

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**v.**

**CYNTHIA BALLENGER, and  
CHRISTOPHER PRICE,**

**Defendants.**

**Case No. 1:21-cr-00719 (JEB)**

**DEFENDANTS' NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: UPDATE  
ON THE MEDICAL CONDITION AND TREATMENT STATUS OF  
CHRISTOPHER PRICE**

Comes now Defendant Cynthia Ballenger (Cynthia Price) and Defendant Christopher Price, (together Defendants or the Prices) by and through undersigned counsel, to provide supplemental information which includes letters or reports from certain health care professionals diagnosing or treating Christopher Price.

**Background**

This notice follows initial notices to the court concerning the recurrence of prostate cancer in Christopher Price. Paragraph 67 of the presentencing report (PSR) [ECF 121] describes the prior issue of prostate cancer and that Chris was anticipating blood tests in August 2023 with respect to monitoring the cancer. The PSR was never updated for subsequent events in this regard before sentencing. The Prices provided a Motion to Continue based on the then very recent diagnosis of recurrence following the blood test and recommendation of a round of radiation

therapy. See ECF 129. Dr. Gagnon initial letter is set out as an attachment. ECF 129-1. The government opposed the request for continuance and the request was denied. During the sentencing hearing the court provided sentences which included terms in prison but set up December 1, 2023 for a status hearing regarding the medical issues and ordered that the report date not be before January 1, 2024. The Court asked Defense counsel to obtain reports from the medical professionals for the status hearing.

On November 26, 2023, Defendants provided the letters/reports of providers and pastor connected with the Frederick Health Medical Group providing treatment and care for Christopher Price [ECF 154, 154-1, 154-2, 154-3, 154-4].

In a notice of supplemental information dated November 29, 2023, the Prices provided additional information from public sources concerning 1) the role of chronic stress and the progress of cancer and 2) the important role of marital partners and care givers in the care team.

At a hearing on December 18, 2023, the court heard argument on certain motions but did not rule. The court ordered an additional status hearing on February 29, 2024 and asked Defense Counsel to obtain updates and information from health professionals. The court further ordered that the Prices not be required to report before March 1, 2024.

### **Updates from Health Professionals**

In February 2024, per the orders of Dr. Gagnon, Chris Price had a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test performed to assist in diagnosing his prostate cancer

status and any impacts from the radiation therapy of the abdomen that Chris had during October and November. The Prices both met with Dr. Gagnon on February 21, 2024 to discuss the results and situation. Dr. Gagnon provides a summary of the findings of this visit in Attachment 1. Among the salient points:

...he had a Follow-up serum PSA which had increased further to 3.23. This now seems most consistent with widespread metastatic prostate cancer. The current PSA value is also consistent with a doubling time of 5.6 months. In many studies, a doubling time of less than 6 months is considered a “very high risk” prognostic factor. As treatments usually require long-term Androgen Deprivation Therapy (suppression of the body’s testosterone) plus a second-line hormonal agent of chemotherapy, I have referred him to a Medical Oncologist, Dr. Elhamy Eskander, for treatment.

Dr. Gagnon noted further in the letter:

Unfortunately, the above indicates, in my opinion, that Mr. Price will have to be continually treated for prostate cancer and will likely die from this disease, although hopefully several years from now. I also believe that the malignancy and treatment will likely place a considerable quality of life burden on the patient. Socially, a burden on the family would also be expected and a further financial burden would be, unfortunately, more likely.

Dr. Gagnon has asked for another PSA tests in March 2024 and a follow-up appointment currently scheduled for March 21, 2024.

The Prices both met with Dr. Eskander on February 26, 2024. Dr. Eskander's staff forwarded the description of the visit. *See Attachment 2.* The visit description states that Dr. Eskander reviewed his condition, prognosis and treatment options plan with Christopher and Cynthia Price. The discussion of prognosis is not presented in the document, but the Prices heard the information. The Prices understanding is consistent with the letter of Dr. Gagnon.

Dr. Eskander discussed the need to start hormone therapy with leuprolide and abiraterone plus prednisone. The patient will need a PET scan to rule out other sites of disease specially in the bones before starting. Chris must also a series of blood tests including tests to review DNA. The plan is for Chris to get these tests in March and the Prices are in the process of scheduling them. The Prices currently have an appointment with Dr. Eskander on April 12, 2024 to review the diagnostics and, likely, to begin the course of hormone therapy recommended by Dr. Eskander. The specifics of treatment will depend on further the test results.

Dr. Eskanders staff also sent a let of some medications that could be considered and provided some of the side effects. Staff pointed out that most of the medications in this drug classification have the same side effects. The information sent is in Attachment 3. The Cleveland Clinic describes Prednisone and potential side effects. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/drugs/20469-prednisone-tablets>

Dr. Eskanders notes describe current complaints listed on the visit report are chronic fatigue, diverticulosis, frequent bowel movements, prostate cancer, frequent urination, chronic back and neck pain, and depressed mood.

With respect to the issues from the automobile accident of November 2023, Dr. Salter sent a short letter dated January 22, 2024. *See* Attachment 4. Dr. Salter indicates that Chris remains under is care and is continuing his course of physical therapy. Dr. Salter referred Chris to a colleague to discuss possible arthroscopic surgery of the left surgery. The Prices are currently scheduled to meet with Dr. Tran who is in the offices of Premier Orthopedics on February 28, 2024 to discuss the possible surgery. Meanwhile, Christopher continues his regular physical therapy visits now at Pivot Therapy.

Jodi Gerber is the clinical social worker providing therapy and counseling to Christopher Price. Her update is Attachment 5. Chris has been under counseling since October 22, 2023. Ms. Gerber notes the continued side effects from radiation therapy. She further notes that the stress level has affected his memory causing forgetfulness, requiring more help from his wife navigating his schedule and appointments. Ms. Gerber notes family support is vital for his emotional and physical well-being. Ms. Gerber notes other stressors discussed in counselling such as the vehicle collision, weekly physical therapy, and the unknowns of the cancer and prison for he or his wife.

Sarah Ramsland, who is Clinical Chaplain Resident at Frederick Health Hospital and providing pastoral counseling on behalf of the Frederick Health

System to Chris, also provided an update. *See* Attachment 6. She discussed his work-related struggles and the importance of primary care giver needs at home related to physical, emotional, and spiritual symptoms. Chris actively engages in this counseling and she anticipates the benefits of such counseling increases as treatment intensifies.

The Prices ask that the court to take these points into consideration.

Dated: February 27, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Nandan Kenkeremath

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