

January 11th, 2022

Ms. Shelly Jordan, PT, Cert. MDT, CWCE
Director of Physical & Occupational Therapy,
Firelands Health Lee C. Jewett Sports Medicine Center

Dear Ms. Jordan,

My name is Richard Ortman, and I am currently a part-time caretaker for my elderly grandfather, Dick Kiser; he has Parkinson's disease, as well as type 1 diabetes and congenital heart disease. We are currently participants in the Firelands Health "Rock Steady" boxing classes for persons with Parkinson's. We are thankful and grateful for these classes; the benefits to my grandfather and others who attend them is very clear. Your staff which runs them are very accommodating and do a great job coaching the classes.

There is, however, a Firelands Health policy which all of the current patients in our 2 P.M. Rock Steady class, and their relevant caretakers, agree is a grievance that is causing a degradation to the professional, scientific standards and medical treatment integrity of Firelands Health systems; especially as it directly pertains to those receiving or assisting with treatments at the Lee C. Jewett Sports Medicine Center. The intent of this letter is to present this grievance to you, accompanied with pertinent materials of petition. This shared grievance amongst the patients of our Rock Steady class is Firelands' current Covid-19 related face masking policy. All of the patients and their relevant caretakers agree that on the basis of either sound science, sound reasoning, or the moral nature of things, that, given the current circumstances and data available on Covid-19, the Firelands' mask policy should be removed.

In first attempting to advance this grievance, I spoke a few times with a patient advocate named Elyse; if my memory serves me correctly, I believe she said that she had spoken directly with you about this matter of my request, and that you had offered to speak with me directly. I thank you greatly for such an offer, and I have not forgotten nor forgone it. Rather, based on the conversations I had with Elyse and the reasoning which she relayed to me for the continued masking policies, I felt it would be far more effective to first comprehensively detail the scientific and moral grounds which I saw for this grievance, and to seek the agreement and support of others in our Rock Steady class before escalating to you. This letter and supporting documentation is the result of these efforts.

I want to be emphatically clear, that the genuine basis for this letter of petition and supporting documentation is not simply to intellectually win arguments of a scientific or moral nature; though the argumentation itself is indeed essential to the cause. Rather, above all else, I, and all of the participants who signed a letter of petition, did so because we believe in the voice of "the people", especially as it regards being a bastion of support to our leaders who make decisions and possibly face formidable forces of authority from above themselves, such as yourself. Though we stand firm on the scientific and moral grounds on which this cause of petition is presented to you, we want there to be no question that one of its primary intents is to empower you as the director of these programs to stand and defend the scientific and morally right causes presented herein, if you will indeed see that they are true. To quote directly from the letter originally presented to participants of the Rock Steady class, they read the following; truly it is for this intent which they have given support:

“Through this plan of petition, you have the opportunity to become such a base of support for the Firelands’ leaders, to let them know that, as a participant in their programs, you stand behind them in doing the right thing, you encourage them to do the right thing, and you’re supplying them with the necessary, sound science and rational argumentation to do so.”

It is our understanding that you, or other Firelands Health leadership, are possibly following federal or state guidance for determining the current masking policy, and we understand that our petition to end the masking mandates is possibly asking you, your peers, and your superiors to go against such guidance. As extensively detailed in the included material, we believe that such guidance is not rooted in sound science, is irrational, is morally wrong, is medically unprofessional, is actively hindering treatment for patients, and is ultimately dehumanizing to the patients of Firelands Health programs. Therefore, though government authorities may make threats of coercion for violations of such policies, the patients and their caretakers believe it is the duty of you and your leaders to stand for what is morally right and true, even in the face of such threats, if they are indeed the primary cause behind Firelands’ current policies; and as previously expressed, we are trying to do our part through this petition in encouraging and supporting you and other leadership staff into making such decisions. We also know that you will not be alone in deciding to alter course, if you will indeed embrace the duty which stands before you, because many of the doctors offices and alternate medical facilities that patients of the Rock Steady class visit regularly have already elected to remove masking policies.

Included with this letter to you are the following documents which were originally disseminated by my own volition to the patients of the Rock Steady class; we are all humbly seeking your valuable time and attention to these documents, especially the details of the final document containing the listed scientific and moral objections, in hopes that the validity and soundness of our causes for repeal can be given just and weighty consideration to have their intended effect.

- Letter Addressed to “... Rock Steady Boxing Class Attendee”
 - The original letter presented to Rock Steady patients to invite their participation to petition
- “Statement of Petition for Repeal of Firelands’ Masking Policies”
 - Voluntarily signed letters of petition from all participants/ caretakers of the 2 P.M. class
- “Objections to Current Firelands’ Covid-19 Masking Policies”
 - A document detailing scientific and moral argumentation as grounds for the grievance

I would also like to humbly request a personal audience with you as a follow up on this material so that I can: receive your impression to the signed petitions, understand your position on the masking policy following your receipt and review of the objection material provided, and know what paths of action may exist to move our petition forward into realization of the masking policy being removed. If you desire to contact me first before I reach out for followup, please find my contact information in the header of this letter.

We all thank you greatly for the time and consideration which you give to this request and petition; for the sake of those whom the entire Firelands Health system is centered around, the patients, we hope you will give genuine and sincere deliberation to our request and the reasoning provided herein.

Sincerely,

Richard Ortman