

**STATEMENT
Denver Health
Rice Family Settlement**

May 29, 2008

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Denver Health is pleased that the family of Emily Rice and Denver Health have been able to reach a settlement so that legal proceedings between the two parties can come to a close. Denver Health and the Rice family agreed that it was in the best interests of both parties to reach a conclusion in order to avoid protracted court proceedings that could have lasted for years.

Following Emily's death, Denver Health conducted an intense internal investigation, and implemented a series of protocol changes. Changes made include additional procedures preceding patient discharge from the Emergency Department; more communication between Emergency Department staff and City Jail staff; and additional intake procedures by nursing staff at the City of Denver Pre-Arrestment Detention Facility (PADF). The continuous quality improvement process at the jail has been revamped so that quality matters are more readily identified. As always, Denver Health is committed to understanding ways to improve patient care and implementing process improvements.

Included in the settlement agreement were a number of new procedures which Denver Health and the family felt would be beneficial to patients and families:

- Develop an additional training module for emergency department medical and nursing staff to use for assessment, communication and documentation of risk factors. This training will be included in orientation for new Emergency Department and jail health care providers, and continuing education for current employees. Training in correctional care sensitivity and communication for the jail nurses will also be added.
- Establish a protocol in the Emergency Department for identifying patients who will be transported to the jail and may need precautionary monitoring, and require a vital sign check by nurses at the jail every four hours for 24 hours after the prisoner is discharged to the jail.
- Develop a more robust disclosure policy for Denver Health and Hospital Authority health care practitioners for prompt disclosure to patient and/or family members, if permitted by law, of unanticipated events or unexpected outcomes.

The loss of any life is tragic for family, friends and health care providers. Denver Health extends our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Emily Rice.

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