"Google alerts" reports some Laguna Honda Hospital problems, but fails reporting others

by Patrick Monette-Shaw SF Examiner.com | **SF Health Examiner**

I'm surprised the Google "alerts" feature fails reporting whistleblower complaints, but reported Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH) as a 'drug rehab center' on July 24, and today reports my September 2009 coverage of LHH.

Setting Google's "alert" feature to receive news about LHH is useful.

This morning, I received an alert from Google that a story I had written in October 2009 — "Laguna Honda's Unkindest Cut" — had been re-posted on the www.docstoc.com web site, a site dedicated to providing documents and information to small businesses and professionals.



The docstoc web site points to an article I initially published in the *Westside Observer*, but which I cover in more detail at www.stoplHHdownsize.com, about the Ja report, which was supposed to assess behavioral health services at LHH, patient flow within the Department of Public Health, and linkages to behavioral health services following discharge to the community. The Ja report contains a number of flawed assumptions and startling admissions, but failed to assess the availability of community linkages to behavioral health services.

On July 24, I received a Google alert asserting LHH is a drug rehab treatment facility (see slide show in Part 2 of this article).

California's Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) has sole authority in state government to license adult alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities.

One problem is that LHH is not licensed by the state to be either a drug or alcohol treatment facility. Instead, LHH is licensed by the state to be a skilled nursing facility.

Unfortunately, other issues relating to LHH do not appear in Google alerts.

The two doctors who filed their whistle-blower complaint on March 2, 2010 regarding LHH's probable patient gift fund abuse — doctors Maria Rivero and Derek Kerr — had previously filed two other whistleblower complaints regarding the Department of Public Health and LHH. All three complaints submitted to the City Controller's Whistleblower Program were referred to San Francisco's Ethics Department, but the Ethics Department doesn't publish which cases it is reviewing, so they aren't picked up by Google to alert the community.

Kerr and Rivero — duty bound to be patient advocates — have paid dearly for upholding their oath to "first, do no harm," and for exposing potential harm.

Their first whistleblower complaint, filed on September 18, 2009, involved potential conflict of interest regarding the Davis Ja report, noted above. The personal and financial relationship between Davis Ja, PhD and

Deborah Sherwood, PhD who was a direct subordinate to Bob Cabaj, MD the then-Director of DPH's Community Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) were called into question.

A fourth CBHS employee, William McConnell, PhD, was a subcontractor to the Ja report. The relationships between these four people may have influenced the development of the content and context of the Ja contract, the award of the CBHS contract to Davis Ja & Associates, and the findings of the final report submitted by Davis Ja to CBHS, since their relationships were not disclosed in the final report.

This leads to the question of whether the so-called "independent' review of LHH's behavioral health services was corrupted due to undisclosed relationships.

This Examiner covered the Ja report extensively at www.stopLHHdownsize.com on September 30, 2009 ("Flawed Davis Y. Ja Report on LHH 'Behavioral Health' Services") and in three subsequent articles at stopLHHdownsize.com. The September 30 article includes a report written by Kerr and Rivero titled "A Critical Analysis of the Ja Report."

As a result of their critical analysis, 20 LHH physicians signed a resolution rejecting the Ja report's recommendation to reduce physician staffing, due to Ja's bias, inadequate data, flawed methodology, and lack of professional qualifications to assess physician services at LHH.

The doctor's second whistle-blower complaint filed September 26, 2009 also involved a potential conflict of interest Director of Public Health Mitch Katz may have with a Chicago consulting firm named Health Management Associates (HMA). In 2005, Dr. Katz awarded a contract to HMA to review the medical services model at LHH.

However, he waited until an August 2009 article appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (*JAMA*), to disclose that he has accepted travel expenses from, and served as a paid independent consultant to, HMA. The whistle-blower complaint questioned Katz's real or perceived conflict of interest.

HMA's 2005 consulting contract was thought to be worth \$250,000. Before Katz disclosed his paid-consultant status in *JAMA* in August 2009, HMA had received a new \$65,000 contract with the City to perform work between January and December 2009.

This may pose a potential financial conflict of interest, or violation of San Francisco codes prohibiting private compensation to city officers and employees. As a paid consultant to HMA, Katz may have, however inadvertently, contributed to HMA having a competitive advantage.

Ongoing potential problems with multiple conflict-of-interest ethical issues at LHH deserve the immediate attention of San Francisco's civil grand jury.

For a printer-friendly version of this article's slide show, go to www.stopLHHdownsize.com, and click on the examiner.com icon in the upper left-hand corner.

Feedback: monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

Figure 1: Advertisement on Alcoholism Treatment Centers Web Site



Source: www.alcoholismtreatmentcenters.us/drug-alcohol-rehab-laguna-honda-hospital-and-rehabilitation-center-sa-sats-san-francisco-ca.html

Figure 2: Advertisement on Alcoholism Treatment Centers Web Site (Continued)

Accepted!

www.luxuryrehabservices.com

30 Day Alcohol Rehab

1-1 Counseling & Medical Detox Located in Beautiful Napa Valley www.DuffysRehab.com

Alcohol Rehab Treatment

Inpatient Alcohol Treatment Program 19 Years Experience in Recovery

www.DrugRehabCenter.com

Ads by Google

375 Laguna Honda Boulevard

San Francisco, CA 94116

Contact Telephone: (415) 759-2300 **Primary Focus:**General health services

Services Provided: Substance abuse treatment, Detoxification

Type of Care: Hospital inpatient

Groups/Special Programs:Persons with co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders, Persons with HIV/AIDS, Women

Forms of Payment Accepted: Self payment, Medicaid, Medicare, Private health insurance, Military insurance (e.g., VA, TRICARE)

Payment Assistance:

Special Language Services: Spanish

Hotline:

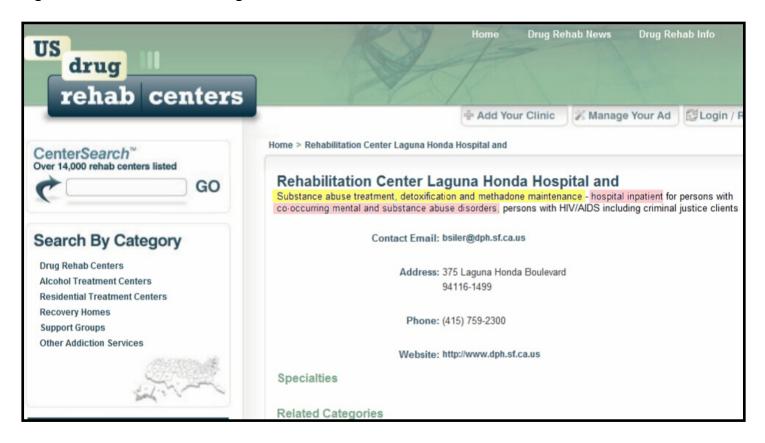
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as it's mainly a matter of changing habits towards a new way of living. Honda Hospital Laguna and Rehabilitation Center SA SATS alcohol rehab center could be your dream solution if you live in San Francisco (CA) and their accredited staff will address your disease with a proven cure.

Facility Name: Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center SA SATS Center Main Location:

Source: www.alcoholismtreatmentcenters.us/drug-alcohol-rehab-laguna-honda-hospital-and-rehabilitationcenter-sa-sats-san-francisco-ca.html

Figure 3: Advertisement on Drug Rehab Centers Web Site



Source: www.usdrugrehabcenters.com/drug-rehab-centers/california-drug-rehab-centers/rehabilitation-centerlaguna-honda-hospital-and-l1516/?SOLE DIR CATEGORY ID=7796

Note: The contact e-mail address is at San Francisco's Department of Public Health. The street address listed is the address of Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center.