



Brattleboro Retreat

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION CARE

November 10, 2008

Ed Paquin, Executive Director
Vermont Protection & Advocacy, Inc.
141 Main Street, Suite 7
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Mr. Paquin,

Thank you for your letter dated August 8, 2008 in which you enclosed the results of the VP&A investigation into the circumstances related to the tragic loss of life of one of the Brattleboro Retreat's patients. I would also like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to your letter and the report.

The loss of life touches all of us to the core. The loss of a life entrusted to us for care is particularly painful. As you noted in your report, members of the Retreat community responded to this loss with both true sadness and a firm commitment to learn from the tragedy. As you note, we have spent countless hours and meetings reviewing documents, interviewing staff and consulting with experts and other clinicians from around Vermont, with the sole purpose of improving our work. As part of this work we wanted to be open with VP&A because we believe that the missions of the Retreat and VP&A are about safety for patients and excellence in care.

Although we are not in full agreement with some of the conclusions drawn from the data, we do very much appreciate the spirit within which the report was developed and as such the report was used as one of the cornerstones of our efforts to respond to this tragedy and to take steps to improve the care we provide.

I thank you and your staff for your openness and collaboration in this effort. I also wish to extend an invitation to visit our hospital to see first hand the changes we have put into place as a result of the work of both VP&A's report and our own root cause analysis/investigation.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Simpson, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Brattleboro Retreat

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