

January 26, 1986

Joan M. Blaies, R.N.  
Director, Mental Health Nursing  
Waukesha Memorial Hospital  
725 American Avenue  
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186

Dear Ms. Balies,

You are, of course, free to use the model consent form from my book, and to modify it as you may need. I am pleased that it may serve a useful purpose. The issue of consent in psychiatric therapies remains complex; it was a central issue at the 1985 NIH sponsored Consensus Conference on Electroconvulsive Therapy.

How is one to assure that the patient and the family have been given sufficient information about the ECT process, which remains a surgical type procedure in psychiatry? One answer is the diligence of the psychiatric staff in explaining the procedures, and in the training and experience of the therapists. But since guidelines for therapists are not established, nor for consent procedures, we have come up with another solution, that of an informational videotape. On the invitation of Somatics Inc., producers of the THYMATRON, I participated in making two videotapes, one for patients and their families and the second for therapists. These may be of interest to you and your associates and I have asked Somatics to send you a description.

Good luck in your work.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry