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To my patients:

After almost 18 years of practicing medicine in Davis Square, I am looking forward to many more years as your family physician. There will be only one major change that will occur in July – I will begin practicing medicine as a woman, Deborah Bershel, MD.

On June 29<sup>th</sup> I will take a 3-week hiatus from the office, then return to live my life as I believe it was meant to be lived. I am *transsexual*, and many of you may only be vaguely familiar with the term. Basically, we are normal healthy adults whose gender identity is the opposite of our biologic gender. The medical/scientific community is trying to grapple with the causes of transsexuality. Some research suggests that there are differences in our brains, in a specific region of our hypothalamus, but discussing esoteric details is not why I'm writing to you today.

At first I had thought it might be easier for me to depart from the practice and start anew, but leaving such a wonderful group of patients, of whom I'm so fond, would have been too difficult. Remaining in Somerville has turned out to be amongst the easiest decisions I've made over the past 2 ½ years. And I understand that you might feel some awkwardness initially. Rest assured that I will be comfortable in answering any questions that you might have for me and that I am not sensitive to flubbed names or pronouns.

As so few people are familiar with transsexuality, I've set up a website with more information about it:

<http://www.DavisSquareInfo.com> Your Login Username is **DavisSquare** and the Password is **Password**

By going to it, you will have access to the latest lay and scientific information on gender issues. I will also be happy to email you with a list of further resources both in book form and on the internet. You can call me at the office ☎617-666-9577 or email me at [help@DavisSquareInfo.com](mailto:help@DavisSquareInfo.com) if you have any questions or just want to share your thoughts with me.

I, as well as all the clinicians here, will continue to provide you with quality personalized health care that is designed for you as an individual. I have always enjoyed promoting wellness, and that will continue to be the hallmark of how I practice medicine.

The only change will be my name and presentation. My commitment to your health will remain exactly the same.

Sincerely,

Roy Berkowitz-Shelton, MD

Through the first 3 Tuesdays of June, I will have a question and answer session from 6:30-8:00PM. Please call the office to let us know if you are interested in attending.