



**SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC ALLIANCE COUNCIL STATEMENT
ON SOUNDERS FC AND PROVIDENCE PARTNERSHIP – FOLLOW-UP**

May 15, 2023

On Friday, May 12, representatives of the Alliance Council met with several executives within the Providence Health system and representatives of the team's supporter groups. The meeting began with Providence sharing programs that both themselves and their affiliate, Swedish Health Services are focusing on, like increasing training to respect trans patients and creating health care navigators to increase access to LGBTQ services in rural areas. They committed that the Work2BeWell program at Renton Schools includes support for LGBTQ students. They told us that Medicaid patients that were illegally referred to debt collectors was an unfortunate oversight, and that they were reimbursed with interest. And the speakers from Providence and Swedish seemed to want to be supportive of values that we treasure.

But after questioning at the meeting, it seems pretty clear that as expected, despite the long waiting lists for gender-affirming care for example, there are lots of services that Providence will not offer (like hormone therapy or tubal ligations) unless deemed "medically necessary" and requires refusal or contracting out to other providers outside the Catholic health system.

One clear takeaway from the discussion is that Swedish and partners like Planned Parenthood are more in line with the values of our community than the Providence ministry is. However, as several members of the supporter groups pointed out, Swedish is not the brand on our jersey, but Providence is. And for many Sounders fans, it is the placing of the Providence brand on our jerseys for our fans to buy and our players to wear that they feel especially betrayed by.

While we are well aware that this sponsorship deal will not be dissolved, and that Providence will not be changing any major policies based on the views of Sounders supporters, perhaps there can be future compromise in the branding verbiage displayed on Sounders jerseys. Finally, we look forward to seeing Providence keep their commitments through the programs they discussed and the future treatment of low-income patients.

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