



UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
OF EL PASO

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**University Medical Center of El Paso Completes Comprehensive Review of
Policies, Provides Community Report**

*Independent, comprehensive report provides current benchmark and future
recommendations*

University Medical Center of El Paso has completed a third-party review of its policies and practices relating to patients brought into its facility by the United States Customs and Border Protection and other law enforcement agencies and will release the findings of that review to the El Paso community during a news conference at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 4, 2014.

The review was commissioned by the Medical Center's Board of Managers shortly after they learned of a lawsuit filed against UMC by the American Civil Liberties Union that alleges civil rights violations. It was conducted by the independent firm of Cavaretta, Katona & Francis, PLLC, which looked at current hospital policies and procedures, industry best practices and governing law. The findings have been consolidated into a Report to the Community, which outlines recommendations for improvement.

"University Medical Center has a tradition of respectful service. Our purpose is to provide high quality, affordable healthcare to all. Commissioning this independent report is in keeping with both our tradition and purpose. We did not want to wait until litigation was resolved to review our current policies, procedures and practices. We are committed to the health and safety of our patients. UMC's Board of Managers received Ms. Cavaretta's report this week and voted to implement the recommendations in her report."

"After an in-depth review of University Medical Center of El Paso's current policies, procedures and practices, as well as those within the industry and what is required by law, I have concluded that UMC complies with applicable law," says Laura Cavaretta, author of the community report. "Moving forward though, it is important that UMC ensure that its policies are clear, actionable and accountable. The report provides recommendations to ensure future success in these areas."

The specific recommendations include:

- Reaffirm a provision in the Medical Staff bylaws that states that patient evaluation and treatment decisions are made by members of the Medical Staff in the exercise of their independent medical judgment and the best interest of their patients;
- Update, streamline and strengthen current policies and forms regarding patient consent and warrant requirements;
- Formalize and execute on-going education and training for employees and members of the Medical staff. Place additional emphasis on ensuring that patients understand their rights and responsibilities as well as their options for reporting any complaints they may have about their interactions with UMC;
- Open and maintain a dialogue with law enforcement agencies such that all parties are aware of UMC policy and procedure requirements and payment expectations;
- Evaluate changes to the Electronic Medical Record such that patient consent can be obtained electronically.

"I believe that we are taking the appropriate steps to ensure that allegations such as those contained in the Jane Doe lawsuit never surface again," says Jim Valenti, President & CEO of University Medical Center. "By implementing the recommendations contained in the Report to the Community we are demonstrating our commitment to remain accountable to our patients. El Pasoans have entrusted their care to us for nearly a century and for just as long, our staff's sole interest has been their patients' health and well being. We are committed to reinforcing that bond as we move forward from here."

The Report to the Community is available to the public via UMC's website (www.umcelpaso.org) It can be found on the home page under "Report to the Community."

University Medical Center of El Paso is a not-for-profit, community hospital located in El Paso, Texas. Our goal is to enhance the health and wellness of the El Paso community by making high quality, affordable healthcare services accessible to all. Our tradition of respectful service is enriched by our participation in healthcare-related education, research and innovation. For more information, please visit our website at www.umcelpaso.org.

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