile, was saved. The restoration of this Emergency Room certainly demonstrates to "me" this Hospital's long-standing commitment to proficient critical care; and a neighborhood's general sense of peace of mind.

The nonprofit, Lower Bloomfield UNITY Council is made up of hundreds of member families living on streets surrounding West Penn. Nearly each member in each family has a story to tell of their reliance on West Penn Hospital. Like me, they take things personal. Some of our

UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL

Chief Robert Brackbill
March 12, 2012
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members and their neighbors were/are employed by the Hospital and depend deeply on the vitality of the Hospital in order to survive, themselves.

Even before Highmark restored a lot of clinical services to West Penn and provided state-of-the-art transformations to its departmental infrastructure, Highmark's collaborated with West Penn to assist Lower Bloomfield UNITY Council in providing its neighborhood children with free lead - poison testing, and 2-hours of adult lead-contamination education by West Penn medical staff, complete with manuals and tools to extensively cover every aspect of the subject: LBUC had discovered on its own that 22 local children were treated for lead in the previous 16 months. At the time, this major team effort was acknowledged by The Allegheny County Health Department. West Penn Hospital The Allegheny Health Department, and UNITY, once again as a team, also offered ongoing weeks of health workshops and diabetes management.

Due to location, our families can't help look out their windows and see West Penn's looming above their rooftops. Throughout the day, medical helicopters articulate its importance. And when the sun goes down, West Penn's North Tower is one big comforting night light. Yet beyond its bricks, the jobs it creates, or even its beneficial economic "over-spill", we are reminded more of the Humanity found inside than anything else, and the most innate and desperate want of being "healed". Whatever our community needs are; or the interests of groups found within West Penn's serving area; or its own Community Partnership, there is something more obviously profound at stake---Life---and how Life is served through all its stages.

Together, Highmark and The Western Pennsylvania Hospital have the ability to translate their combined, most excellent resources into continuous acts of "healing". That is more compensation than any neighborhood can ever expect. Hospitals are "living" things; bricks just hold all the intelligence, skill, loyalty, compassion, struggle, and trust inside. Won't you please support this new affiliation, this "new entity" Mr. Brackbill, and watch it grow?

Yours,



Andrew J. Lecce
Executive Director

AJL:jk
cc: