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CITY OF MILWAUKEE
2018 MAY -7 P 4:01
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

May 3, 2018

Mr. Jim Owczarski
City Clerk of Milwaukee
City of Milwaukee
City Hall, Room 205
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Mr. Owczarski:

Thank you for your letter of April 27. In response to feedback we received from the mayor, Common Council, community leaders and others, Ascension Wisconsin announced that they would pause their plans to reconfigure services at Ascension St. Joseph Hospital. This means they are stopping the plan to consolidate medical/surgical and ICU inpatient beds and surgery from St. Joe's to Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Milwaukee. Please be advised that they are not – and never were – closing St. Joe's.

It is my understanding, they will continue to work toward expanding primary care at St. Joe's because Ascension leadership in Wisconsin recognizes how important having a medical home is to their patients. It is also my understanding that they will continue to explore opportunities with organizations that offer compatible health and social services that are interested in leasing existing, available space at St. Joe's. In addition, Ascension Wisconsin is committed to the future of Ascension St. Francis and there are no plans to close this access point for our community.

As you are aware, Ascension Wisconsin's three city hospitals play an essential role in Milwaukee's safety net system, providing quality care for those who are poor and most vulnerable. For more than 170 years, that has been their Mission. That has not changed and will not change.

Over the coming months, we will begin adopting the Ascension brand across all our Milwaukee hospitals. While our name and signs are changing, our commitment to providing personalized, compassionate care is not. Since we believe healthcare is local, Ascension Wisconsin will continue to respond to the changing healthcare landscape in Wisconsin and adapt to how care is delivered. They will continue to stabilize and reshape their offerings to evolve as an integrated system of care that provides high-value, quality care and an outstanding patient experience.

There is much work to do and it will take all of us – health systems and other providers, federal, state and local elected and governmental officials, together with community stakeholders – to tackle the public health challenges that we face. All of us have a role to play in developing broad-based, holistic solutions to transform our healthcare system from one that treats people when they're sick to one that helps people stay well and live their best lives. I know that our Ascension Wisconsin leaders look forward to being a part of those solutions.

Thank you for bringing the City of Milwaukee Common Council's concerns to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony R. Tersigni". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "T".

Anthony R. Tersigni, EdD, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Bernie Sherry, SVP, Ascension Healthcare / Ministry Market Executive, Ascension Wisconsin