



USA TODAY™

OPINION

YOUR SAY

Organizations can defend victims of sexual misconduct by treating the perpetrator

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USA TODAY's article "Confidential deals can obscure sexual misconduct allegations against doctors" didn't surprise or shock us.

Unfortunately, the exact opposite is true. Working in the fields of sexual trauma, sex addiction and sexual offending in Los Angeles means that we come in contact with individuals on a daily basis who engage in destructive and sometimes illegal sexual behavior.

A great deal of this behavior occurs either in the workplace or offsite between a powerful representative of management and an employee, or a client or patient of the organization.

Luckily, if the perpetrator is coming to see us, it most probably means that his employer (or perhaps his family, or both) has decided to handle the problem head on by being above board and making sure the offending party gets treatment. When that is the case, we can make great strides and short-circuit the cycle of relapse and recidivism.

Unfortunately, this is often not the case since the employer has decided to cover for the employee to "protect" the organization and bury the facts behind layers of legal maneuvering. In that scenario, the behavior is usually repeated and the world of hurt continues. The organization loses the confidence of the community, thwarting its attempts at proactive damage control, hurting many and perpetuating the problem.

We urge large organizations to instead dedicate their time, effort, resources and reputations to defending

victims by treating the perpetrator. Only in that way is there a real chance to attain honesty, protection and healing.

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