FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Greetings to our FULL Membership:

A Semmelweis Society International (SSI) Board meeting was held on August 10, 2008.

When President Roland Chalifoux called the meeting to order, Board members Saundra Counce and Clark Baker were present. George Holmes was unavailable.

We discussed various issues and made the following decisions:

1. The Directors have replaced Bill Hinnant, MD/JD, as an ex-officio member of the Board. The Board thanks Dr. Hinnant for his many years of dedicated service to SSI and our efforts to end sham peer review. Unfortunately, his current duties present various conflicts of interest that make it difficult for him to continue as Director. We expect that he will continue to provide outstanding service to his clients.

2. The Directors are happy to announce the appointment of SSI member Terry Bennett, MD, MPH. Terry is a practicing physician in New Hampshire and has successfully fought against sham peer review and has won. His story deserves much more attention, but the hour is late. If you don’t know him, you’ll find a short interview on this website. We welcome him aboard.

3. During the past few months, the SSI Board has been deluged with hostile, belligerent, and uncontrolled invective, generated by a small group of SSI members. As many of you know, their dissatisfaction began after ex-members James Murtagh and Kevin Kuritzky alleged that two “Clean Hands” Awards were undeserved. The Directors appointed me to investigate last June and I submitted my report to the Board last July. Despite the Board’s determination that Murtagh and Kuritzky’s allegations were false and the affirmation of the awards, that same small group of members continued to behave inappropriately. Despite repeated requests by our members and directors, many within that group did not abide by our repeated requests. What complicated the issue was that the Board was receiving ongoing advice by Doctors Hinnant and Bard, despite serious conflicts of interest that were both known and unknown until recently. As a result of these revelations, the SSI Board secured unbiased and unassailable counsel from outside sources that assisted the Board in clarifying our duties and responsibilities as Directors.

Based upon the opinions of counsel, the Board has the authority to suspend, revoke, or terminate any member, for conduct that is inconsistent with the purpose, mission and objectives of Semmelweis. This is the obverse of the power expressly vested in the Board (Art. III, Sec. III, Sub. I) that “Any Member can be accepted to the society, subject to final approval of the Board” [subject to appeal rights that also are spelled out in the present bylaws]: e.g., Art. II, para. 17, states that the “Society will support fair peer review that follows due process guidelines and proper procedure,” implying that fair and properly motivated peer review is not “disrupting the very fabric of Medicine in the United States” (see Declaration of Patients' and Doctors' Rights, para. 3). Just as bad faith peer review disrupts Medicine, the Society's officers cannot stand silent and allow members to engage in behavior that disrupts the Society. Hence the
Board's implied power to take action against any member engaging in conduct disruptive of the Society.

The present bylaws are sufficient to empower the Board to take necessary actions against members whose conduct is either disruptive of the organization, or is unprofessional in ways that bring discredit on the good name and reputation of the Society.

Another important power of the Board, which is the entity that “manages the business of the Society” under every State's law that governs nonprofit corporations, is to **police and censure any members who act or attempt to take action, or send communications, in the name of or under the authority or apparent authority of Semmelweis Society International.** Like every individual, every “corporate person” has the power to protect their name, identity and reputation. No member can be allowed to act in its name, unless expressly authorized by the Board or the Officer with the mandate to control the relevant areas of the activities and work of the Society. Obviously the President has more plenary authority, and of wider scope than the Secretary or the Treasurer, however both of the latter-named officers have limited plenary powers to act within their respective spheres of authority. Correspondingly, the Vice President has plenary authority to act with full powers of the President, in situations where the President is unavailable or disabled and prompt action is required. It is highly desirable, whenever the Vice President and/or other Officers are forced to take action by the exigencies of the circumstances, for the President, the Officer for whom the other Officer took the action, and/or the full Board, depending on the overall situation, to ratify, affirm, or modify the emergency action taken as soon as is reasonably possible.

4. As a result, the SSI Directors regret to announce the revocation of the following memberships:

   **Ralph Bard**  
   **Henry Butler**  
   **Lokesh Vuyyuru**  
   **Blake Moore**

Under ordinary circumstances, membership revocation would be made privately between the Directors and the member. In this case, the Directors felt that a more public statement was appropriate, especially in light of these members’ open hostility that was witnessed by so many members and non-members. Their disgraceful, sustained, outrageous, unapologetic, and unprecedented exhibition so offended the Semmelweis organization that it deserves special recognition. Our hope as Directors is that we will never witness or endure another similar episode.

These revocations were not made without careful consideration. All of these former members brought with them special talents and energies. Unfortunately, those energies were more recently focused in a direction that conflicted with SSI’s commitment to end Sham Peer Review.

Special notices will be sent to Doctors Bard and Hinnant which will better clarify the related issues. If either individual wishes to share the information contained with you they may do so. (Dr. Hinnant remains as a member in good standing.)

If former members Bard, Vuyyuru, Butler, and Moore wish to appeal our decisions they may do so by private email (no flaming) to Board Secretary, Clark Baker. Any interference or appeals by other members is not approved.
The Directors advise all members that **ANY** unsolicited email or telephone calls regarding the aforementioned awards, the investigation, or any hostile spamming and “flaming” will not be tolerated by your directors.

The mission of the Semmelweis Society is to improve the quality of medical care in the United States through assisting physicians who have been subjected to malicious and improper (sham) peer review. Members who believe that other objectives subordinate our mission are encouraged to seek membership elsewhere.

Please contact Secretary Clark Baker if you have further questions.

Respectfully,


Clark Baker
Secretary

(for)

Roland Chalifoux, DO
President

Saundra Counce, RN
Vice President