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September 29, 2010

Mr. Dan DeBarba, CEO
Norwalk Hospital
34 Maple Street
Norwalk, CT 06856

Praise for John M. Garofalo, M.D.

Dear Mr. DeBarba,

On August 25, 2010 I had a Da Vinci hysterectomy at Norwalk Hospital performed by Dr. John Garofalo. I was new to Norwalk Hospital and to Dr. Garofalo. I had 3 previous surgeries for uterine fibroids, most recently at Stamford Hospital and Greenwich Hospital and I am pleased that I researched DaVinci and chose Dr. Garofalo. He is without exception the most patient and attentive surgeon I have ever dealt with.

I would consider myself a "high maintenance patient" due to the fact that I have a very low pain threshold and a heightened sensitivity to bodily sensations due to the mind/body work that I do. I am a psychotherapist and fitness trainer and I combine the two disciplines and treat many mental disorders along with child, teen and adult obesity which is at an all time high. I have a heightened sensitivity because I have to be highly tuned into my patients in order to understand the complexities of their mental disorders. Because of this I have become highly tuned to everything in life, especially pain. With that said, I am grateful that my husband convinced me to research the DaVinci system before going back to Greenwich Hospital. Once I began researching Dr. Garofalo my husband decided to get involved again (he does the media for a few hospitals) and he had surgeons calling me from all over the place to help me with my decision. I asked Dr. Nimaroff, the Chief of Gynecology at North Shore University Hospital in New York about Dr. Garofalo and within a day he got back to me and said that Dr. Garofalo had a very good reputation. After that I felt like I had my blessing to go forward with Dr. Garofalo and Norwalk hospital.

At the very first visit Dr. Garofalo spent more time with me than any other surgeon. He went through my medical history more thoroughly than any doctor ever had. He spent time investigating, ruling out other disorders, assessing and evaluating options. I knew I was with someone special when I met Dr. Garofalo. This continued through and even after surgery was complete. Dr. Garofalo was patient and concerned with my every need; even at the point where other doctors would have become frustrated with my anxiety and the amount of questions I asked. Dr. Garofalo never lost his patience with me and was a true professional. He visited two or three times after surgery in the hospital (can't remember- too many drugs) and called me every day after I was discharged to see how I was doing. He also had me come back to his office twice during the week of my discharge to address some issues I was having. I was shocked to have a surgeon that cared so much and I felt comfortable and happy about my choice to use Norwalk Hospital and Dr. Garofalo.

The most profound thing that I will never forget is when I had my 10 day follow up visit. I thanked him for tending to my every need of being a high maintenance patient and he said, "It was my privilege". Not, my pleasure, but my privilege. I thought that was the nicest thing any doctor had ever said to me and I was honored that I chose him as my surgeon.

Another great thing happened upon my 10 day follow up. I went back to the blood draw where one of the nurses was so kind during my pre-op testing when I was feeling extremely nauseous. I went back to thank Ivette at the blood draw for her kindness and in the lobby of the hospital discovered the DaVinci system. I got to sit down and work the arms and the system just 10 days after my own surgery. It felt like a video game. That was the best!

Lastly this letter would not be complete without mentioning the great staff at Dr. Garofalo's office. They are always kind and patient, even when the office is crowded and patients are not always kind to them. I witnessed them keeping their composure when a patient became rude to them due to a scheduling issue.

My sincere thanks to you and your hospital for all that you do to help people in the community and thank you for making my experience a positive one! It is a month later and I am back to work full time and almost pain free.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela Tinkham".

Pamela Tinkham