



BLESSING-RIEMAN

College of Nursing & Health Sciences

A member of the Blessing Health System

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APR 10 2019

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

April 9, 2019

Courtney Avery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Opposition to QMG Application for Second Surgery Center in Quincy / Collaboration a Better Outcome

Dear Ms. Avery:

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing and Health Sciences ("the College") is an institution of higher education with a mission "to provide excellence in professional nursing and healthcare career education." at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate level.

We are located in a recently renovated, repurposed for-profit Vatterott campus in Quincy, Illinois. In addition, students enjoy space on the Blessing Hospital campus which is their primary clinical facility. Blessing Hospital is the College's parent organization and is a major supporter of the College, providing financial subsidies, clinical sites, and facilities. Our mission, goals, and expected program outcomes are congruent with those of the parent institution, reflecting professional health care standards and guidelines, while considering the needs and expectations of our community.

With support from the hospital, the College serves the tristate community in many ways. It provides the region with the largest BSN and MSN programs within a 110-mile radius, providing the region's healthcare providers with baccalaureate and master's prepared nurses, respiratory care practitioners, radiology and medical laboratory technicians. Eighty percent of the programs' graduates come from the tristate area and approximately 65% take positions in the area upon graduation. To ensure students have a high quality clinical experience, the College utilizes a model of expert faculty paired with clinical preceptors who are employed and paid by Blessing Hospital. Graduates perceive facilities as a top priority to obtain skills that are critical upon graduation.

The College's Simulation Center was created in 2011. The center enabled multi-disciplinary simulations with residents from SIU School of Medicine Family Practice, John Wood Community College (JWCC) students and staff from the hospital. In addition, the Emergency Medical Technicians utilize the simulation center during the College down times to engage their students in experiences they might not ever see in a clinical setting. This enables all students involved to learn and be comfortable in situations when they do occur after their formal education is completed and they are working in the area. Simulation centers are very expensive to operate. Purchase of new simulators are supported by Blessing Hospital.

A major portion of the College budget plans for expenses with instruction, library, and student services. Blessing Hospital monetarily supports this initiative. The library budget includes money to ensure electronic journals are available to support not only the College but also the SIU School of Medicine Family Medicine, the students from JWCC Health Sciences, and all health professions within the community. A state of the art library is a criterion for continued accreditation for our residency program.

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217-228-5520 www.blessinghealthsystem.org www.brcn.edu**

Without the monetary support received from the hospital all of the community initiatives of sharing resources would not be possible. In addition, growth experienced in the College to support work force development in our community would not be possible. Examples of this growth have been:

2018 – In the Fall, an Associate of Science in Health Information Science was launched. It was designed to accommodate a working person. The program is on-line with IT support from the College to ensure students have access to programs that enhance their education. Faculty are shared between the hospital and the College.

2018 – The Blessing Hospital School of Radiology that currently offers a certificate will become a bachelor's program under the College umbrella in 2020. It will include content in specialty areas such as CT, MRI, or Mammography. This will enable graduates to have qualification upon graduation for a broader spectrum of employment. This program is heavily endowed by the hospital. While the graduates from this program may work at Blessing Hospital upon graduation, they also are employed by QMG, Hannibal Regional Hospital, and other health care agencies in our community.

2018 – The Lab Technician hospital certificate program will be converted to an Associate of Science degree in 2020. This will enable the graduates to move to a Bachelor with a seamless articulation of credits. These changes are occurring as a result of increased demand for additional skill sets from graduates of health care programs.

2018 – Collaboration with JWCC – Surgical Technician Program – This was a certificate program that was struggling with enrollment resulting in budget deficits. The College was able to collaborate with JWCC to share costs of this program. These graduates are highly sought in the community at both the hospital and at the surgical center. The cost of this initiative is also underwritten by Blessing Hospital.

2016 – Collaboration with JWCC – ADN program – At the time state monies were shrinking, a collaboration was designed to ensure the ADN program did not close. JWCC contracts with the College to teach their second year, while remaining JWCC students. They have the advantage of utilizing our simulation center and our specialized faculty. These students can obtain a BSN through a seamless articulation with BRCN within 15 months after completion of their ADN. This initiative is underwritten by Blessing Health System.

2014 – An Associates of Science Respiratory Care Program was launched when the only program in the region closed. Since launching the program, 100% of our graduates have passed their certification examination. All graduates have been employed upon graduation.

As you can see, as a College, we have been able to meet the needs of our community in many areas of health care education through the support of Blessing Hospital. Each program requires specific accreditation, faculty, and support services. This would not be possible without the assistance of Blessing Hospital.

I strongly encourage the denial of the Certificate of Need for an additional Surgery Center requested by Quincy Medical Group of Quincy, Illinois.

Sincerely,



Brenda K. Beshears, PhD, RN
President/CEO
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