



**CONNECT
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April 10, 2014

Via Facsimile to (510) 622-2743 and email to oakfilings@dgs.ca.gov

Judge Ruth S. Astle
Office of Administrative Hearings
1515 Clay Street, Suite 206
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Case No. 2013110565 on Kaiser Permanente

Dear Judge Astle:

On behalf of the 31,000 members of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists ("CAMFT"), we wish to convey our extreme concern and opposition to the Kaiser Foundation motion filed in which Kaiser seeks to preclude public view of proceedings and to seal related documents.

This health care plan has been fined \$4 million dollars for engaging in acts which violate California law. For Kaiser to even suggest a closed hearing simply adds credibility to the original charges against this plan resulting in the large fine in question. Health care plans are routinely accused of being non-transparent and fraught with corruption, and to hold a hearing behind closed doors, where the mental health community cannot bear witness, just leads to increased suspicion and distrust. The issues being heard on this matter are vital to the mental health community and consumer, and must be heard in an open forum.

Any court has the ability to determine which specific documents shall be deemed confidential or privileged, while still allowing the bulk of the documents to be open and transparent—this is necessary for the benefit of the public's interest. The gravity of the violation and public policy implications demand that the mental health stakeholders deserve the right to be aware of and privy to the underlying facts and supporting documentation relevant to issue at hand.

It is imperative that a proper balancing test be implemented in this case. We thank you in advance for your attention to this important legal issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Atkins", written over a white background.

Catherine L. Atkins, J.D.
Deputy Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Epstein", written over a white background.

Jill Epstein, J.D.
Executive Director