

# UCLA

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## Office of the Chancellor

June 10, 2019

To the Campus Community:

Our university's first and highest obligation is to the communities we serve. And so, it is with a profound sense of sadness that we report distressing information. Dr. James Heaps, a physician formerly employed by UCLA, has been charged with sexual battery in connection with his medical practice and today surrendered to law enforcement. Dr. Heaps was an obstetrician-gynecologist who worked on a part-time basis at the UCLA student health center from approximately 1983 to 2010, was hired by UCLA Health in 2014 and held medical staff privileges at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center from 1988 to 2018. We understand that these charges relate to care he provided to two patients in 2017 and 2018 at UCLA Health. Last year, in response to allegations of sexual misconduct against Dr. Heaps, UCLA investigated his conduct, removed him from clinical practice, informed him that his employment was being terminated (after which he announced he was retiring) and reported him to the Medical Board of California and law enforcement.

Sexual abuse in any form is unacceptable and represents an inexcusable breach of the physician-patient relationship. We are deeply sorry that a former UCLA physician violated our policies and standards, our trust and the trust of his patients. Because we know we can and must do better, in March, we initiated an independent review of our institution's response to sexual misconduct in clinical settings. The review is examining UCLA's response to such conduct and whether our policies and procedures to prevent, identify and address sexual misconduct are consistent with best practices and reflect the high standard of patient care we demand of ourselves. Based on the findings of the review, we will identify and implement necessary changes across all of UCLA's clinical sites. Our process will be guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, fairness and devotion to our patients.

This effort has been led by a committee consisting of Chancellor Gene Block; Joanne Corday Kozberg, a former UC regent who served as California secretary of state and consumer services for Governor Pete Wilson; the Hon. Carlos Moreno, a former California Supreme Court justice; and Lori Pelliccioni, a former UC regent and former assistant U.S. attorney with 25 years of experience in the health care industry. The review will also be aided by medical experts and build upon structural, policy and process changes that UCLA Health has already developed and implemented. You can view those policy and process changes on the [UCLA Health website](#). We thank our colleagues for their time and service on our behalf.

UCLA has partnered with a trusted third-party resource called Praesidium, which has extensive experience in providing and connecting patients with support services. We encourage any patients with complaints or concerns about Dr. Heaps to contact Praesidium at (888) 961-9273.

With thousands of clinicians, UCLA Health is entrusted with nearly 2.5 million patient visits per year. Our goal is to provide the best experience for every patient, during every encounter, every time. Our responsibility to our patients is of paramount importance to us. We are committed to taking the necessary steps to ensure their wellbeing and maintaining the confidence and trust of the broader UCLA community.

Sincerely,

**Gene D. Block**  
Chancellor

**John Mazziotta**  
Vice Chancellor, UCLA Health Sciences  
CEO, UCLA Health