

*Bonnie Dowanberg*

Questions for JC Hospital District Commissioner candidates compiled from members of the Citizens for Healthcare Access (CHA) and Indivisible PT Huddle Healthcare group.

We welcome any of the candidates to write answers if they wish and return them to the committee. Thank you in advance. Again, the meeting is scheduled to start at 8AM on Tuesday June 13th and run to 9:30 AM.

Q. What is the reason you are running for Hospital District Commissioner? What relevant experiences do you have? *Primarily due to my experience with MH and SA tx and administration, in light of goal to incorporate these treatment programs into hospital services. 20 years as an MHP and administrator.*

Q. What is the most important thing you think the Hospital District should be doing over the next year? *Planning for the integration above.*

Q. What do you feel the role of a Hospital District Commissioner is or should be? Especially in light of this hospital being a publicly owned hospital? *To guide the hospital administration toward addressing the health needs of the community.*

Q. Are you aware of the four county "community health priorities?" If so, what do you think the district commissioners can do to help support these goals? *Yes, I am and I think the commissioners can educate themselves on all of the issues surrounding these noteworthy goals. Including MH and SA has been an issue I began supporting 20 years ago at JMHS, healthy lifestyle is a lifelong concern for all, access to care is complex (especially concerning MH and SA), and immunization is one way of preventing disease, but not the only way- this needs more work, I think.*

Q. Have you read the Community Health Improvement Plan? What are your thoughts on it? Is there anything you would change in it? Is there any specific area of concern in it? *No, I haven't seen it yet.*

Q. Have you ever worked in the delivery of healthcare? Have you worked in public health? Have you participated in healthcare or public health policy? What was your role in those contributions? *I have been a therapist, clinical supervisor, clinical director, and quality improvement director, at 3 different Community Mental Health agencies in the area. I have been involved at the state level on the development, revision and streamlining of MH law and policy. My emphasis is always to simplify processes and make the patient experience as positive as possible.*

Q. Do you feel there are any particular issues that you would bring to the discussions in the Commissioners meetings that are not currently being addressed? If so, what are they? *I would like to see the commission investigate possible approaches toward a single payer insurance program, federal, state or county, as something we might be able to prepare for and even accomplish during my tenure, if elected. And I would also like to enhance the discussion of how to integrate new service (MH and SA) which are covered by a very different set of laws and administrative codes.*

Q. Are you aware of the difference in prices between Jefferson Healthcare and other providers both here on the Peninsula and elsewhere? Do you think it is a concern? *You mean cheap labs and tests available in Poulsbo? It is a concern, but I don't know the dynamics of that yet.*

Q. Do you support repealing the ACA or fixing it? If you would favor repeal, what do you envision for a replacement? Do you support the House Republican passed bill? Why or why not? *I think our payment system in America is broken. Neither the ACA, or the Republican plan address that. We spend twice as much as most developed countries, and have significantly poorer outcomes. We are moving toward a single payer system, yet slowly I'm afraid.*

Q. Where do you get your healthcare and/or your health insurance? Did that change with the Affordable Care Act? *Medicare for me, and we buy private high deductible policies for my spouse and son, my daughters also buy private coverage (all at an outrageous cost). ACA had no affect.*

Q. People in our community sometimes have to make a choice between essentials such as food and rent or paying for a doctor's visit or medicine. Other may be struggling with mental health or drug issues. What background do you bring to the Hospital District Commissioners that can help in policy discussions around these issues? *20 years as a mental health treatment provider and administrator.*

Q. What is your position on a person's right to make end of life decisions? *I see no one else in a position to decide that unless competency is compromised.*

Q. What is your position on a woman's right to choose? *Same as above.*

Q. Are you familiar with the policies of JCH regarding women's health care? Do you have concerns about these policies? *I am not familiar currently, but expect that this was done to best serve women in ways that are effective and respectful for them.*

Q. Are you familiar with the services being offered through the Women's Health Clinic at Jefferson County Hospital in Port Townsend? Do you have any concerns about these services? Any that are not being offered you would suggest? *I am not aware of any problems or needs currently.*

Q. Are there any further positions you would like to clarify for us, and if so, what are they? Any thoughts on relevant healthcare topics not covered here that you are passionate about? *Again, single payer is a big issue for me, and admittedly a steep hill to climb, but I believe the time has come to plot a course. The world is filled with examples of how it can be done. It's time to begin.*

Al Bergstein

Chair - Jefferson County Citizens for Healthcare Access