

**\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\***

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## **Independent Doctors in Naples, Florida, Being Forced Out of Hospitals**

### ***Citizens' Council for Health Freedom: Move Freezes Out Patients' Physicians, Giving the Hospital Full Control Over Treatment Decisions***

**ST. PAUL, Minn.**—Independent doctors in Naples, Florida, and their patients recently got an unwelcome holiday surprise.

A pilot project at Naples Community Hospital Healthcare System has many independent physicians bracing for the end of their admitting privileges at the system's hospitals, according to [Naples Daily News](#). The program dictates that the system's "hospitalists" will handle all medical admissions from emergency rooms as well as referrals from doctors' offices.

This means, says [Citizens' Council for Health Freedom \(CCHF\)](#), that independent primary care and family physicians, concierge physicians and non-specialists would no longer be allowed to admit their patients to the hospitals within the system.

***"This move amounts to the hospital system freezing out physicians so it can have full control over what happens to its patients," said CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase. "Even more concerning, patients are being deprived of their chosen physicians. For many patients, the doctors they have seen for years will no longer be allowed to admit them to this hospital system, write orders, choose specialists or have any say in their care. Hospitalists who are employed by and working for the hospital—not the patient—will be in charge."***

***"This hospital in particular, which is tax-exempt, is using a new value-based Obamacare payment system that encourages it to control every dollar spent on every patient," Brase added. "This new program is a major leap toward the centralized control structures of socialized medicine. If it succeeds, hospitals all across the nation may soon deprive any patient of their trusted doctor—and physicians of their right to treat their patients and be their patient's best advocate."***

Last month, Dr. Paul Jones, an independent concierge physician, stepped down as president of the NCH medical staff. A fellow independent physician said from his 'perspective,' Jones was asked to resign. Notably, the announcement came soon after Jones wrote an editorial for the Naples Daily News questioning NCH's plan. According to the newspaper, Jones estimates half of admissions to the hospitals are done by primary care physicians who are not employed by NCH. Many of them, including himself, have long-term relationships with patients and the policy change will disrupt those relationships.

In an effort to protect both patient and doctor rights, more than 4,000 people have signed a [Change.org petition](#) that states: “I believe every patient has the right to choose their trusted physician to guide their treatment plan during hospitalization. I request the NCH Hospital Board of Trustees to reconsider their admissions policy to ensure that community physicians can retain their admitting privileges.” View the petition [here](#).

*“The hospital may have a bias in treatment decisions,” Brase added. “Several years ago, this hospital system also [signed an ACO agreement](#), which essentially centralizes Medicare dollars and pushes the hospital to keep everyone under its thumb to control these dollars and share in any savings Medicare attains as a result. An ACO has been called an ‘HMO on steroids,’ and it requires a robust electronic health record (EHR) system to track Medicare patients to see where they go and how they are treated. If patients enrolled in original Medicare, who can go to any doctor anywhere, are within the ACO’s assigned population, the hospital will try to keep them within the ACO hospital and its clinics. This arrangement is not for the benefit of the patient; it’s for the benefit of the hospital. This is just another example of the perverse incentives created by Medicare’s public-private partnerships with providers.”*

For more information on ACOs and robust EHR systems from the new book written by Twila Brase, “**Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records**,” visit [BigBrotherintheExamRoom.com](#).

Learn more about CCHF at [www.cchfreedom.org](#), its [Facebook](#) page or its Twitter feed @CCHFfreedom. Also view the [media page for CCHF here](#). For more about CCHF’s initiative *The Wedge of Health Freedom*, visit [www.JointheWedge.com](#), *The Wedge* [Facebook](#) page or follow *The Wedge* on Twitter @wedgeoffreedom.

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