

## Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We are writing to you today because as the board of directors of Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital, **we believe it is important to communicate with you, the owners of your non-profit community health care facilities.** We serve on the board of directors because, like you, we want to live in a community with a great health care system. We believe it is important to offer the best possible medical care as close to home as possible.

As board members of Grand Itasca, we are very sad that the negotiations with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) have caused us and many of you to become very anxious about the future of your health care coverage. As many of you are aware, the September 17th mediation efforts between Grand Itasca and BCBS have not resulted in any progress toward a new contract and, as a result, **we have no reason to believe that Blue Cross will change its course and agree to a fair new contract with Grand Itasca.**

**You, our patients, have expressed a vision for community health care that includes:**

- quality primary and secondary medical care and;
- convenient, accessible health care services close to home.

**Unfortunately, Blue Cross has a vision for health care in our community that does not meet these needs. At the conclusion of our mediation session, Grand Itasca was left with two bad choices –**

- either sign a contract that does not provide adequate resources necessary for quality, safe, and accessible care or;
- not have a contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield

**Inadequate reimbursement would deprive our community clinic and hospital of the necessary resources it needs to:**

- ensure adequate staffing,
- continually invest in new technology and equipment and;
- develop medical services in primary and secondary care.

Our community has indicated that all of these items are important to them.

**At this point, we simply cannot accept a contract that does not support our community's vision for health care.**

**It is not possible to deliver on our promises to the community without financial stability. For nearly 100 years, there has been a hospital in our community and it is important that we continue to have adequate resources to provide our community with this vital resource.** It seems rather odd that BCBS is entitled

to financial strength while the financial strength for the continued growth, development, and survival of our community clinic and hospital is not important to them.

**Some of us Grand Itasca board members are insured by BCBS and face the same concerns that many of our BCBS patients are experiencing. Be assured that Grand Itasca will be available to you and your family no matter which health plan is your insurer.**

## So what can we do in this present situation?

Learn as much as we can about our insurance products:

- Call your employer or agent and ask questions.
- If you are of Medicare age, attend the upcoming insurance fair sponsored by Grand Itasca with all insurance providers in our region. Watch the newspaper and listen to the radio for more information about this fair.
- Stop by our BCBS transition room, located just inside the front lobby of Grand Itasca, to speak privately with a staff member who can answer your questions about your BCBS coverage. The transition room is staffed Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- Request a speaker at one of your club meetings. Call the Grand Itasca Service Line at 218-999-1004.

Thank you for all your past support and please feel free to call any of us to talk more about this issue.

Sincerely yours,

Shen Adams

Frank Allen

Doug Coy, MD

Marva Jean Hutchens

Mike Ives

Lisa Johnson, DDS

Mary Kosak

Peter McDermott

Barbara McDonald, Chair

Terri Radovich, MD

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Deb Nyquist, MD

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Tim Pehl, MD

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