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February 21, 2006

Hon. Frederick P. Cerise, M.D., M.P.H.
Hon. Raymond A. Jetson
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals
1201 Capitol Access Road, P.O. Box 629
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-0629

Hon. Kim Edward LeBlanc, M.D., Ph.D.
Hon. Kweli J. Amusa, M.D.
Hon. Melvin G. Bourgeois, M.D.
Hon. M ark Dawson, M.D.
Hon. Keith C. Ferdinand, M.D.
Hon. Linda Gage-White, M.D., Ph.D.
Hon. Tonya Hawkins Sheppard, M.D.
Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners
630 Camp Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

VIA TELEFACSIMILE AND ORDINARY MAIL– 504-568-5754- 225)342-5568

URGENT AND TIME SENSITIVE

Re: Licensing of Out-of-State Volunteer Acupuncturists

Dear Honorable Officials:

I am writing you on behalf of the Board of Directors of Acupuncturists Without Borders (“AWB”), a nonprofit organization that has provided over 4000 free acupuncture trauma relief treatments in Louisiana to Hurricane Katrina trauma victims and in response to the Louisiana Board of Medical Examiners’ (“the Board”) correspondence of February 17th, 2006 (“the Board’s Letter”, attached hereto as Exhibit A). We are seeking immediate action, on an emergency basis, so that we can continue to provide Hurricane trauma victims free acupuncture trauma relief treatments.

We are shocked and dismayed at the Board’s finding that there is an “absence of demonstrated need that current demands for acupuncture care [stress relief treatments] are not being adequately addressed by Louisiana acupuncturists and acupuncturists’ assistants,” as well the Board’s decision not to act unless “the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals were to advise the Board that such a need exists.”

On February 13th, 2006, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Mental Health, announced that is issuing a Request for proposals (RFP) for disaster mental health assistance (crisis counseling support) and other long term disaster recovery initiatives to the residents of all 64 parishes affected by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. The DHH’s request reflects the ongoing health crisis created by the wave of destruction, displacement, death, injury, and human misery, unparalleled in modern times, that has descended on New Orleans and parts of Louisiana. It also reflects that, in the words of one AWB volunteer acupuncturist:

There is a lot of healing work to be done in the Gulf Coast for all kinds of healthcare providers, whether they be acupuncturists, primary care physicians, counselors, physical therapists or the innovators of a sustainable economic and human environmental recovery.¹

The DHH’s request for proposals adequately demonstrates the dramatic scope of the unmet need. If you could see the scores of highly stressed residents and overwhelmed relief workers that we encounter and treat, if you could hear from the grateful clinic staff, FEMA and Red Cross workers, police, firemen, and many others who beg us to come back again and again, you would know, as we do, that the desperate need far exceeds the

current capacity of and is not being met by Louisiana acupuncturists and acupuncturists' assistants.

Indeed, the need to deal with the tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of Louisiana citizens suffering from severe stress disorders exceeds the capacity of all Louisiana health care providers. In the presentation that follows, you will hear from those who know best, the people themselves.

Within the past few days alone, AWB has received over a hundred calls from new people in the New Orleans area, some begging, some with sobs in their voices, asking where they can receive free acupuncture trauma relief treatments. Last week we could have told them of various locations in the New Orleans area that they could go to seven days a week to receive free treatments. Today we have to tell them "You Can't." Ask these people and thousands others in New Orleans whether there is an unmet need and they will, like us, be shocked that the question even needs to be asked or answered Can anyone tell them in good conscience that they are being denied treatment because their needs are already being adequately met?

The Board's decision to disallow out-of-state licensed acupuncturists to provide free treatments effectively prevents Hurricane trauma victims from obtaining greatly needed trauma relief.² The need and demand for acupuncture stress relief treatment is growing, not receding. The efficacy of the community-style, auricular acupuncture to address trauma in mass disasters was demonstrated during its use in the 9/11 Disaster.

In the interests of Hurricane trauma victims who continue to suffer from traumatic stress, AWB urgently requests that the Louisiana Board of Medical Examiners ("the Board") and the Department of Health and Hospitals ("DHH") grant AWB's volunteer out-of-state licensed acupuncturists³ immediate, limited relief from certain aspects of Louisiana licensing requirements.

Immediate relief is necessary in order to allow AWB volunteers to continue to provide free trauma relief treatment to the large numbers of Louisiana residents and first responders that continue to suffer from severe stress in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Rather than invoking formal rulemaking, which can be a lengthy procedure, AWB respectfully requests that a more efficacious manner of relief such as was employed when

Secretary Cerise issued the December 28th Guidelines allowing volunteer, out-of state medical personnel to continue providing services for sixty days.

AWB is concerned that will once again treat its request without any sense of urgency. AWB is distressed that it the Board waited one month to put its January 17th decision in writing, thereby preventing AWB from being able to have the Board address this matter during its February meeting. The undersigned contacted Board staff on Monday, February 20, 2006, the first business day after receipt of the Board's letter and was informed that the Board would not consider any submission from AWB—no matter how urgent—until the Board's next meeting in March. AWB hopes that, notwithstanding what it was told, that the Board will address this matter in the immediate future with the urgency that this matter deserves. Every week that this matter is further delayed means that hundreds of Hurricane trauma victims are denied free stress relief treatments.

We beseech each one of you--Secretary Cerise, Deputy Secretary Jackson, Board President LeBlanc, Board Vice President Amusa, Secretary-Treasurer Bourgeois, Board Members, Dawson, Ferdinand, Gage-White, and Sheppard—to find the time out of your busy schedules to give this request your urgent and serious attention.

The significant need and demand from Hurricane Katrina trauma victims for free, readily-available acupuncture stress relief treatment that is not being met and can not be met by Louisiana licensed acupuncturists or acupuncturists' assistants in the foreseeable future. AWB believes that, at most, several acupuncturists or acupuncturists' assistants may be currently living and, perhaps, practicing at this time in New Orleans and surroundings.⁴ A single Louisiana-licensed practitioner in the area has been identified that would be willing to volunteer time to provide free stress relief treatments and that person can only commit to a single day a month. AWB, its Board and volunteers, are committed to help bridge this unmet need and ameliorate the suffering of large numbers by providing thousands more free treatments to all who seek it on a walk-in basis over the coming months.

AWB's humanitarian relief efforts in New Orleans began shortly after Hurricane Katrina and have continued, with some small breaks, through the present time, providing over 4000 free stress relief treatments. Until receipt of the Board's February 17th response to AWB's original request dated and telefaxed on December 28th, 2005 (copy

attached hereto at Appendix B), AWB believed that out-of-state acupuncturists could continue to practice for sixty days under the DHH guidelines announced on December 28, 2005. The Board's February 17, 2006 correspondence, however, makes reference only to the Governor's Executive Order which expired on December 31, 2005 and does not address any grant of authority under the DHH Guidelines currently in effect. Sadly, the Board's letter has forced AWB to cancel any plans for bringing in additional rotating teams and to wind down all Louisiana operations pending your collective response to this request.

The following is the Executive Summary of the points raised in the remainder of this document:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Tens of thousands in the New Orleans area are suffering from severe stress disorders.**
- **There is a demonstrable need in New Orleans and environs for acupuncture trauma relief, evidenced by, among other things the over 4000 such relief treatments provided to date to Louisiana Hurricane Katrina victims or responders by AWB volunteer, licensed acupuncturists.**
- **The need for acupuncture trauma relief is not and can not be met in the foreseeable future by Louisiana acupuncturists and acupuncturists' assistants.**
- **This need is best addressed by allowing out-of-state volunteer acupuncturists to continue to provide community-style acupuncture treatment at multiple locations accessible to the public and responders.**
- **The simple acupuncture treatment protocol for community-style acupuncture treatment used in disaster relief is appropriate for members of the general public who are seeking relief from anxiety, stress or trauma and can be utilized for this purpose without regard to or the need for specific medical diagnosis.**

- **A limited relaxation of the supervising physician requirements is required in order to allow AWB licensed acupuncturists to provide acupuncture trauma relief treatments.**
- **The simple acupuncture treatment protocol to be used by AWB is safely administered on a daily basis in over a thousand facilities in the United States by personnel with far less training than AWB state-licensed acupuncturists.**
- **Because of the limited and simple nature of the proposed treatment protocol, a limited relaxation of the supervising physician requirements would not diminish the patient safety measures embodied in Louisiana law and the Board's rules.**
- **Relaxation of the supervising physician requirements will not allow or require AWB out-of-state acupuncturists to exercise independent judgment with respect to implementation or effectuation of medical determinations and will not compromise the Board's patient safety concerns**

AWB IS SEEKING LIMITED RELIEF

AWB believes that the Board is disinclined under any circumstances to allow AWB acupuncturists to practice within the full scope of their home state license, as was allowed under Executive Order KBB-2055-33 and the DHH Guidelines. AWB has reduced the scope of its request in order to address the concerns evident in the Board's correspondence.

AWB is only seeking that the Board allow out-of-state volunteers to engage in the limited NADA auricular (ear) acupuncture protocol that has been widely studied and has no adverse effects.

AWB is only seeking that the Board allow out-of-state volunteers to engage in a limited auricular (ear) acupuncture protocol known to be very effective in relieving stress, known as the NADA⁵ protocol. AWB believes that this approach strikes a fair balance between the Board's regulatory concerns and the largely unmet need of Hurricane Katrina victims for stress relief treatment.

Use of the NADA Protocol ensures a high degree of safety because it has been successfully administered millions of times over the past twenty years and has been widely studied. Ear points used in the NADA Protocol are widely recognized in the field of acupuncture to reduce stress, anxiety, excessive sensitivity, balance sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems and have a positive effect on blood circulation. The NADA Protocol has been extensively studied with no adverse affects reported in the literature.⁶ In testimony given to Select Committee on Narcotics of the US House of Representatives, New York Psychiatrist Michael O. Smith, noted that in treating over 8,000 clients with the NADA Protocol no adverse affects were noted.⁷ Its low cost and lack of side affects were praised by Arthur Margolin, a Research Scientist in Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine and principal investigator of a favorable study of the protocol published in the August 2000 issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine. This scope of practice is far less than that routinely practiced by Louisiana acupuncturists' assistants. This protocol, which consists of the insertion of up to five acupuncture needles in each ear, is so simple that it is routinely performed in over a thousand treatment facilities in the United States by lay persons with only 70 hours of training.

Consistent with its universal use, AWB applies the NADA Protocol in a community setting. Clients are treated fully clothed, as follows:

Client sits in a comfortable chair.

Client is asked to clean ears with a pad saturated with 70% Isopropyl alcohol.

Acupuncturist inspects ears, cleans further with alcohol if needed.

Acupuncturist inserts up to five needles into each ear.

Client remains sitting for a period of up to 50 minutes.

When subject is ready to end treatment, acupuncturist removes needles and disposes of them in a "sharps" box.

Acupuncturist examines ear to make sure that there is no spotting of blood at needle sites. A sterile gauze pad is applied to the client's ear to stop or remove any spotting

and client is given a pad saturated with 70% Isopropyl alcohol to clean ears before leaving.

The clients are treated in a community-style setting, i.e. all sitting in the same room or outdoor area. Clients are treated on a walk-in basis, without any need for an appointment or other pre-arrangement. Because of the extensive need, the AWB team travels to a wide variety of venues on a given day. By using the NADA Protocol and its community-style setting, a single acupuncturist can treat more patients in an hour that can be treated in a traditional acupuncturists office in several days.

A Significant Number of Louisiana Residents Are Suffering From PTSD

"You can presume almost everyone in southern Louisiana and Mississippi is experiencing some form of post-traumatic stress disorder. I'd say that 60% of my medical students are showing definable signs." Henri Roca III, MD, assistant professor of medicine at Louisiana State University, New Orleans, and chief of LSU's Integrative Medicine program (italics added). Dr. Roca is using acupuncture to treat the Hurricane Katrina survivors' PTSD.⁸

It is well-known that survivors of a mass disaster will continue to suffer for months, even years after major disaster. The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies has noted that the effects of stress "may last for many months after the disaster has ended, and even longer." Specifically addressing the effects of Hurricane Katrina, the American Psychological Association has opined that "there is not one 'standard' pattern of reaction to the extreme stress of traumatic experiences. Some people respond immediately, while others have delayed reactions – sometimes months or even years later. ... The reactions over time may be complicated by the fact that it could take a long time to rebuild after Katrina and hardship conditions can persist for quite some time."⁹

The National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Department of Veteran's Affairs has identified the following are high risk factors for "severe stress symptoms and lasting PTSD": Severe exposure to the disaster, especially injury, threat to life, and extreme loss. Living in a highly disrupted or traumatized community. High secondary stress."¹⁰ These factors describe the experience of tens of thousands of Hurricane Katrina victims living in New Orleans and surrounding areas and the innumerable victims treated

by AWB. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates 500,000 people -- both storm survivors and the emergency workers who helped them -- may need mental health services. The Louisiana Public Mental Health Review Commission has found that:

[I]t is critical for the state to continue to provide uninterrupted mental health services to its citizens by opening and re-opening facilities for the impacted and displaced, to maintain and develop a stable mental health workforce, to provide disaster relief mental health services to all impacted.¹¹

The Commission identified the following as needing mental health services:

- seriously injured victims and bereaved family member
- victims with high exposure to trauma
- victims evacuated from disaster zones
- bereaved extended family members/friends
- rescue workers with prolonged exposure
- medical examiners' office staff (coroners)
- service providers involved with death notification, bereaved families
- persons dealing with extreme loss
- mental health providers, clergy, emergency health providers, school officials, media personnel, businesses (with financial impact), governmental officials and the community-at-large

The NADA Protocol is ideal for dealing with stress, anxiety, and insomnia in the general population.

Originally developed to treat substance abuse clients, the NADA Protocol is ideal for dealing with stress, anxiety, and insomnia in the general population. For instance, between 2001 and 2005 over 800 mental health clients were treated with the NADA Protocol at South Shore Mental Clinic in Nova Scotia, Canada. A study of this program presented at the 2005 NADA “showed a significant improvement in anxiety and sleep problems.”¹²

The World Health Organization also recognizes acupuncture as an effective treatment for anxiety and insomnia. In one published study, two researchers from the Yale University School of Medicine found that subjects who received acupuncture at a particular auricular point¹³ experienced a profound change in their behavioral anxiety

levels, i.e. the subjects receiving acupuncture reported being "significantly less anxious" than did those in control groups at the 30-minute and 24-hour intervals.¹⁴

The efficacy of the NADA Protocol for disaster relief was demonstrated during the 9/11 Disaster in New York City.

The community-style, NADA Protocol auricular acupuncture that AWB uses played an important role in dealing with stress in the 9/11 Disaster. An article written for *Acupuncture Today* about AWB's Hurricane Katrina relief work provided the following historical perspective:

Community responses of this type were first mounted after the Sep. 11, 2001 terrorist attack in New York and other cities on the East Coast. Using ear acupuncture and National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) approaches, treatment has been provided to thousands of individuals. The focus of treatment is on minimizing physical and psychological stress related to disaster or tragedy.¹⁵

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy a 24-hour acupuncture and massage treatment site was established at the Jacob K. Javits Center, on West 37th St., the base of operations for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Association), the New York National Guard and New York State Troopers. During the month that followed approximately 1200 acupuncture trauma relief treatments were performed by volunteers at this site alone. Acupuncture trauma relief treatments were offered at other sites in New York City, including at St. Vincent's Hospital. As late as three years after 9/11, the **Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers in New York City were still offering auricular acupuncture stress relief treatments to 9/11 trauma survivors.** Recognition of the benefits of auricular acupuncture in the 9/11 Disaster is well-documented. In a brochure put out for 9/11 survivors, "Is 9/11 Still Affecting You?" the American Red Cross and the Mental Health Association of New York City offered auricular acupuncture as a method used to relief anxiety and financial grants were made available to 9/11 victims to pay for acupuncture treatments.

It is worth noting that many 9/11 responders, such as firemen, were among the out-of-state volunteers that came to help Hurricane Katrina victims. Knowing first-hand the benefits of auricular acupuncture to relieve stress, the 9/11 responders were quick to

avail themselves of AWB treatments and strongly encouraged their colleagues to take advantage of the free treatments. Louisiana has already followed the experience of New York in dealing with mental health issues after the 9/11 Disaster.¹⁶

The Efficacy of AWB's Treatments in New Orleans is Well-Documented

It should be very reassuring for DHH and the Board to learn that the efficacy of AWB's treatment services in New Orleans have been documented in wellness profiles, stress management instruments, and discussions conducted with over 300 repeat-AWB-client First Responders and Direct Providers at the New Orleans Emergency Operations Center (EOC). In the words of the developer of the Wellness Center at the EOC:

12/12/05

To Whom It May Concern

It with a great deal of indebtedness that I say "Thank you" to Acupuncturists Without Borders (AWB). I am a consultant with the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration or SAMHSA, an agency of Health and Human Services (HHS). In this capacity, I was sent to develop a Wellness Center in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), at the Hyatt Hotel in New Orleans. The EOC is the Command Center run by the City of New Orleans wherein sits each member of the city responsible for its rebuilding. This Wellness Center idea was born out of a request by First Responders who felt a need for mental health support for themselves but who were often unwilling to seek direct counseling or other assistance. When AWB was asked to provide service at the EOC, First Responders began to open up to the wisdom of seeking help for themselves. We found that AWB was a perfect therapeutic/medical bridge around which First Responders could begin the work of establishing a personal health/wellness plan.

Since the collaboration with AWB as a Wellness Center partner, over 300 First Responders and Direct Service responders have been repeat clients who have attested to positive health results. Wellness profiles, stress management instruments, and discussions have verified a reduction in stress and an awareness of a more positive life balance.

I attest to the efficacy of AWB's services and I welcome our continued relationship in the name of the First Responders of New Orleans and the citizens for whom they labored.

Sincerely,

Sandra W. Ortega, PH.D.

AWB has received similar enthusiastic reports from FEMA officials, Red Cross Workers, Shelter Coordinators, and from many other venues at which it has provided treatment and a number of these reports are quoted in the last pages of this correspondence.

AWB Acupuncturists Would Not Be Making Independent Medical Determinations

The Board has expressed its concern that allowing AWB volunteers to give treatments would violate Louisiana law and regulations that “prohibit an acupuncturist’s assistant from exercising, without the informed concurrence of a Louisiana licensed physician....” The benefit of using the NADA Protocol is that it requires no independent judgment with respect to implementation or effectuation of medical determinations. The same protocol is applied to everyone who requests it and no diagnosis is made or required. Everyday, in hundreds of facilities across the United States, clients simply sign in and sit down to receive the NADA Protocol treatment. They are not asked why they are there or what medical complaints they have. It is not necessary. The NADA Protocol treatment can safely be used on the healthy and the unhealthy. Of course, Universal Precautions are applied in all cases. If the client reveals a medical complaint in the course of treatment, AWB volunteers advise the client to seek care from an appropriate medical or mental health provider.

There is no need to require the presence of a supervising physician

Because the NADA Protocol does not involve the AWB acupuncturist in the exercise of independent judgment with respect to implementation or effectuation of medical determinations, there is no need to require the presence of a supervising physician. Requiring that treatment only be given at the office of or under the direct supervision of a physician would be antithetical to the method and purpose of NADA Protocol community-style acupuncture stress relief treatment.

Most physician’s offices are not set up for the treatment of multiple individuals in a single room nor could they endure the disruption of clients walking in without an appointment and expecting immediate treatment. Furthermore, the target clients for community-style acupuncture are not typically in a position to set up an appointment and travel for treatment several times a week. This is particularly true of the large numbers of

responders and volunteers that AWB treats by going to their location and not having them to AWB.

The following is a partial list of facilities at which AWB has provided free treatments:

- Common Ground Health Clinic, Algiers
- Common Ground Distribution Center, Algiers
- Washington Square Park - Rainbow Family providing medical services and food
- Mary Queen of Vietnam Church, Michoud
- The park in Algiers point - treatments for the local community
- FEMA/Small Business Administration site - St. Bernard parish
- Voluntary Agencies tent (Red Cross, Salvation Army) - Lower Ninth Ward
- St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Baton Rouge - Vietnamese community
- U.S. Health Services and Staff of School for Visually Handicapped, Baton Rouge
- Emergency Operations Center, New Orleans
- Covenant House (teens at risk)
- State of Louisiana Health Dept. – Wellness Day
- Odyssey House (halfway house)
- Tent City emergency responders
- Common Ground Distribution Center - 9th Ward
- Monte de Olivos Church, Metairie - Honduran community
- Cajun Dome (Red Cross shelter) - Lafayette, Louisiana
- Emergency Communities, St Bernard Parish
- FEMA site - New Orleans Public Library
- Habitat for Humanity
- Firefighters
- National Guard
- Police

AWB is certainly not opposed to the presence of a supervising physician where one is available and AWB has worked in the presence of physicians at some of the clinics which have asked AWB to provide acupuncture treatment to their clients.

Community acupuncture is a highly effective and efficient way of treating stress-related conditions in areas of conflict, disaster or devastation. Because of the simplicity, demonstrated effectiveness in disaster relief work, and safeness of the NADA treatment protocol the DHH and/or the Board can authorize AWB out-of-state volunteers to continue to provide treatments to Hurricane victims without compromising the patient safety, independent judgment, and supervising physician considerations embodied in Louisiana law.

AWB Out-of-State Volunteers Have Provided 4,000 Treatments to Date and the Demand is Increasing.

Grassroots efforts have been integral in providing relief in New Orleans, said Dr. Roca . Volunteers from Acupuncturists Without Borders (www.AcuWithoutBorders.org) have been steadily treating thousands of New Orleans' citizens as well as the city's police force and relief workers.¹⁷

Henri Roca III, MD, Chief of Louisiana State University 's Integrative Medicine Program.

There is perhaps no better testimony to the unmet need than the fact that in the period from October 2005 to mid-February 2006, AWB volunteers have performed over 4000 free acupuncture stress relief treatments, mostly in New Orleans. AWB is not aware of any Louisiana acupuncturist or acupuncturists' assistants that provided free acupuncture stress relief treatments during this period. This number is adequate testimony that there is unmet need. At the present time, we believe that there are only two or three acupuncturists or licensed acupuncturist assistants in New Orleans, clearly insufficient to address the need. AWB is only aware of a single Louisiana licensee that is able to provide volunteer services in New Orleans and that person is only willing and able to provide treatments a single day a month.

The 4000 treatment figure, although indicative, is hardly an accurate measure of the need. It could easily have been double or triple that number or more if AWB was able to field more volunteers during the past few months. Sadly, the ever-growing requests made to AWB to provide stress relief treatment at various locations constantly exceeds AWB's ability to field volunteers. AWB exists on donations and volunteers must pay their own transportation costs, usually airfare.

Many venues that we are able to visit for only a few hours a week would gladly have us treat on a daily basis. Furthermore, most people suffering ongoing stress and psychological trauma from Hurricane Katrina were not aware that acupuncture treatments were available for free or even that such community-style acupuncture treatment could alleviate stress and trauma. The vast majority of people that AWB treated were people that had never experienced acupuncture.

It is only recently that AWB's activities received publicity. Within 24 hours of a single newspaper article appearing on February 17, 2006, AWB's Executive Director, Diana Fried, received almost 100 telephone messages from New Orleans residents requesting free trauma relief treatments. The number would have been larger but the constant volume of calls forced Director Fried to institute a voicemail message directing people to obtain the treatment schedule from our website. Website logs revealed that hundreds of individuals accessed the website the same day.

The Clients Receiving AWB Treatment Have Suffered From Significant Trauma

It is clearly beyond argument that there is significant unmet demand for acupuncture stress relief treatments. Every day AWB volunteers treat trauma victims whose stories, most of which would be extraordinary in other times, evidence great suffering and trauma:

“We treated 911 workers who were trapped at their stations while the city flooded around around them. One worker told of being on the phone with someone who was pleading that they save her life. She heard the caller drown.”¹⁸

The Algiers resident who stated “dealing with Katrina and its aftermath is like trying to get off crack. Your body is at battle every second, and cannot relax. Your desperate for a little hope, a little good news.”¹⁹

The jewelry maker with “a steady river of tears flowing down both cheeks.” During a second visit for treatment she said. “I'm lonely.” she told me. “My apartment is okay, but the city feels empty and spooky. There aren't so many people on the streets at night and it doesn't feel safe.”²⁰

The frequent client that during Katrina encountered a body floating in the street. “I don't know no resuscitation, but I try, I try. I pounded on his chest and said ‘come on,’ ‘come on don't die,’ ‘come back.’”²¹

The gentleman that came back after his first visit and said, "This acupuncture makes me want to dance. It makes me happy. I couldn't sleep before. I saw so many horrible things in the flood. Dead bodies... Now I have joy again...The needles help keep my mind straight. You really fixed me up.”²²

The photographer who complained that he was not sleeping. From his bag he pulled out two thick photo albums. “The first one was filled with photos taken from a boat in the lower ninth ward after the levee broke. The second album contained photos taken in the Convention Center where he was trapped for days [with thousands of others.]²³. The photos caught the desperation, the humiliation, the death.”

Grown men who have been working long hours in toxic clean up operations for too many days in a row show up with a blank look in their eyes and slumping heads. Women holding families together, cooking for relief camps, nurses listening all day to the tragic stories.²⁴

“[A] father and mother I treated talked about their eleven year old son who has had night terrors since Katrina. He wakes up screaming in the night.”²⁵

“I remember a woman ... asking me what I was doing and I told her I was offering acupuncture to help with stress, relaxation and some of the effects of trauma. She told me she had not slept in 3 weeks and she was concerned because her blood pressure was so high. I invited her to sit down and let me insert needles in her ears. She was so scared. So I promised her I would insert one needle at a time and would stop at any point if it became too much for her. ... Within minutes she was fast asleep. I stood next to her and watched her sleep for the next 45 minutes. She felt great afterwards and thanked me, but could not understand how she became so sleepy.”²⁶

One of the first people that I treated in the devastated Ninth Ward of New Orleans was the five state regional FEMA director for chaplain services. He was responsible for the federal effort to support trauma counseling to responders and returnees when they were confronted with the deaths of family members or neighbors, the complete loss of their possessions and homes and the harsh truth from total devastation of their neighborhood, and community. This two decade special forces veteran had spent the morning witnessing the discovery and removal of six corpses and said that he would be able to know immediately if this "Chinese needle thing" was valid. Thirty minutes later stood up an effusively grateful convert. Not only was he ready to tell his superiors about the amazing success of our work for stress relief, he reported that his nagging back pain was gone for the first time in five years.²⁷ It was apparent to me and the Red Cross medical volunteers standing by that this quiet "Rambo-like" federal agent was not accustomed to spinning yarns to impress people.

The tremendous unmet need for stress relief is manifest and cuts across all walks of life. AWB treats citizens of New Orleans, National Guardsmen, EMT's, workers and officials for FEMA and the Red Cross, policemen, firemen, utility workers, contractors, volunteers at Food Kitchens and health clinics. It is respectfully asserted that there is a continuing crisis of stress disorders and that immediate action on this request is in the best interests of the citizens of Louisiana.

Post-Treatment Evaluations Confirm That AWB Acupuncture Treatments Are Effective And Welcomed By Hurricane Katrina Survivors

“AWB treats anyone who was affected by the hurricanes...locals, rescue workers, volunteers, etc. *Everywhere we went people were asking us to come back, what they recieved from those treatments was profound.*”²⁸

Jeya Aerenon, AWB Volunteer Acupuncturist

AWB asks clients to fill out evaluations after each treatment. The following comments are verbatim and are typical:

“You’ve help more than anyone or anything else here. Thank you so much.”

“I’ve been much calmer since I first tried these treatments two weeks ago (third treatment) and I appreciate your help.”

“I hope to continue treatment and I am happy that AWB will be available daily.”

“It was very effective and should be offered in every clinic.”

“It is so much appreciated that you could be here to provide such a needed service.”

“This is the first time I have relaxed since the storm.”

“Please keep coming!”

“This session really helped me think and it definitely helped me release a whole lot of stress.”

“This is the only thing that helped.”

“This is what we the evacuees need instead of drug medications to help us deal with what has and is happening to us.”

“...[C]alming experience amidst the chaos and uncertainty.”

“I will inform the other soldiers of the acupuncture results.”

“Please come back!”

“Consider this for as many responders as possible,”

“ Thank you! I haven’t been so relaxed and calm in a while. “

“Extremely effective procedure. Gives me the ability to work more efficiently.”

“It was wonderful. IT has helped my stress level tremendously.”

“Come back and do this again for more folks!”

“Keep coming back.”

“Be here ALL the time! Thank you all SO much”

“Keep on doing it.”

“Let the army units know about your services.”

“Keep coming back.”

“Its effective enough, just keep coming back!”

“Send more people. We need it down here.”

Medical Professionals and Responders Commend AWB’s Free Treatments

Finally, AWB would like to share with you the voices of some of the non-acupuncturist medical professionals, responders, and community leaders we have worked with:

The EOC is the Command Center run by the City of New Orleans wherein sits each member of the city responsible for its rebuilding. This Wellness Center idea was born out of a request by First Responders who felt a need for mental health support for themselves but who were often unwilling to seek direct counseling or other assistance. When AWB was asked to provide service at the EOC, First Responders began to open up to the wisdom of seeking help for themselves. *We found that AWB was a perfect therapeutic/medical bridge around which First Responders could begin the work of establishing a personal health/wellness plan.*

Since the collaboration with AWB as a Wellness Center partner, over 300 First Responders and Direct Service responders have been repeat clients who have attested to positive health results. Wellness profiles, stress management instruments, and discussions have verified a reduction in stress and an awareness of a more positive life balance.

I attest to the efficacy of AWB’s services and I welcome our continued relationship in the name of the First Responders of New Orleans and the citizens for whom they labored.

Sandra W. Ortega, PH.D, consultant with the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, HHS, developer of the Wellness Center in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), at the Hyatt Hotel in New Orleans.

I am the manager of a fairly busy FEMA recovery Center in New Orleans, LA. – post Katrina. I believe strongly in having a calm atmosphere available for the disaster applicants and the employees who assist them. During the past two weeks the acupuncturists have visited our center and provided treatment for several employees. The results have varied, but overall have been very positive. Reports from those who have participated have included an overall sense of calmness. A better sense of well-being, a more restful sleep, and just “feeling better” physically. This has been a most helpful process and I surely hope we can continue treatments in the future.

There are other techniques for relaxation and stress relief we utilize and this is among the highest rated in the feedback I receive from those who participate – thank you so much!

Mary Moren-Cornelius, DRC Manager #54 FEMA, New Orleans, LA (italics added).

My experience with the acupuncturists over the past week and a half has been interesting. On my second night I decided to get it done because I had never experienced it and I wondered how I could refer people to something I don't know. After treatment I had a good, calmer feeling that night. *Over the past week and a half I have referred many people with chronic pain and stress, who feel they have no other options, for acupuncture.* I really appreciate having this modality here. Often people stop me and ask if I know where the acupuncturists are and where they can get treatment. I really enjoyed working with Acupuncturists Without Borders. Thank you for being here.

Laura Beth Czulada, a fourth year medical student from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine volunteering at Common Ground Clinic (italics added).

I would like to thank the various professionals from the Acupuncture Disaster Relief team for their work at Covenant House New Orleans. *They have helped many staff and residents deal with their stress and anxiety as related to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the difficult process of rebuilding our shelter and city.* They have also educated many young people about this ancient form of medicine. All those who have received acupuncture have spoken very warmly about the experience. I have personally been treated several times and have found it very balancing and helpful in maintaining a positive attitude towards my work here at the shelter.

Louis M. Byron, GSW, Program Manager, Covenant House New Orleans

I am a volunteer with the American Red Cross. I see acupuncture helping dramatically relieve the stress and tension of our volunteers so we can better serve the victims of Hurricane Katrina. As a volunteer with the Red Cross we tend to focus so much on other people that we forget to make sure that we are physically and mentally healthy. *Acupuncture and other health services are invaluable in the overall effectiveness of our service work. Acupuncture Disaster Relief is essential to service.*

Todd Kusilikis, American Red Cross Volunteer

As shelter coordinator here at St. Anthony/ICM shelter, we've had the pleasure of working with the group Acupuncturists Without Borders on a weekly basis. Since our shelter is comprised entirely of a Vietnamese community, acupuncture is a form of healing which is deeply rooted in our culture. This group has brought

relief from pain and stress for so many. Our evacuees have been through so much these past few months that this one measure of relief has been received with much gratitude by them. I bear witness to the fact that our evacuees look forward to these weekly visits. I highly recommend the services provided by Acupuncturists Without Borders and can only hope that they continue to help others in whatever capacity they can.

Mary Nguyen, Shelter Coordinator, St. Anthony/ICM Shelter, Baton Rouge, LA

I am a supervisor at Warehouse 5, Reserve LA working with the Red Cross. I was under quite a bit of stress a few months ago and have chronic neck pain and heard about the acupuncture that was offered through FEMA at tent city, outside NOLA. I went, as many, a skeptic, but after 20 minutes, was completely convinced. I haven't felt so good in years. I returned to the warehouse to comments that I was less stressed and more pleasant- qualities which helped me as a supervisor and made the flow of the warehouse far better. My only complaint is that I now have the symptoms returning and I haven't the money to pay for the services! To whom it may concern, the acupuncture I received was amazing and went far beyond a pleasant experience; I believe it was a necessity. Thanks for your time.

John Pasquina, Red Cross, WH 5, Reserve, LA

It has been a delight to have the team from acupuncture helping the Latinos in our community. The people, though cautious at first, have benefited greatly from this treatment.

I serve a Latino community and it has helped in their healing and helping their stress.

We hope they can continue to come.

Pastor Jesus Gonzales, Monte de los Olivos Lutheran Church, Metairie, LA

Acupuncturists Without Borders have been servicing our church, Mary Queen of Vietnam Church for over two months. They have come to provide acupuncture treatments for our parishioners every Sunday, providing us with stress relief and pain relief treatments. We really appreciate the dedication and attention that they give us.

* * *

The Acupuncturists Without Borders have been amazingly friendly, accommodating, and patient with the linguistic and logistical barriers we have experienced. After receiving an acupuncture treatment myself, I felt an amazing

release of tension. *At this time in our lives that is one of the best things we can ask for.*

Parochial Vicar, Reverend Luke Nguyen Hungdung (italics added)

Many patients are struggling with insomnia and depression as a result of their stress. Most people in the community have never experienced acupuncture. *The Acupuncturists Without Borders group has been providing daily service at our main clinic as well as traveling with us on our mobile clinics.* I believe the acupuncturists are offering a great service – an alternative to drugs, for coping with stress. It helps our patients relax and also shows them that there are alternative ways to cope other than with drugs and alcohol. *The acupuncturists are providing a very valuable service to a population that is struggling.*

Kristin Summers, fourth year medical student, University of Maryland, at Common Ground Clinic (italics added).

AWB volunteer acupuncturists have been helping to meet this demand and AWB volunteers from around the country are eager to continue providing free acupuncture stress relief treatments in Louisiana. The need is overwhelming, the potential benefit to the citizens of Louisiana great. The power to grant or deny Louisiana residents the continued, needed, documented benefits from free acupuncture stress relief treatments lies in hands, nay, lies in the hearts of each you, the Honorable Secretary Cerise, Deputy Secretary Jackson, Board President LeBlanc, Board Vice President Amusa, Secretary-Treasurer Bourgeois, Board Members, Dawson, Ferdinand, Gage-White, and Sheppard. We urge you to take swift and positive action and not treat this as just a disagreeable piece of paper in the inbox and put off action until another day, week, or month.

Our revised proposal demonstrates our sincere desire to work with DHH and the Board and address the Board's concern so that we can continue to provide some needed relief to the Hurricane trauma victims. We sincerely hope that you are willing to work with us. Thank you for your consideration.

Whatever lies in the future, we at AWB are deeply honored that we have been allowed to serve the remarkable and resilient citizens of Louisiana. We are deeply touched by the tragedy that they have endured and continue to endure, individually and collectively. We are humbled by their determination to rebuild normal lives in the face of continued adversity.

We are also honored to have been able to serve alongside and to assist the selfless government workers and officials, first responders, direct providers, community leaders, workers, and volunteers from Louisiana, from throughout the Nation, and even from overseas, who are working against great odds to restore the health, spirits, economy, and communities of the citizens of Louisiana. Thank you for having allowed us to share our healing talents with some of your citizens who greatly need them.

Sincerely yours,

John A. MacDonald, J.D.
Director for Policy, Planning and Budget
Acupuncturists Without Borders

- ¹ William F. Wulsin, ND, MA, LAc., “Impressions from the First Wave of Acupuncturists Without Borders,” Website Posting, New Mexico Association of Oriental Medicine (Jan. 25, 2006)
- ² We consider Hurricane Katrina trauma victims to include not only the general populace affected by the disaster, but also responders, volunteers, medical personnel, government officials and contractors who are suffering stress from dealing with the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.
- ³ AWB recognizes that acupuncturists that are not also medical doctors are called “acupuncturist assistants” under Louisiana law. The scores of AWB volunteers that have or are willing to provide free treatment services to Hurricane Katrina are licensed in their home states and are known as “Doctors of Oriental Medicine,” “Acupuncture Physicians,” or “Licensed Acupuncturists.” In deference to their professional accomplishments and status, they will be referred to as “acupuncturists” unless the context requires otherwise.
- ⁴ As the credentialing authority, the Board has the data on the number of licensed acupuncturists and supervising physicians. A Yahoo! Yellow Pages search revealed two listed acupuncture offices in New Orleans, two in Metairie. After that, the closet location found was in Mandeville almost 30 miles away from New Orleans.
- ⁵ The procedure, originally developed by Michael Smith, M.D. of the Lincoln Hospital, Bronx, New York, is named after the National Acupuncture Dextox Association, which developed the standards for its safe use.
- ⁶ See, e.g. A. D’Alberto, “Auricular acupuncture in the treatment of cocaine/crack abuse,” *J Altern Complement Med.* Dec.2004 at1000 (“Throughout all the clinical trials reviewed, no side-effects of acupuncture were noted.”); “Managing acute withdrawal syndrome on patients with heroin and morphine addiction by acupuncture therapy”. *Acupunct Electrother Res.* (2004, 29(3-4):) at 187-95 (“Unlike the drug approach, which usually has side effects, there is no adverse effect with acupuncture therapy.”).
- ⁷ Michael O. Smith, M.D., “Testimony presented to the Select Committee on Narcotics of the House of Representatives” (July 25, 1989).
- ⁸ Quoted in Erik L Goldman, “Holism in Action: Natural Medicine Responds to Disaster,” article posted at www.holisticprimarycare.net
- ⁹ American Psychological Association, “Managing Traumatic Stress: After Hurricane Katrina” at 2.
- ¹⁰ “Mental Health Reactions After Disaster: A Fact Sheet for Providers” at 2, National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- ¹¹ Minutes of Louisiana Public Mental Health Review Commission Meeting (Oct. 11, 2005).
- ¹² “Stressed Out, Can’t Sleep - Try Auricular Acupuncture,” *ShoreLines* (Jul./Aug. 2005, No. 30).
- ¹³ This point is included in the NADA Protocol utilized by AWB volunteers in Louisiana.
- ¹⁴ Wang SM, Kain ZN. Auricular acupuncture: a potential treatment for anxiety. *Anesthesia and Analgesia* Feb 2001;92(2):548-553.
- ¹⁵ Porter, K. and Sommers, B., “Acupuncturists Without Borders Mounts Hurricane Relief Effort,” *Acupuncture Today.* (Nov., 2005, Vol. 06, Issue 11).
- ¹⁶ Minutes of the Louisiana Public Mental Health Review Commission Meeting (Oct. 25, 2006) (“Louisiana is following the same steps that New York did following 9/11 to assess needed funding for mental health services.”)
- ¹⁷ Erik L Goldman, “Holism in Action: Natural Medicine Responds to Disaster,” article posted at www.holisticprimarycare.net
- ¹⁸ Karen Adams, L.Ac
- ¹⁹ Korben Perry, “Report from New Orleans and Acupuncturists Without Borders”
- ²⁰ Jordan Van Voast, L.Ac., “New Orleans Stories”
- ²¹ Jordan Van Voast, L.Ac., “New Orleans Stories”
- ²² Graham Marks, et al. “Acupuncturists Without Borders: treating on the streets of New Orleans
- ²³ Graham Marks, et al. “Acupuncturists Without Borders: treating on the streets of New Orleans
- ²⁴ Jordan Van Voast, “Letter from New Orleans”
- ²⁵ Jordan Van Voast, “Letter from New Orleans”
- ²⁶ Sue Larkin, Website Posting, New Mexico Association of Oriental Medicine (Jan. 25, 2006)
- ²⁷ William F. Wulsin, ND, MA, LAc., “Impressions from the First Wave of Acupuncturists Without Borders,” Website Posting, New Mexico Association of Oriental Medicine (Jan. 25, 2006)
- ²⁸ Jan. 22, 2006 posting on Yingyang.tribe.net