



July 31, 2019

**BLESSING-RIEMAN**

**College of Nursing & Health Sciences**

Ms. Courtney Avery, Administrator  
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
525 West Jefferson Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Springfield, IL 62761

**RECEIVED**

AUG 2 2019

**HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Dear Ms. Avery:

This letter is written to support the Certificate of Need (CON) application that has been submitted by Blessing Hospital in Quincy, Illinois to relocate the current Surgery Center. As the President/CEO of the College of Nursing & Health Sciences that is heavily subsidized by the hospital, I appreciate the expertise the Board members bring to the review process.

The hospital has a long history of supporting a nursing program. The first graduation was held in 1894. This history has always been interwoven with the needs of the community. This past year 77.5% of our baccalaureate graduates chose to stay in this region with 62% staying in the hospital, 15.5% working in other health care offices such as Quincy Medical Group and Hannibal Regional Hospital, and 22.5% going back to their home areas of Peoria, Springfield, Pittsfield (a critical access hospital), and Mt. Sterling, Illinois at Western Illinois Corrections. As you can see, the majority stay in rural Illinois to practice which helps both work force development and the community in which they live.

This does not happen by accident. Hospital staff play a crucial role in ensuring students are engaged during their clinical experiences. Exit interviews reflect reasons they chose to stay include the teamwork displayed while they are in various clinical areas which include surgery. A relocation of the surgery center will assist students in completing this surgical rotation in an out-patient setting.

Students often graduate with minimal debt. This is due to the strong support the hospital gives to the College. They have the opportunity to receive grants as well as hospital based loans that are forgiven if they choose to join the organization upon graduation or paid back with very generous terms. In addition, we have added Health Sciences to our College and offer degrees in Respiratory Care and Health Information Management. The current Radiology certificate and Medical Laboratory certificate will be converted to degrees within the next two years. This is being done based on community need and is being accomplished through the monetary support of Blessing Hospital.

Thank you for your support of a relocation of the Surgery Center.

Warmly,

Brenda K. Beshears, PhD., RN

President/CEO

Blessing – Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences  
Quincy, Illinois 62305

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