

27 January, 2006

Craig Gaccione, Chief of Staff
Randolph Hospital
364 White Oak Street
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Craig,

The enclosed letter to Randolph County District Attorney, Garland Yates is self-explanatory.

This mess started with an administrator threatening a physician. Eight years ago, I intervened, at the request of a terrified nursing staff, in the care of a baby born to one of your patients. I came in knowing that I was putting all I held dear at risk. Everyone on this medical staff at the time knows what happened next. And they know it was wrong. In fact, when it happened, you wrote a letter on my behalf, asking hospital administrators to reconsider their actions. I thank you for that. But Bob Morrison and Steven Eblin did not listen. The rest is eight years of my life fighting a beyond-corrupt system of “oversight” trying to get back what never should have been taken from me in the first place.

Last night, I attended an “open forum” sponsored by the Asheboro City Council’s new 20/20 project – designed to get input from the public about the future direction of our community. Bob Morrison volunteered to serve on this project, and was appointed to chair the steering committee. In separate correspondence, I have taken up that appointment with City Council members, as I appeared before them in the spring of 2004 to tell them exactly what Mr. Morrison and Mr. Eblin had done to me – and to ask for their help. I believe the appointment was inappropriate given what the Council knows about Mr. Morrison’s actions in my case. That letter is now posted on my website (www.asheboropediatrics.com).

My website exists, by the way, because the Randolph Hospital Board of Directors and/or medical staff have NEVER deemed it necessary to address the unethical and illegal behavior of Robert Morrison and Steven Eblin towards a staff physician who was doing her job – a physician who went above & beyond – in the face of totally inappropriate threats and false accusations. I have to wonder how other members of the medical staff would have felt – and how they would have reacted – if they had been placed in the same intolerable situation. The settlement of the resultant lawsuit in no way compensated me for my losses because Mr. Morrison and Mr. Eblin saw fit to lie under Oath about the “confidentiality” of their “non-profit” books and salaries – withholding information that was vital to the calculation of fair and equitable damages for a practice destroyed and a reputation maliciously attacked. While I technically “won” all aspects of the legal case (including fending off that despicable “libel” lawsuit), Mr. Morrison and Mr. Eblin ultimately got everything they wanted (including very generous salary & bonus packages – flown in under the radar of public scrutiny) by cheating. In the wake of their bad faith, I have not had the resources to return home and start all over from scratch. Ten years of my life are gone.

At least two physicians in this town can attribute their own quiet and successful transitions from RMA to my fight. Because I stood up and fought back against the slime-ball tactics, Bob & Steve did not dream of doing to them what they did to me.

I returned home to attend two of the 20/20 meetings, and both times, citizens bemoaned the coming and going of doctors. At the meeting last night, the very first topic brought up to discuss as a “problem” was Randolph Hospital. One of the participants actually suggested that the place should be shut down – and the town start all over with a new hospital. It was almost comical to watch Bob respond – mindful of the fact that I was in the room and could’ve blown him out of the water if I had chosen to open my mouth. It’s been ten years since I came “home” to Asheboro, and Bob’s “vision” of improving the hospital’s image is, in many ways, no closer to reality than it was when I was recruited. I believe it is because in his efforts to improve “the business” of the hospital and dominate the medical landscape, Bob Morrison forgot he was dealing with people – people with histories and ideas and minds and dreams and visions of their own. Changing Randolph Hospital’s image is about so much more than slick public relations.

The purpose of this letter is to let the medical staff know that I have no intention of fulfilling former RMA Director Mike Bridges' expressed desire (to Dr. Laurie Anderson) for me to "just go away". Today, the North Carolina Attorney General announced an "ethics" initiative that provides prosecutors broader discretion in pursuing matters of public corruption. Please be clear that I consider the behavior of Robert Morrison and Steven Eblin, as the officers of a "non-profit" hospital, corrupt. Over the last few months I have been very vocal in blogging forums about how my own situation demonstrates much of what is wrong with corporate medicine. The matters I have brought to the attention of the Randolph Hospital Board, the Asheboro City Council, and Randolph County District Attorney, Garland Yates are criminal in nature and speak to the integrity and honor and credibility of the entire medical community. The question all of Asheboro's doctors need to ask themselves is this: What if this had happened to YOU? Would it be okay then? Would it be so amusing if YOU had to resort to staging a protest in front of the hospital – a protest that our newspaper would not cover because the publisher is best buds with Bob?

Perjury has no statute of limitations and I plan to continue aggressively pursuing this case as a matter of public corruption. That being said, I want to come home, and I would be willing to sit down with representatives of the Randolph Hospital Board of Directors (which obviously condoned Bob's actions) and the District Attorney's office (which has the power and discretion to work out a solution) to discuss how this matter could be fairly and finally resolved. Indeed, it is beyond me how the members of the Randolph Hospital Board of Directors can justify not once in eight years inviting me to their table, or taking appropriate measures to right an obvious wrong when it was brought to their attention. **For since this mess began, every single time I have sat at Bob's table, in any "negotiation", he has lied to me.**

The "team" of Bob and Steve destroyed every dream I ever had, and splattered me all over the proverbial wall – in full and painful view of my parents. My Father died last February 2 – on the seventh anniversary of my "notice" of termination from RMA. As I told the City Council in my correspondence to them, he was always in my corner, and he taught me to stand up to bullies.

Bob Morrison and Steven Eblin are nothing more than overpaid bullies. They had no right of contract, federal agreement or law to do what they did to me. They had no ethical or medical justification. The personnel and Peer Review files that first they hid behind, and then misused are clean. My hard-won "victory" in civil litigation turned out to be a farce because they blatantly lied about matters of public record. As I approach the dreaded "anniversary" this year (and face, in the near future, corrective surgery for the second procedure "botched" at Randolph Hospital – a procedure I underwent there to prove my faith in the hospital), I am more determined than ever to see that they answer for what they did. This episode of the hospital's history is shameful, and has been embarrassing for many people that I know have worked very hard to provide good care. I deeply regret that. But it is time to put the blame for that squarely at the feet of the men who screwed up – men who pulled every dirty, under-handed trick in the book to avoid responsibility for the screw-up. I really don't care anymore what some of the "senior" medical staff may think about my efforts (particularly those who stood on the sidelines and did not lift a finger to **STOP** what Bob and Steve were doing). From what I have seen and heard at the 20/20 meetings, maybe those doctors should care what I think. I don't think we need a new hospital. I think the hospital needs a new leader. One who does not lie to get what he wants.

Sincerely,

Mary H. Johnson, M.D., FAAP

cc: The Randolph Hospital Medical Staff and Board of Directors