

MEMO TO: Erlanger Medical Center Board of Trustees

FROM: Erlanger Employed Physicians

DATE: June 24, 2019

We, the undersigned, were very disappointed to read in the Times Free Press yesterday that the hospital Medical Executive Committee (MEC) had sent to the Board a letter of no confidence in the senior management team. In truth, we have reason to believe that the press article did not accurately reflect the intent of the MEC. However, after much thought, we feel compelled to express our opinion and state that we wholeheartedly support Mr. Spiegel and his team and have full confidence in their efforts to make Erlanger a better place for patients, our medical staff and our employees. Many of us have been at Erlanger for most of our career and we believe it is better now than ever. These opinions are shared by many of our colleagues in the Erlanger Medical Group (EMG).

We are obliged to point out that the Erlanger Medical Group is grossly underrepresented on the MEC. This is in spite of the fact that the EMG physicians provide the bulk of the services (80% by reliable estimates) performed at the hospital. It concerns us that the act of sending a letter of no confidence (as interpreted by the press) in Mr. Spiegel was not vetted with the entire medical staff. The fact that it was released to the public is very disturbing and undermines the authority of the MEC.

Erlanger has shown amazing growth during Mr. Spiegel's time here. The number of patients passing through the Erlanger system has dramatically increased. Revenues have doubled (0.52 billion to 1.1 billion). He has tapped outside resources that we never knew existed. Our physical plant has seen many additions and improvements. The number of doctors in the EMG who wholly support Erlanger has exploded (84 to 435). Community awareness and appreciation of our mission has increased remarkably—we hear this from our friends and patients several times a week. Area hospitals obviously admire what we do here as shown by the constant flow of patients from their hospital to ours. All this in no accident—it happened under the leadership of Kevin Spiegel!!!

We do not dispute that there are issues to be addressed. In any organization that is as large and fast growing as Erlanger, there will be challenges and problems unforeseen that must be addressed. The fact that Erlanger is obligated to take care of the entire region does not make that an easy task. However, if we do not fulfill that obligation, then WHO WILL.

On occasion, there will be an adverse event in the hospital. Considering the volume of patients coming through Erlanger, such events are inevitable. When they do occur, the immediate reaction is to blame it on the system and its leaders. We dare say that if you closely analyze each situation, you will find that one person on the front line, not the administration, misjudged the circumstances and made a bad decision. That is also inevitable but let us not forget about all the wonderful things that happen at Erlanger every day.

Thank you for considering our thoughts and concerns. Our sincere hope is that Mr. Spiegel will continue to lead our hospital for years to come. We will certainly work with him to make Erlanger a greater institution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Argil Wheelock, MD
member EMG
Bill Moore Smith MD
Medical Director Primary Care
Medical Director Sports Medicine

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AMAR SINGH, MD
Chair, Dept. of Urology
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Jody Miller - neuro surg
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