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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Lynette Kelecich
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October 29, 2019

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761
Attn: Mr. Michael Constantino

Re: CGH Medical Center, Sterling (Proj. No. 19-049)

Dear Mr. Constantino:

This office represents CGH Medical Center and City of Sterling (collectively, the "Applicants"). In that capacity, we are submitting letters of support for CGH Medical Center, Sterling (Proj. No. 19-049) from the following:

- Maggie Wike
- Sterling Police Department
- Rock Falls Police Department

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments regarding the letters of support.

Sincerely,

Lynette Kelecich

Attachments

Maggie Wike
1408 Weaver Road
Sterling, IL 61081
October 14th, 2019

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
Springfield, Illinois 62761

RE: Certificate of Need Application for CGH Medical Center

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of CGH Medical Center's Certificate of Need to open a ten-bed adult behavioral health unit for two reasons. First and foremost, I am a mother of a son with mental illness. Second, I am a nurse who understands the importance of providing timely and high-quality care to individuals who are experiencing acute mental illness.

The lack of inpatient behavioral health services in our area is a cause of significant concern. Individuals in our community who experience mental health crises are waiting in the emergency room for an inpatient psych bed. In some cases, the individual may wait for two to three days. Acute mental illness is a medical emergency, and yet, my son and many others like him in our community cannot receive care in a timely manner due to the shortage of beds in our community. If he had an acute heart attack, a treatment delay could cost him his life. It is the same with mental illness. Lack of access to timely and effective care, places him and our community at risk in the form of suicide, homicide, or both.

While it is true that a neighboring hospital has a behavior health unit, my son has never been accepted for treatment there. Each time he comes to CGH Medical Center, a referral is placed for placement. We have specifically asked for referral to the neighboring hospital and the response has always been that they are full. Instead, we wait for the first available bed and end up in the Chicagoland area, which is approximately two hours away.

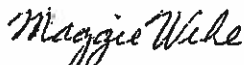
Please keep in mind that my son is an adult. When he is transferred out of town, we lose all contact. We do not know if he has been discharged and roaming the streets of Chicago homeless, or in a halfway house, or hitch-hiking home. All of these situations have occurred. During these times, he stops taking his medications and the cycle continues. With access to an inpatient unit at CGH Medical Center, our ability to maintain stability increases significantly.

As a Board member of our local NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) Sauk Area, I continually take calls from families in Whiteside County with similar stories. They cannot get a bed at the neighboring hospital, wait for hours or days, and end up one to two hours away.

Mental illness effects the entire family and community. I am proud that CGH Medical Center is no longer ignoring this need and seeks to fill a gap in our community that is desperately needed.

Thank you for approving this application and it is crucial for the health of our community.

Sincerely,



Maggie Wike



CITY OF
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POLICE DEPARTMENT

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10/25/19

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson St. 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of CGH Medical Center's Certificate of Need Application to open a ten-bed behavioral health unit.

As Chief of the Sterling Police Department, I am responsible for accomplishing the mission of promoting, preserving, and delivering a feeling of security, safety, and quality services to the Sterling community.

We collaborate with CGH Medical Center directly and through our partnerships in the Whiteside County Healthier Communities Partnership and the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). These partnerships promote sharing of information, resources, assistance, and expertise. Both of our organizations strive to create a safe environment for citizens to receive the best care when we are called upon to perform our duties. The lack of inpatient behavioral health beds in our community threatens our ability to achieve this mission.

Serving as the local police department, CGH calls upon our officers regularly when assistance is needed to protect staff and other patients from violent, behavioral health patients. Officers report back that these individuals wait for placement for one, if not several days. When the officers question why the patient has not transferred to the behavioral health unit in the neighboring county, they are told no beds are available. Subsequently, officers encounter these same individuals, post transfer to the Chicago-land area, returning to Sterling without a plan for follow up care. It is frustrating to observe the number of times citizens bounce back to the emergency room to start the cycle again. This is a poor use of resources, tax dollars, and could be preventable if CGH was able to provide inpatient behavioral health services.

By approving this application, CGH Medical Center, law enforcement, and agencies in Whiteside County can create a system of continuous care for the mentally ill in the communities we serve.

Respectfully,



Chief, Tim L. Morgan

Sterling Police Department

Rock Falls Police Department
1013 7th Avenue
Rock Falls, IL 61071-2891
815-622-1140
Fax 815-622-1144

Chief of Police
Tammy J. Nelson

Mayor
William Wescott

Email: rfpolice@rockfalls61071.com

Operations Commander
Mark Davis

Administrative Commander
David Pilgrim

October 24, 2019

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
Springfield, Illinois 62761

RE: Certificate of Need Application for CGH Medical Center

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of CGH Medical Center's Certificate of Need to open a behavioral health unit.

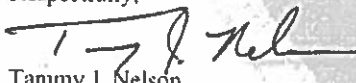
There is a critically unmet need for psychiatric inpatient services in Whiteside County. As the Rock Falls, Illinois, Chief of Police, my officers and I are committed to safety of our approximately 9,000 residents. Through proactive community engagement and partnerships in the areas of homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse we strive to improve the lives of community we serve.

As a member of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), officers' partner with community agencies to identify and case manage residents struggling with mental health and substance abuse disorders by linking them to needed services. In a true crisis, residents are taken to the emergency room at CGH Medical Center to evaluate for inpatient behavioral health services. Because CGH does not have a dedicated behavioral health unit, these residents are subsequently transferred out. In our experience, the vast majority of these patients end up one or two hours away from home. This poses an extremely difficult situation for the families left behind and our officers hear first hand the nightmare stories associated with these transfers, including the challenges of finding a way back home after discharge. These individuals are below the poverty line, many times unemployed, and have no access to transportation.

In Whiteside County, the estimated percent of adults with any mental illness is 18.6% for ages 18 and older and suicide is a leading cause of death for ages 15-44. Further, of the individuals who report mental illness, 71% do not seek care. Transportation, access, and fear of being shipped off to Chicago are primary reasons for this percentage. The disconnect and loss to follow up that occurs with these transfers negatively impacts the ability of the CIT to be successful in helping these residents obtain and sustain normalcy in their lives.

Please help our community and approve the application to open a behavioral health unit at CGH Medical Center. Our County and my city are in desperate need of access to these services closer to home.

Respectfully,


Tammy J. Nelson
Chief of Police
Rock Falls, Illinois 61071
815-622-1140

"Proud of Our Past-Confident of Our Future"