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To my dear patients,

I need to let you know that the Medical Board of California is trying to take my license because of my prescribing for patients with chronic pain, which they are calling negligent. As many of you know, I disagree with the current 2016 CDC opioid guidelines, which I think are unfair to “legacy” pain patients. Those are people who have been on high doses of opioids in the past, some of whom do not tolerate tapers, certainly at the rates that are currently recommended.

I provide multidisciplinary care to patients with chronic pain and have helped many patients decrease or stop pain medications, and actually feel positive about my contribution to pain management in our county. I am also involved in addiction treatment. I think I am part of the solution, not the problem, so I intend to fight this, but there is a significant chance that I will lose, as another casualty of the War on Drugs.

I would recommend patients start looking for new providers, which as you know is not simple in our area, so I do not want to leave you high and dry.

I would also like to ask for letters of support to present to the Medical Board. In particular, if you feel:

- a. I have discovered a diagnosis that was missed by a different provider
- b. I have been a thorough and diligent doctor (eg not negligent)
- c. I have been responsive to any special needs of yours in a way that others have not (home visits, etc.)
- d. You are concerned about the impact on our community if I am removed as a local provider
- e. You feel you can comment on my commitment and dedication to my patients

Please consider writing a letter stating these things. They can be brief, but should state how long you have been my patient, any concrete examples of my care for you and their impact on your health or life, and your perception of whether I meet the standard of care exhibited by other docs in our community. Send those to us here, and we will forward them to my lawyer.

BOTTOM LINE:

Full Circle Center may be closing. We may or may not have much notice if that happens, so consider this a preliminary notice, in case. . . .

I am hoping for your help, and if there are any other docs you also see who have ever said anything positive about my notes or my care, could you please let me know so I can approach them for letters of support?

Thanks so much,

Connie Basch, MD

What we ask you NOT to do:

Please DO NOT transfer all your records out at this time.

We are optimistic we will be able to fight this. As a reminder, there are providers in our area who have been placed on probation and allowed to practice after DUI's, sexual assault and other offenses, and we feel that my diligence, and the multiple letters from local physicians and patients which are being requested in my support, will turn this back. I do not drink, smoke or use any recreational substances. I do not cross sexual boundaries with patients.

While all of this is going on, I continue to work to take care of you all, and to advocate for you. As many of you know, that means working more than 100 hours per week most weeks (all of you who have received 11 pm or 3 am e-mails know what I am talking about), so I do not have the bandwidth for 1600 patients to suddenly ask for me to put together materials for a transfer that hopefully is not even going to happen.

Similarly, my staff are calling consultants for records, calling insurance companies to try to get your tests and medications authorized and so on. Please let them do that work and not get distracted with records releases that are not truly needed, but if you actually have an appointment scheduled somewhere let us know where and when and we will do our best make sure relevant records are there by that time.

My office manager has been in communication with the manager for the Open Door System, and they have assured us that they will work with us to get patient needs met if the worst comes to pass. We will talk with other practices in the area as well if it looks like that is what is going to happen.

If the worst comes to pass, I promise the records will be available even after the license is pulled: I have always placed a premium on patient safety, and will continue to work to make sure handoffs are complete, that new providers get summaries and relevant records.

-Connie