

Dear members of our community,

An article published on September 13 in *USA Today* about our hospital was a disservice to our patients and our dedicated teams who, for decades, have supported the nation's capital in every major crisis, from the 9-11 tragedy at the Pentagon to the Navy Yard shooting. Every day, we provide high-quality, safe care to everyone who needs us. Despite our best effort to provide *USA Today* with accurate information about us, the story is riddled with inaccuracies and misused data.

It was especially disappointing that the article exploited the injuries and treatment of Rep. Steve Scalise to make a false and completely unfounded implication that a minor plumbing leak put the congressman – and other patients – at risk. Our team handled the referenced incident immediately and effectively, and we involved an outside company to certify the room was safe for patient care. Notably, the independent Joint Commission and D.C. Department of Health regularly and rigorously inspect every inch of our hospital, and we are fully accredited.

Finally, MedStar Washington Hospital Center is financially strong. Even when we've faced budget strains, as most hospitals do, we've invested in programs to improve quality and safety. This year, for example, we created a new Sepsis Response Team, added pharmacists on patient units and expanded our hospitalist and critical care staffing.

This is part of our larger commitment to "high reliability," which requires considerable transparency. In fact, it is this transparency that allowed the reporter to obtain information and misuse it to paint a wholly inaccurate portrait of our hospital. Regardless, we will never waver from our vitally important commitment to all of our patients and to the nation's capital.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.

John Sullivan
President, MedStar Washington Hospital Center