



Oak Orchard

Community Health Center, Inc.

❖ 300 West Avenue Brockport, NY 14220
(585) 637-3905 Fax (585) 637-4990

❖ 301 West Avenue Albion, NY 14411
(585) 589-5613 Fax (585) 589-0872

BOARD LIST

August 29, 2006

Chair

Louise Stein, PhD

Randall L. Johnson, Chair
Citizens' Health Care Working Group
7201 Wisconsin Avenue Suite 575
Bethesda, MD 20814

Vice Chair

Karen Watt

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Secretary

Harry Shifton, RPh

The Oak Orchard Community Health Center commends the Citizens' Health Care Working Group (CHCWG) on its efforts to include citizen input on improving access to quality health care for all Americans. Oak Orchard is an FQHC, providing comprehensive primary and preventive health care services to a four county rural area in Western New York. In 2005, Oak Orchard provided 70,000 visits to nearly 17,000 residents of the service area.

Treasurer

Margaret Ciesinski

The Working Group's Interim Recommendations are generally on target and we support the CHCWG's efforts to ensure these messages are heard by Congress. We strongly support the recommendation that coverage must be ensured for all. However, I am writing you today to express our deep concern regarding one aspect of the second proposal in the Interim Recommendations. Specifically, the recommendation to "expand and modify the FQHC concept to accommodate" other providers could remove or reduce the federally qualified health center community board requirement. This recommendation departs significantly from the goal of health centers of ensuring a community voice in the provision of services, and undermines existing patient democracies.

Member-at-Large

Bob Ryan

Our State Primary Care Association and New York health center providers participated in the Working Group meeting held in New York City on April 22. From what I understand, modification of FQHC statutes was not a part of the discussion or recommendations made at this meeting. I am concerned about their inclusion when they were not addressed in the community meetings.

President/CEO

David W. Fisher, MBA

The Citizen's Working Group is an important avenue for American voices. As an advocate for community-based, high quality and affordable health care, I ask you to remove this recommendation and shift your support to build upon the successes of community-governed health centers by protecting their community boards.

Sincerely,

David W. Fisher,
President/CEO
DWF/kel

"Planting the Seeds for a Healthy Future"