



May 25, 2006

### *Opinion Letter*

We, the board members of the PAAG (“Patient Advisory and Advocacy Group”) are in support of Aegis’ position regarding the need to amend Title IX and Title XXII, for the inclusion of educational programs, social work and specialized services in the above mentioned regulations.

We believe that educational programs will provide us with a better understanding of our situation and condition, and relieve common obstacles including denial, insecurities, fear, shame and guilt feelings. We also believe that proper education will support our commitment and give us greater involvement in our recovery.

We believe that as we become more successful in our recovery, that the change of lifestyle will raise obstacles and challenges for us outside of the clinic. The assistance of social workers could help us in our relationships with other government agencies and community resources, especially the Department of Health Services (including eligibility work), the Department of Social Services and Child Protective Services, the Employment Development Department and vocational rehabilitation programs, parole and probation officers, judges, and public defenders, not to mention other financial aid such as “food and housing”.

Specialized services, side by side with our recovery is important as most of us were diagnosed with Hepatitis-C, anxiety, stress, grief, etc. The treatment of these conditions requires the assistance and services of professionals and specialists. Unfortunately, most unlicensed people don’t have the knowledge and skills that it takes to treat this problem.

We hope that the Department of Alcohol and Drug Program in the State of California will be receptive to these changes and endorse them. We are convinced that it will not only help us in dealing with our problems, but also allow us to improve the quality of our life and become more productive members of society. In other words, this is a win/win solution for both the state, as well as the patients. Eventually, this investment will produce a substantial return to the tax payer.

PAAG Board Members