

October 23, 2017

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Via Federal Express

**HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Ms. Kathryn J Olson  
Chair  
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review  
Board  
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor  
Springfield, Illinois 62761

**Re: Alpine Dialysis (Proj. No. 17-039)**

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am vascular surgeon who performs vascular access procedures on dialysis patient, and I support DaVita's proposal to establish an 8 station dialysis facility on the southwest side of Rockford. The community is nearly 22% Hispanic and 19% African-American. These are two minority groups which have a higher incidence and prevalence of kidney disease than the general population. Further, the primary service area is an area with many low-income residents. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the population of the GSA is living below the Federal Poverty Level and over 40% of the population in the GSA lives below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (138% of the Federal Poverty Level is the income eligibility limit for the Medicaid program in Illinois).

The project proposed by DaVita will improve access to life sustaining dialysis services to the residents on the southwest side of Rockford. Utilization of area dialysis facilities is 83.33%, exceeding the State Board's utilization standard. Due to the demographics of the community, the need dialysis is anticipated to increase for the foreseeable future. Further, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 15% of American adults suffer from CKD. Unfortunately, kidney disease is often undetectable by the patient until the late stages when it is often too late to stop or slow the disease progression. As more working families obtain health insurance through the Affordable Care Act and 1.5 million Medicaid beneficiaries transition from traditional fee for service Medicaid to Medicaid managed care, more individuals in high risk groups now have better access to primary care and kidney screening. As a result of these health care reform initiatives, DaVita anticipates continued increases in newly diagnosed cases of CKD in the years ahead. However, once diagnosed, many of these patients will be further along in the progression of CKD due to the lack of nephrologist care prior to diagnosis. It is



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imperative that enough dialysis stations are available to treat this new influx of ESRD patients who will require dialysis in the next two years.

I support DaVita's application for an 8 station dialysis facility in Rockford and requests the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve this project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marc Whitman  
5668 E. State St #1000  
Rockford, IL 61108

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