



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 16, 2009

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager  
City of Cambridge

From: Dennis D. Keefe, CEO *(signature)* 12/16/09  
Cambridge Health Alliance

**RE: Response to POR 2009 #428**

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Thank you for bringing POR 2009 #428 to my attention regarding the Victims of Violence (VOV) program and the Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT).

The VOV program at Cambridge Health Alliance continues to offer the full range of clinical services that had been offered previous to the reconfiguration that Cambridge Health Alliance underwent in response to the State's 9c cuts in October 2009. As part of Cambridge Health Alliance's negotiations with the State, the State requested that the provision of our mental health services be focused to patients living in our primary service area, which includes Cambridge, and/or whom currently receive primary care services from us.

As discussed at a community meeting held earlier this summer, the Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT) at Cambridge Health Alliance was funded fully by a grant from the Massachusetts Office of Victims Assistance (MOVA) for a number of years. Unfortunately, Cambridge Health Alliance was notified in 2009 by MOVA that the grant would not be renewed and therefore, Cambridge Health Alliance was not able to continue the program. The grant provided further support to our Victims of Violence program by funding 0.85 of a full time equivalent (FTE). The Victims of Violence (VOV) program continues to provide the support that the two part-time grant funded CCRT positions provided to the Cambridge community even though it is no longer formalized as a CCRT program. The CCRT program was developed internally by our VOV staff so Cambridge Health Alliance continues to have the expertise to provide CCRT services. Our staff are state-wide and nationally recognized for their expertise in preventing and mediating many forms of violence including domestic, youth, and adult violence and in fact, many of our providers have already been working in the community to support efforts in preventing and mediating violence including in the schools.

In addition to our expertise in both VOV and Department of Psychiatry, Cambridge Health Alliance has a rare resource in the Community Affairs department which focuses on improving the health of our community through outreach programs. Rather than take a reactive stance, Community Affairs continues to be engaged in the community to monitor and gauge all issues affecting health (including presence of violence) to take a proactive stance to prevent issues from escalating. Our staff are also multi-lingual and have support from our robust multi-lingual services department to meet the diversity needs within the community.

Even though Cambridge Health Alliance continues to provide the services which were once provided through CCRT within our existing programs, Cambridge Health Alliance is continued discussions with MOVA to determine why the grant was not renewed and explore the opportunity of restoring the grant funding in the near future to maximize our services. As I am sure you appreciate, these are difficult economic times for all organizations including state agencies but Cambridge Health Alliance is dedicated to continuing to meet the needs of our communities.

Thank you.