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December 4, 2015

SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
Bureau of Health Facilities Licensing
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Sir or Madam:

In a perfect world, emergency health care services would be provided to anyone without any waiting or inconvenience. Understanding that this is not a perfect world, nor are resources to provide emergency health care treatment unlimited, the recent experience my family had at Lexington Medical Center necessitates this request for investigation of its Emergency Department, staffing and procedures.

On December 2, 2015, my daughter Michaela Rae Chewar attempted to obtain emergency health care treatment. She began the day with a stomach virus with severe distress, vomiting and gastrointestinal issues that normally just takes time to resolve. However, during an episode of vomiting, she was rendered unconscious and experienced what she described as "a seizure". Because she was unconscious, we (her husband, her sister and I) advised her to seek emergency attention. We all believed that she needed to be evaluated by a health care provider to determine why she was rendered unconscious. She and her husband have a small baby, so she was driven to the emergency room to wait by herself for treatment. Left alone after admission, she was instructed to sit in the waiting room, with an anticipated wait of eight (8) hours for evaluation. She was not provided with any space to lie down. The public bathroom did not have a call device in the event she required assistance when vomiting while waiting. After two and a half hours, she asked for a ride home. Waiting in the waiting room for treatment with gastrointestinal upset was difficult, and an eight hour wait near impossible, as you can imagine. When she left, the administrative staff of the hospital informed her that she would lose her position in the queue of waiting patients.

Upon arriving at home, she had another episode of vomiting which again left her unconscious and trembling. My son-in-law called me and I traveled from Charleston to take care of the infant while they made another trip to Lexington Medical. They arrived about 8 pm that evening. They left the emergency room waiting room at 4:00 am the next day, without any treatment being administered. At about the same time they arrived on the evening of December 2, a young toddler arrived with a gash to his head. It is notable that this young toddler had not been provided any care when they left at 4:00 am on December 3. When my daughter left the emergency room at 4:00, she still had not been treated by the staff at the emergency room. On December 3, she sought treatment from the V.A. hospital. Luckily, her situation turned out to be linked to severe dehydration and low blood pressure. We believe had

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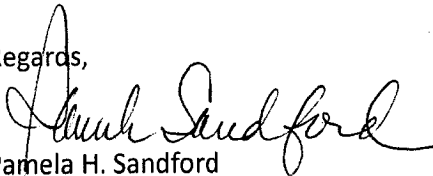
fluids been administered to her on December 2 during her first visit to Lexington Medical Center, subsequent vomiting rendering her unconscious may have been eliminated.

Upon information, the admitting document lists "flu-like symptoms" as Michaela's reason for seeking medical attention. This information, if true, is incorrect. We do not have the form to reference, but she was seeking medical attention because she was concerned about being rendered unconscious and "seizing" when vomiting, certainly a health concern, I think you'd agree, that requires a medical professional's evaluation.

We are all aware that there are varying degrees of medical emergencies which require attention. Critical injuries and cardiac symptoms certainly need priority attention. However, there is absolutely no valid reason that individuals should be required to wait eight hours or more for emergency care. We don't know whether this is an admitting protocol failure, a staffing failure or some other matter, but we believe this issue is important enough to be investigated by DHEC so emergency care can be provided to people by Lexington Medical Center.

If you have any questions about this complaint, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pamela H. Sandford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pamela" being more prominent.

Pamela H. Sandford

c: The Honorable Nikki Haley, Governor, State of South Carolina
Lexington Medical Center, Legal Department