

From: [Ted Christou](#)
To: [DPH.HFSRB.PublicHearings](#)
Subject: [SUSPICIOUS MESSAGE] [External] 20-039 Mercy Hospital Closing
Date: Thursday, October 29, 2020 11:05:03 PM

My name is Dr. Theodore Christou. I have worked at Mercy for over 30 years caring for patients in the community. Five years ago I became the residency outpatient clinic director. My team's goal was to promote health care that educates and serves the community. Our patients responded to the effort. Since we started the patient no-show rate has dropped from 40% to less than 12%.

We offer a FREE smoking cessation clinic with excellent results.

Unlike other clinics, Mercy clinic pharmacy and the 340B drug pricing program allows us to provide charity care low cost or free prescriptions to those in need.

Our FREE diabetic clinic has shown significant measurable improvement in our diabetic patients who participated.

In 2014 we initiated an opioid reduction protocol with an outstanding 84% reduction in opioid prescriptions in 2019.

Consider the possibility of Trinity Health Care with 27 billion dollars in assets systematically bankrupting Mercy Chicago following the same game plan they used to bankrupt Providence Behavioral Health Hospital in Boston and Mercy in Springfield Massachusetts.

(www.massnurses.org/news-and-events)

At Mercy Chicago Trinity has rewarded an administration that lost a total exceeding \$130 million dollars over seven consecutive years. The hospital has artificially lowered the hospital census by inaccurately reporting the number of available beds then limiting staffing forcing the hospital to go on bypass and make it appear the hospital was underutilized.

The hospital has understaffed and inadequate billing practices. Advocate bills Medicare \$114,405 and Northwestern bills \$274,590 for a sepsis patient. Mercy bills \$75,255.

(www.hospitalcostcompare.com/drugs/).

In 2011 before Trinity took over, Mercy generated a 13 million dollar profit with a reported revenue of \$257 million. The hospital remained profitable for two more years. Move forward to 2017 under Trinity's direction the hospital lost \$21 million and reported revenue of \$254,323,401. Similar revenue but with a much different bottom line. This strongly suggests the hospital is more than viable; it can be profitable.

Trinity has a history of closing safety net hospitals they have owned. Following this pattern they are ignoring efforts to keep Mercy open during a world crisis by rejecting legitimate offers from University of Chicago and other medical corporations.

Closing the hospital will impact the long term supply of physicians since 108 resident training positions will also disappear. Trinity cared so little for this legacy that they chose a closing date before June 30th abandoning those residents in training and risking their opportunity to graduate and even completing their residency. Some of these positions have been redirected to another hospital owned by Trinity. Others will have to find a new program. This maneuver effectively ended the long history of training physicians on the south side of Chicago that began in 1853.

Those of us who work in Mercy Hospital have stayed because we care about the community. In addition to the nearly 20,000 visits per year in our Oakwood Shores pediatric, women's, and medicine clinic, Mercy clinics combined see over 100,000 patients per year. The ER has over 50,000 visits per year. When the hospital closes so do the clinics. Who will fill this void? Mercy has focused on patients not on profits for over 167 years promoting the original mission of Mercy Hospital. ...improving the health and well-being of our communities and those in need, especially people who are underserved."

Respectfully, you have the responsibility and means to keep the mission alive. Do not allow Mercy Hospital to close or be financially dismantled any further.

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