



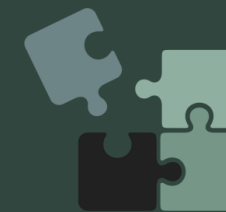
Media Readiness When a Crisis Occurs

WSHPCO Fall Conference

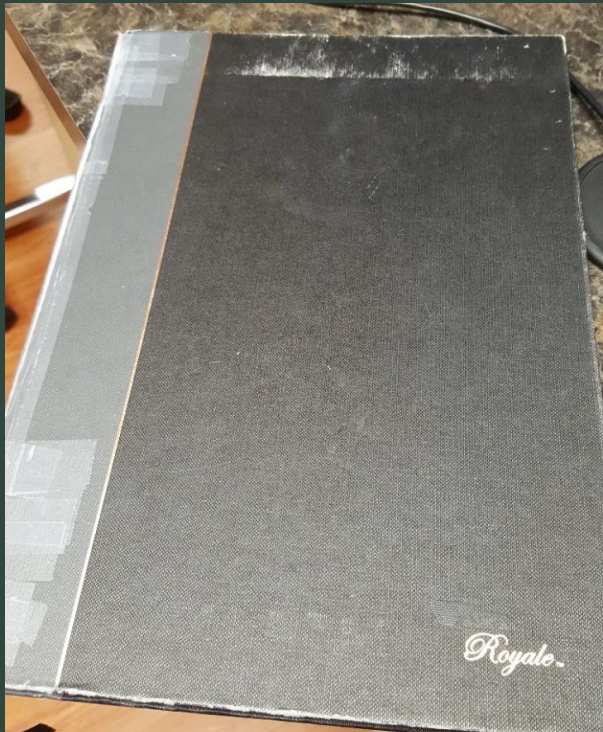
October 20, 2025

Presented by Greg Pang, MHA, Principal
Gregpangconsulting.com

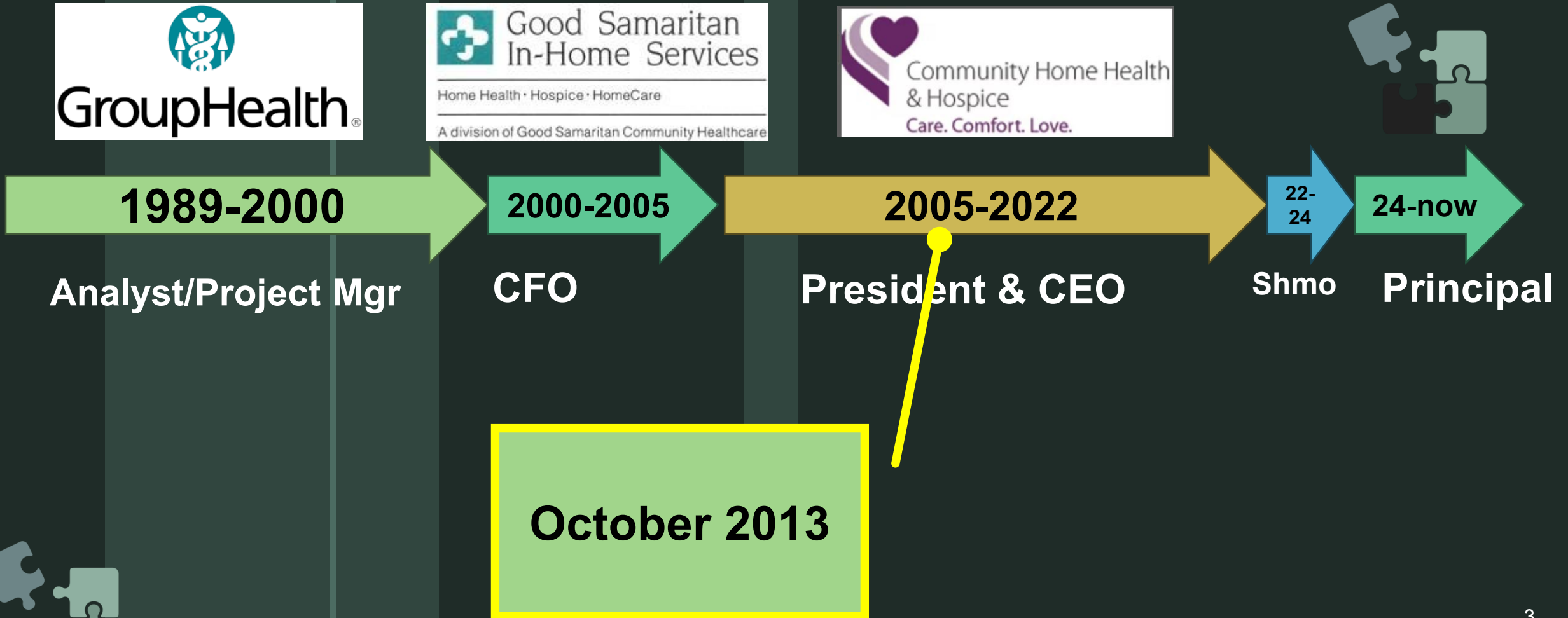
**Slide Deck available
after presentation**



It was a Dark and Stormy Night



My Bio Timeline





Confidentiality Disclaimer...

- ✓ Patient Names
- ✓ Businesses
- ✓ Organizations
- ✓ People
- ✓ Places



Media Hits...within 20 minutes!

Jerry Moon's Family Found Stranger's Body In His Casket, Learned Father Had Been Cremated

The Huffington Post | By Andres Jauregui



Grieving family horrified to find wrong body in casket during funeral

family nearly buried wrong man

Print

Miami Herald

Posted on Wed, Oct. 23, 2013

Family wants answers in Chehalis body switch

Family: 'They opened the casket and it was not'

By Associated Press and KATU News Staff | Published: Oct 23, 2013 at 10:31 AMPDT (2013-10-23T17:31:28Z)

Dead wrong! Family finds wrong body during Washington state funeral

Family opened the casket to say a final goodbye to Jerry Moon, but found the body of another man in the casket. Relatives said that Moon's body wasn't just misplaced, but - against his wishes - had been cremated.

BY JOE KEMP / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Media Exposure...



The Cause of our Media Firestorm...

FUNERAL MIX-UP

"WE HAVE TO TRUST THOSE PEOPLE WHO WE RECEIVE A BODY FROM. THAT IS WHAT IS SO FRUSTRATING, BUT WE ARE TAKING COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY."

DANIEL LAPLAUNT, MGR, BROWN MORTUARY SERVICE



TIP#1; Understand the Media



Tips!

- “If it bleeds, it leads”
- Do not assign blame
- Create a few 5-10 second soundbites
- Nothing is “off the record”
- “Never Argue With a Man Who Buys Ink by the Barrel” – Mark Twain
- AKA; “The Pen is Mightier than the Sword”
- Be aware of tight news production timelines and be responsive.



TIP#2; A Media Relations Policy is a MUST



Tips!

- Required Reading for all staff
- No one talks to the media except CEO-designated personnel
- Community Relations accepts, reviews, and responds to media requests within 20 minutes.
 - Full Response
 - Measured Response
 - “We’re working on it”
 - Timeline expectations
- Go to gregpangconsulting.com to download a copy of the media policy we had in effect at the time.



TIP#3; Get Your Talking Points Together



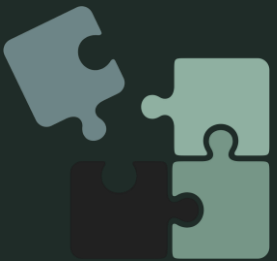
Tips!

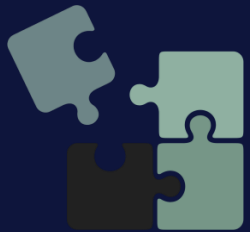
- Bulleted List; remembering the “soundbite” tip!
- Must address the questions of varied audiences.
- Must balance patient confidentiality vs. transparency.
- May require consultation with those with legal or crisis expertise.



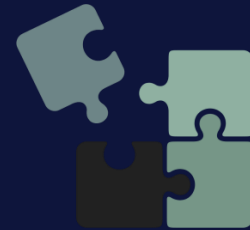
Small Group Exercise

- During this media crisis, we came up with 5 talking points.
- Talking points were approved by the Board of Directors
- Talking points were memorized by CEO and CR Director
- And now, it's YOUR turn...





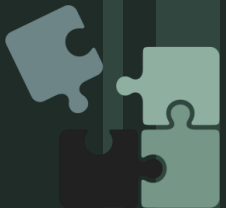
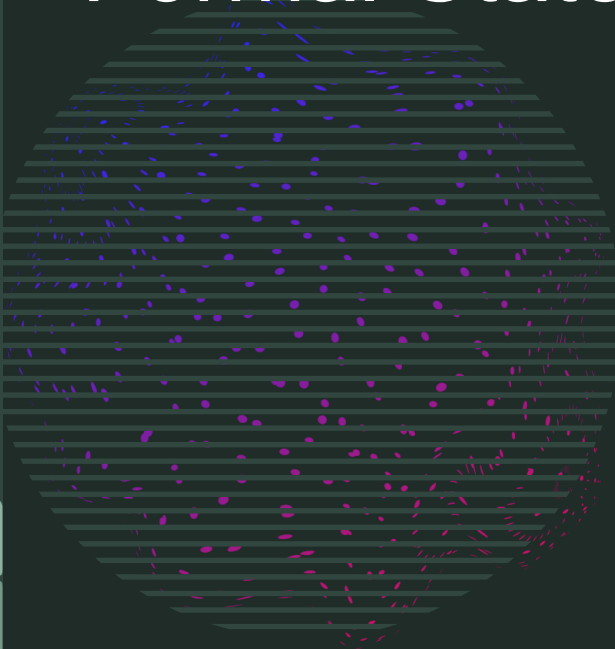
WHAT WE CAME UP WITH...



1	5
2	X
3	X
4	X

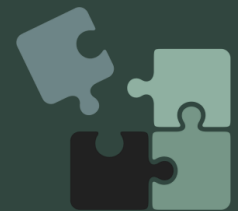
The Outcomes...

- Media redirects attention to the Funeral Homes.
- A period of hyper-vigilance
- Formal State Investigation



Media Readiness When a Crisis Occurs

Questions/Comments?



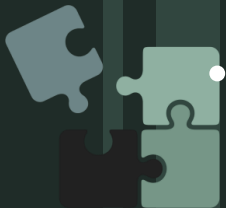
So...what **REALLY** happened?

According to state Investigation Report:

- Oct 13, 2013; both patients died within an hour of each other at our Longview Care Center.
- Separate funeral homes were contacted for pickup. Both funeral homes contract with the same transportation company for pickup.
- One funeral coach was sent for the pickup of both remains.

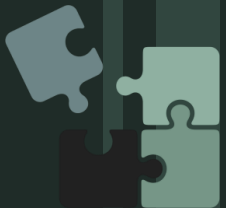
So...what REALLY happened?

- Identification bracelets are to be placed on the remains by the funeral home upon pickup.
- Identification bracelets were not placed on the deceased until they were at Dahl-McVicker funeral home in Kelso.
- Identification bracelets were placed on the wrong remains at this time, in violation of RCW.
- Brown's mortuary hired Dahl-McVicker funeral home to maintain the remains of Mr. Moon until his remains could be transported north to their mortuary in Chehalis (recall LaPlaunt's quote).
- Mr. Moon's remains were cremated against his religious beliefs 4 days later.
- Mr. Peticlerc's remains were then transferred to Brown Mortuary in Chehalis.



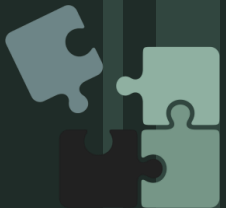
So...what REALLY happened?

- Peticlerc's family believes they have cremated remains of Robert Peticlerc.
- Moon family believes they have casket with Jerry Moon. At funeral on October 21, family decides to open the casket.
- The “plastic bag” is a wrap routinely used by funeral homes to prevent dehydration.
- Moon family cancels graveside services, uproar ensues.
- We are unsure how the media were alerted.



Aftermath

- Dahl-McVicker funeral home charged with unprofessional conduct, put on probation for 1 year, fined \$12,500.
- Brown's mortuary in Chehalis didn't appear to have any penalties enacted by the state.
- Moon family initiated legal action against Dahl-McVicker funeral home and Brown's Mortuary in 2015. Out-of-court settlement was reached.
- No record of Peticlerc family pursuing legal remedies.



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Questions/Comments?

