



State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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JEFFREY A. MEYERS
COMMISSIONER

October 17, 2016

Via Email (pdf.) and First Class Mail

Dr. James N. Weinstein, CEO
Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center
1 Medical Center Drive
Lebanon, NH 03766

Re: Notice of DHMC Layoffs

Dear Dr. Weinstein:

Enclosed is a copy of the email that you released earlier today announcing 84 layoffs in response to financial losses at DMCH in its 2016 fiscal year.

Your announcement states that these 84 layoffs will be achieved "across the system." As a result, I am asking you to clarify whether any of the layoffs will impact DMCH's provision of psychiatric services, including those services provided under contract to the State of New Hampshire at New Hampshire Hospital, the Sununu Center, Glen Cliff Nursing Home and at the Department of Health and Human Services.

While you recently indicated to the Governor and Executive Council the commitment of DMCH to provide all of the services under contract with the State, your letter is unclear as to whether the layoffs "across the system" will include or exclude psychiatric services in Lebanon or elsewhere.

I would appreciate a prompt response that is also copied to Governor Hassan and the members of the Executive Council.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey A. Meyers
Commissioner

Enclosure

Cc: Governor Hassan and Honorable Executive Council

Meyers, Jeffrey

Subject:

RE: Moving forward with Performance Improvement

From: "Jim Weinstein, CEO and President" <Office.of.the.CEO@hitchcock.org>

Date: October 17, 2016 at 8:36:56 AM EDT

Subject: Moving forward with Performance Improvement



To the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Community,

As you know, we are engaged in a performance improvement process, mostly related to reducing our overall expenses. In so doing, our top priority, **patient care**, remains our guidepost. Our commitment to our patients and families has never been greater, despite living in very challenging times of diminishing reimbursements and ever-rising costs.

In the face of a 0.8 percent — or \$12 million — negative margin for FY16, we anticipated the need for a reduction in force. I directed our leadership team to focus on three means to achieve the necessary reductions and limit actual layoffs: 1) attrition, drawing on our turnover rate of 800 positions a year; 2) reducing open, unfilled positions; and 3) delaying new hires, except those necessary for maintaining clinical excellence. I am pleased to share the news that as a result of a lot of hard work by many, we have been able to largely achieve our goal by these three means.

As a result, actual layoffs will be limited to 84 employees across the system. For these colleagues, as in the past, we will continue to work with them to find new employment where possible and desirable. Over the next 60 days, job placement services and a number of resources will be offered. Those affected will be encouraged to apply for other positions within D-H and/or at our affiliates, many of which have expressed a desire to consider these employees for open positions for which they are recruiting. We are also having preliminary conversations with Dartmouth College to give preferential consideration to these employees for positions they have open.

I want to sincerely thank our colleagues for their service to Dartmouth-Hitchcock, which in some cases has stretched over many years. Indeed, some have come back from retirement to assume roles at D-H. I could not be more grateful for their dedication to their colleagues, the patients and families we serve.

I ask all of us to honor our colleagues and to support them and each other during this time.

Going forward, we will continue to focus on our core work of making sure our operations are effective, efficient, and providing the best service in the right place and at the right time. With our affiliates, we will continue the necessary work of reviewing all our activities across the system to align resources, reduce unnecessary redundancies, and empower our teams to advance their goals, always with patient safety and high quality as our primary focus.

As models of health care delivery advance, we will continue to anticipate and adjust, to appropriately meet the needs of patients and their families and to deliver care in new and different ways. Such programs include our growing telemedicine, tele-emergency, tele-pharmacy programs along with our in-home monitoring with ImagineCare. All the while, we continue to strengthen our partnerships in our communities as we focus on population health to provide the necessary resources to patients in both traditional and non-traditional settings.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock is a great organization and a tremendous resource for this region. I am proud of the work we have done and continue to do, in spite of the challenges we face. We are caring for our neighbors, regardless of their ability to pay and in the face of a New Hampshire Medicaid reimbursement rate that is the lowest in the nation.

Despite our challenges, we have never taken our eye off the ball -- **patient care**. In fact, as you know, our quality has never been better and our rankings locally, regionally and nationally are at the highest level in our history. Without success here, there is no mission.

I hope you all feel pride in the work you and your colleagues are doing. The national recognitions we are receiving for quality and recently through a CMS grant, for efforts to develop a collaborative approach to addressing physical and behavioral health issues across our state, are just two examples of the extraordinary work being done throughout our system every day.

We are also leading the work for our nation in sepsis, a diagnosis that takes some 500,000 lives a year. For decades, Dartmouth-Hitchcock has led the work of informing patients about their treatment decisions, to only get the care they want and need when well informed. Similarly, we have been leaders nationally in patient reported outcome measures, now a national effort, and so much more, in genomics and now, ground-breaking efforts in regenerative medicine.

As we continue on our journey to become a system grounded in population health and value, not market share and volume; in collaboration over competition; and in giving patients good information so they receive only the care they want and need, you all play an integral part. Thank you for what you are doing today and for your efforts to achieve our Why: to improve the lives of the people and communities we serve – today and for generations to come.

Jim

Dr. James N. Weinstein
CEO and President
Dartmouth-Hitchcock.org
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