

## Atrium Health Response to Questions About RIP Medical Debt

Michelle – please see below for responses

-Have you been approached about working with RIP Medical Debt and if so, what was your response? **There is a retired local doctor who is a vocal advocate for the program, reaching out to our leaders. The appropriate leaders have had discussions with him and informed him it's not something we intend to pursue.**

-Would you be willing to sell or donate some of your unpaid medical debt to RIP? Why or why not? **We do not sell bad debt. Atrium Health utilizes a generous charity care and financial assistance program which ensures charity care for patients with household incomes up to 300% of the federal poverty level. Ultimately, the outcome for the patient is the same or better under our charity care and financial assistance policies and better for the community, as the one-time dollars the program would consume can be targeted to other needs.**

-Does Atrium sell unpaid debt to collection agencies or debt buyers? **We do not sell bad debt.**  
-A retired Atrium physician says he has been trying without success to get this issue in front of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hospital Authority. He says he is frustrated there is no opportunity for public comment or to easily communicate with board members despite the hospital authority being a public board. Do you have any response to his comments? Is there a way for the public to communicate with the hospital authority board?

**As mentioned above, decision-makers within our organization have been in communications with a local, retired doctor who advocates for this program. We are likely talking about the same person.**

### **Statement:**

**Atrium Health's existing financial assistance policies offer robust, equitable and long-term support to patients of all income levels. Our commitments to helping our patients prevent medical debt include charity care and proactively enrolling patients in Medicaid and other health insurance options available to them. We believe our policies and practices afford patients and our communities a better long-term and ongoing solution to addressing and preventing medical debt.**

**Thousands of North Carolina residents are needing to renew their Medicaid coverage, are becoming eligible for the first time because of Medicaid expansion or have options available through the exchange. Combined with our financial assistance program, our patients have stable options to address and maintain their health needs, as opposed to a pool of one-time funds that would be rapidly depleted.**

Thanks,

### **Dan Fogleman**

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**Atrium Health**