

September 25, 2015

Mr. Jon Opelt
Texas Alliance For Patient Access
2301 S. Capital of Texas Highway, J-101
Austin, TX 78746

Dear Mr. Opelt:

I would like to share my personal story about receiving life-saving care in Lubbock, Texas.

I woke up one morning in December of 2010. To put it mildly, I didn't feel very good. My legs, feet and face had swelled up. I'm one of those bad boys that think he's tough. I never go to the hospital. But on this morning my wife said we need to take you to the emergency room.

So she drove me to the ER at Nor-Lea General Hospital. They did some blood tests and decided they needed to transport me to a critical care hospital immediately. Albuquerque is a five-hour drive from here. So, the logical thought was to send me by ambulance to Covenant Hospital in Lubbock.

There was a foot of snow on the ground. I asked them to drive the ambulance slowly so that my wife could follow in her car.

We got to the hospital in Lubbock where they determined that my problems were more than water retention. I had renal failure. My thyroid was going out. My heart valve wouldn't shut right. They did a procedure called aqua pheresis; that uses a pump and catheter to pull the excess salt and water off of me. In short order they withdrew 29 IV bottles of fluid.

The functional capacity of my heart had dropped dangerously low; so dangerous that many heart surgeons wouldn't even attempt a repair of my heart valve. It was questionable whether I could survive the surgery.

My choices were pretty slim. If I didn't have the surgery I'm going to die. Even if I do have the surgery there is a strong possibility that I won't come off the table alive.

I asked the doctor if he felt he had the ability to do the surgery. He said he thought he did. I said doctor you do your part and I'll do mine. He didn't know about the prayer line behind me.

I survived the surgery and today I'm doing great. They said my working days were over. But three months after surgery I was back at work and continue to work.

I'd be dead today if not for the great care I received in Lubbock. These were doctors and nurses I wanted to work on me. They gave me a fighting chance and for that I am eternally grateful. Lots of people I know here in Lovington, rely on the availability of medical care in Lubbock. I like our local hospital but Lubbock is our lifeline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'S' at the beginning.

Samuel Murphy
814 West Avenue K
Lovington, NM 88260

Home: (575) 396-7055