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RE: Letter of Support for IPPF Patient Educators at Dental Schools

To Whom It May Concern:

On March 31, 2014 an International Pemphigus & Pemphigoid Foundation (IPPF) Patient Educator presented to my second year DDS Oral Pathology class at Indiana University School of Dentistry. The Patient Educator captivated over 100 of us with the details of her long journey to obtain a diagnosis of pemphigus vulgaris. Her presentation was exceptional and I highly recommend all dental students have the opportunity to learn from an IPPF Patient Educator.

The opportunity to supplement regular Pemphigus and Pemphigoid didactic material with a live, human patient was a very memorable experience that put a face to a disease. During her presentation, the Patient Educator showed clinical photographs of her own mouth in various stages of the pemphigus vulgaris disease process. She described the painful lesions and how they made her feel as she visited various healthcare providers searching for an answer. Most alarming to the students in the room, she described the inaction of her general dentist, which directly led to many additional months of pain and suffering before ultimately arriving at a diagnosis.

It is critically important to provide dental students with a variety of learning experiences and to remind us that behind every disease we study are real patients with those diseases. As a result of this one Patient Educator experience, I am *far* more likely to recognize the signs and symptoms of Pemphigus and Pemphigoid in my practice of general dentistry and, more importantly, act on that recognition without hesitation. I strongly encourage every dental school to consider inviting an IPPF Patient Educator into their classrooms.

Please feel free to follow up with me if you have any further questions about my experience.

Sincerely,



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