| 1 2 | HELMER • FRIEDMAN, LLP Gregory D. Helmer, P.C. (S.B. #150184) Andrew H. Friedman, P.C. (S.B. #153166) | CONFORMED COPY | | | | |
|----------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| 3 | Kenneth A. Helmer (S.B. #193366) 723 Ocean Front Walk Venice, California 90291 | OF ORIGINAL FILED Los Angeles Superior Court JUN 08 2011 | | | | |
| 4 | Telephone: (310) 396-7714 Facsimile: (310) 396-9215 | | | | | |
| 5 | Attorneys for Plaintiffs | John A Starte, Executive Officer/Clerk | | | | |
| 6 | ANGELA CRICKMAN and LISA GREBE | DOROTHY SWAIN | | | | |
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| 8 | SUPERIOR COURT OF | THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA | | | | |
| 10 | FOR THE COU | NTY OF LOS ANGELES BC463109 | | | | |
| 11 | ANGELA CRICKMAN and LISA GREBE |) Case No. | | | | |
| 12 | Plaintiffs, | COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES: | | | | |
| 13 | v. |) (1) SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY A PHYSICIAN | | | | |
| 14 | LAWRENCE RESNICK, an individual, WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER, a | Cal. Civ. Code §§ 51.9, 52] | | | | |
| 15 | corporation or other business entity, PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC., a |) (2) INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS | | | | |
| 16 | |) (3) NEGLIGENCE | | | | |
| 17 | INC., a corporation or other business entity, and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, |) (4) VIOLATION OF UNRUH CIVIL | | | | |
| 18 | Defendants. |) RIGHTS ACT [Cal. Civ. Code §§ 51, 52] | | | | |
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| 20 | | DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY | | | | |
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| 22 | Plaintiffs Angela Crickman and Lisa Grebe, as | s individuals, complain and allege as follows: | | | | |
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| 24 | INTE | RODUCTION | | | | |
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| 26 27 | 1. In this case, Plaintiffs Angela Crickman and Lisa Grebe allege, <i>inter alia</i> , tha | | | | | |
| 28 | their Health Maintenance Organization ("HMO | O") – Bay Area Community Medical Group, Inc. | | | | |
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| | Comp | laint for Damages | | | | |

(which has been acquired by UCLA), – in disregard for their rights, safety and well-being, referred them to defendant Lawrence Resnick, M.D. of the Woman's Breast Center for breast examinations, mammograms and ultrasounds. Plaintiff Angela Crickman alleges the same conduct against her primary care physicians, defendant Peak Health Medical Group, Inc. Defendants knew that defendant Resnick had a pattern and history of engaging in sexually inappropriate and offensive conduct toward his female patients and that he had been sanctioned by the State Medical Board for engaging in inappropriate conduct. Motivated by their own economic self-interest, however, they continued to refer their patients, including Ms. Crickman and Ms. Grebe, to defendant Resnick. As set forth herein, defendant Resnick engaged in inappropriate, unprofessional and offensive conduct toward both women while in the course of examining their breasts. Among other things, he engaged in flirtatious and suggestive conduct and, in the case of Ms. Grebe, he kissed her at the conclusion of the examination. As a result of defendants' conduct, both women have sustained damages.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. The Court has personal jurisdiction over the defendants because they are residents of and/or doing business in the State of California.

3. Venue is proper in this county in accordance with Section 395(a) and 395.5 of the California Code of Civil Procedure because Defendants, or some of them, reside in this county, and the injuries alleged herein, or some of them, occurred in this county. Venue is further appropriate in this county in accordance with Section 395(a) Defendants and Plaintiffs contracted to perform their obligations in this county, because the contract was entered into in this county, because the liability, obligation and breach occurred within this county, and because the principal place of business of Defendants, or some of them, is situated in this county.

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PARTIES

- 4. Plaintiffs Angela Crickman (hereinafter "PLAINTIFF CRICKMAN" or "MS. CRICKMAN") and Lisa GREBE (hereinafter "PLAINTIFF GREBE" or "MS. GREBE") are individuals (sometimes collectively referred to as "PLAINTIFFS") who, at all relevant times during the events alleged herein, resided in the County of Los Angeles, State of California.
- 5. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendants WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER, PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC., BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC., and DOES 1 through 25, and each of them, are and, at all times mentioned herein, were corporations, unincorporated associations, partnerships or other business entities, qualified to do business and/or are doing business in the State of California.
- 6. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendant LAWRENCE RESNICK (hereinafter "RESNICK") is an individual who is an owner, principal, officer, director and/or managing agent of defendant WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are further informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendant RESNICK is and, at all relevant times alleged herein, was a resident of the County of Los Angeles, State of California.
- 7. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendant RESNICK is, and at all relevant times was, the majority shareholder, member and/or owner of WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that there exists, and at all times herein mentioned, existed a unity of interest and ownership between defendants RESNICK and WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are further informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendant RESNICK completely controls and dominates, and at all times mentioned herein, controlled and dominated the affairs of WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER such that any individuality and

been ascertained.

separateness between them have ceased and that defendant RESNICK is the alter ego of WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER. Adherence to the fiction of the separate existence of WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER as an entity distinct from defendant RESNICK would permit an abuse of the corporate and/or LLC privilege and would sanction a fraud or promote injustice.

8. The true names and capacities, whether corporate, associate, individual or otherwise of defendants DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, are unknown to MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, who therefore sue said defendants by such fictitious names. Each of the defendants designated herein as a DOE is negligently or otherwise legally responsible in some manner for the events and happenings herein referred to and caused injuries and damages proximately thereby to MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, as herein alleged. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE will seek leave of Court to amend this Complaint to show their names and capacities when the same have

9. At all times mentioned herein, defendants, and each of them, were the agents, representatives, employees, successors and/or assigns, each of the other, and at all times pertinent hereto were acting within the course and scope of their authority as such agents, representatives, employees, successors and/or assigns.

FACTS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

- 10. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are both patients of the same primary health care provider, PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. a medical group consisting of physicians specializing in the area of family practice.
- 11. Physicians with defendant PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. referred both MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE to defendant RESNICK for mammogram and ultrasound examinations of their breasts. PLAINTIFFS are informed and believe, and thereon allege,

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13. Despite knowledge of defendant RESNICK's inappropriate behavior, defendants PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. and BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC. continued to refer their patients (including PLAINTIFFS) to him.

and history of referring all patients who need mammograms or ultrasounds of their breasts to defendant RESNICK and that they do so at the direction and/or recommendation of defendant BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC. – the Health Maintenance Organization ("HMO") to which PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. belongs. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that UCLA Health System and the Regents of the University of California have acquired and/or will acquire defendant BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC.

12. At the time they referred and/or continued to refer MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE to defendant RESNICK, defendants PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. and BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC. knew that defendant RESNICK had a pattern, practice and/or history of engaging in sexually inappropriate, offensive and flirtatious conduct and of making unwelcome advances while performing ultrasound and/or mammogram examinations of his patients' breasts. Among other things, in December 2007, defendant RESNICK had been sanctioned for and publicly reprimanded by the Medical Board of the State of California for engaging in unprofessional conduct arising from inappropriate comments he made to a patient during a breast examination. In addition, PLAINTIFFS are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that other complaints and/or accusations of improper conduct had been filed with the Medical Board against defendant RESNICK, and that defendants PEAK HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, INC. and BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC. had received complaints and concerns from their own patients and members about defendant RESNICK's inappropriate conduct during breast examinations.

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FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY A PHYSICIAN

(Cal. Civ. Code §§ 51.9, 52)

(By MS. CRICKMAN against all Defendants)

(By MS. GREBE against Defendants RESNICK, WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER, BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC., and DOES 1 through 50)

28. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE reallege and incorporate by reference paragraphs 10 through 27, as though set forth in full.

29. In perpetrating the above-described actions, the defendants, and each of them, including DOES 1 through 50 and/or their agents and employees, subjected MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE to unlawful sexual harassment in violation of California Civil Code Sections 51.9 and 52. At the time the unlawful conduct was perpetrated, the relationship between MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, on the one hand, and defendants, on the other hand, was one of Physician/Patient, HMO/Patient and or a substantially similar relationship. As set forth herein, defendant RESNICK made sexual advances and engaged in other verbal, visual and physical conduct of a sexual nature or of a hostile nature based on gender that were unwelcome and pervasive or severe. In addition, defendants PEAK MEDICAL HEALTH GROUP, INC. and/or BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC., with reckless disregard for the rights and safety of MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, with advance knowledge of defendant RESNICK's propensity and pattern of engaging in inappropriate conduct, and in furtherance of their own economic best interest, referred and continued to refer their patients, including MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, to defendant RESNICK and otherwise aided, incited and/or conspired with the denial of MS. CRICKMAN's and MS. GREBE's rights pursuant to Section 51.9 of the California Civil Code.

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30. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE had an inability to easily terminate their relationship with the defendants.

- 31. As a result of such unlawful conduct, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE suffered and will suffer actual damages, including, without limitation, emotional distress and the violation of a statutory and/or constitutional right
- 32. By the aforesaid acts and omissions of defendants, and each of them, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE have been directly and legally caused to suffer actual damages including, but not limited to, loss of earnings and future earning capacity, attorneys' fees, costs of suit and other pecuniary loss not presently ascertained.
- and continues to suffer severe emotional and mental distress, anguish, humiliation, embarrassment, fright, shock, pain, discomfort and anxiety. The exact nature and extent of said injuries is presently unknown to MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE do not know at this time the exact duration or permanence of said injuries, but are informed and believe and thereon allege that some if not all of the injuries are reasonably certain to be permanent in character.
- 34. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that the defendants, and each of them, by engaging in the aforementioned acts and/or in authorizing and/or ratifying such acts, engaged in wilful, malicious, intentional, oppressive and despicable conduct, and acted with wilful and conscious disregard of the rights, welfare and safety of MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, thereby justifying the award of punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be determined at trial.
- 35. As a result of defendants' acts and conduct, as alleged herein, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are is entitled to actual damages as provided in Section 52(b) of the California Civil Code.

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| 1 | 36. As a result of defendant's acts and conduct, as alleged herein, MS. | | |
| 2 | CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are entitled to all applicable civil penalties and to exemplary | | |
| 3 | damages as provided in Section 52(b)(1) of the California Civil Code. | | |
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| 5 | 37. As a result of defendants' acts and conduct, as alleged herein, MS. | | |
| 6 | CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are entitled to reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit as provide | | |
| 7 | in Section 52(b)(3) of the California Civil Code. | | |
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| 9 | SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION | | |
| 10 | INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS | | |
| 11 | (By MS. CRICKMAN against all Defendants) | | |
| 12 | (By MS. GREBE against Defendants RESNICK, WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER, BAY AREA | | |
| 13 | COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC., and DOES 1 through 50) | | |
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| 15 | 38. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE reallege and incorporate by reference | | |
| 16 | paragraphs 10 through 27, 29 and 30, as though set forth in full. | | |
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| 18 | 39. Defendants' conduct as described above was extreme and outrageous and was | | |
| 19 | done with the intent of causing MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE to suffer emotional distress or | | |
| 20 | with reckless disregard as to whether their conduct would cause them to suffer such distress. | | |
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| 22 | 40. By the aforesaid acts and omissions of Defendants, and each of them, | | |
| 23 | MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE have been directly and legally caused to suffer actual damages | | |
| 24 | including, but not limited to, loss of earnings, reliance damages, costs of suit and other pecuniary | | |
| 25 | loss in an amount not presently ascertained, but to be proven at trial. | | |
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| 27 | 41. As a further direct and legal result of the acts and conduct of defendants, and | | |
| 28 | each of them, as aforesaid, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE have been caused to and did suffer | | |

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and continues to suffer severe emotional and mental distress, anguish, humiliation, embarrassment, fright, shock, pain, discomfort and anxiety. The exact nature and extent of said injuries is presently unknown to MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE do not know at this time the exact duration or permanence of said injuries, but are informed and believe and thereon allege that some if not all of the injuries are reasonably certain to be permanent in character.

42. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that the defendants, and each of them, by engaging in the aforementioned acts and/or in authorizing and/or ratifying such acts, engaged in wilful, malicious, intentional, oppressive and despicable conduct, and acted with wilful and conscious disregard of the rights, welfare and safety of MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, thereby justifying the award of punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be determined at trial.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

NEGLIGENCE

(By MS. CRICKMAN against all Defendants)

(By MS. GREBE against Defendants RESNICK, WOMAN'S BREAST CENTER, BAY AREA COMMUNITY MEDICAL GROUP, INC., and DOES 1 through 50)

- 43. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE reallege and incorporate by reference paragraphs 10 through 27, 29, 30 and 39, as though set forth in full.
- 44. Defendants, and each of them, owed Plaintiffs a duty of care to refer them and their other patients to a to physicians who they were confident would observe strict and professional standards of care in conducting in highly personal examinations of a woman's breasts, including ultrasounds, mammograms and physical examinations, and to refrain from referring them to a physician who they knew, or should have knows, had a propensity to engage in the kind of inappropriate, offensive and harmful conduct as alleged herein.

- 49. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendants, in violation of Section 51 of the California Civil Code, failed to provide or apply the same level of scrutiny to physicians to whom they referred their female patients as they did to those to whom they referred their male patients. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that defendants would not have referred male patients to a physician who had been sanctioned by the State Medical Board for inappropriate conduct, but that they readily and repeatedly did so with their female patients.
- 50. By the aforesaid acts and omissions of defendants, and each of them, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE have been directly and legally caused to suffer actual damages including, but not limited to, loss of earnings and future earning capacity, attorneys' fees, costs of suit and other pecuniary loss not presently ascertained.
- 51. As a further direct and legal result of the acts and conduct of defendants, and each of them, as aforesaid, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE have been caused to and did suffer and continues to suffer severe emotional and mental distress, anguish, humiliation, embarrassment, fright, shock, pain, discomfort and anxiety. The exact nature and extent of said injuries is presently unknown to MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE do not know at this time the exact duration or permanence of said injuries, but are informed and believe and thereon allege that some if not all of the injuries are reasonably certain to be permanent in character.
- 52. MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that the defendants, and each of them, by engaging in the aforementioned acts and/or in authorizing and/or ratifying such acts, engaged in wilful, malicious, intentional, oppressive and despicable conduct, and acted with wilful and conscious disregard of the rights, welfare and safety of MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE, thereby justifying the award of punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be determined at trial.

| 1 | As a result of defendants' acts and conduct, as alleged herein, MS. | | |
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| 2 | CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are is entitled to actual damages for each and every offense and are | | |
| 3 | further entitled to three times the amount of those actual damages, as provided in Section 52(a) of the | | |
| 4 | California Civil Code. | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | 54. As a result of defendants' acts and conduct, as alleged herein, MS. | | |
| 7 | CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE are entitled to reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit as provide | | |
| 8 | in Section 52(a) of the California Civil Code. | | |
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| 10 | PRAYER FOR RELIEF | | |
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| 12 | WHEREFORE, MS. CRICKMAN and MS. GREBE pray for judgment against | | |
| 13 | defendants, and each of them, as follows: | | |
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| 15 | 1. General damages in an amount to be proved at trial; | | |
| 16 | 2. Special damages in an amount to be proved at trial; | | |
| 17 | 3. Punitive and exemplary damages in an amount appropriate to punish | | |
| 18 | defendants and to make an example of them to the community; | | |
| 19 | 4. Trebling of their actual damages and in no case less than \$4,000 pursuant to | | |
| 20 | Section 52 of the Civil Code; | | |
| 21 | 5. All applicable civil penalties pursuant to Section 52 of the Civil Code; | | |
| 22 | 6. Attorneys' fees; | | |
| 23 | 7. Costs of suit; | | |
| 24 | 8. Interest; | | |
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| | 15 Complaint for Damages | | |
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| 1 | | 9. For such other relief as the C | Court deems proper. |
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| 3 | DATED: | June 7, 2011 | HELMER • FRIEDMAN, LLP Gregory D. Helmer, P.C. Andrew H. Friedman, P.C. Kenneth A. Helmer |
| 4 | | | Kenneth A. Helmer |
| 5 6 | | | By/// |
| 7 | | | Gregory D. Helmer, P.C. |
| 8 | | | Attorneys for Plaintiffs ANGELA CRICKMAN and LISA GREBE |
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| 10 | | <u>PLAINTIFFS' DEMAI</u> | ND FOR JURY TRIAL |
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| 12 | | Plaintiffs ANGELA CRICKMAN a | and LISA GREBE hereby demands a trial by jury. |
| 13 | DATED | I 7 2011 | HELMED EDIEDMAN LLD |
| 14 | DATED: | June 7, 2011 | HELMER • FRIEDMAN, LLP Gregory D. Helmer, P.C. Andrew H. Friedman, P.C. |
| 15 | | | Kenneth A. Helmer |
| 16 | | | H/s |
| 17 | | | By: Gregory D. Helmer, P.C. |
| 18 | | | Attorneys for Plaintiffs |
| 19 | | | ANGELA CRICKMAN and LISA GREBE |
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