



**ILLINOIS  
CANCERCARE, P.C.**  
*Specializing in Cancer and Blood Disorders*

February 4, 2020

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
c/o Courtney Avery, Administrator  
525 W Jefferson St, 2nd Floor  
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Illinois CancerCare, P.C. and the OSF HealthCare application for Proton Therapy at the St Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Illinois

Dear Administrator Avery and members of Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board,

Cancer care requires a community of providers.

We all must work together in a cordial and collegial manor. The best cancer specialists are dedicated to securing excellent patient experiences, dedicated to clinical research to discover tomorrow's treatments, dedicated to educating a new generation of cancer providers, and dedicated to continuous improvement.

Illinois CancerCare, P.C., is an adult medical oncology and hematology practice owned and managed by 10 physician partners trained at academic NCI designated Cancer Centers. All of us are board certified in adult hematology and medical oncology. The practice has an additional four board certified medical oncologists and hematology/oncologists, one board certified internal medicine hospitalist, 25 Advanced Practice Nurses, 80 nurses, four pharmacists, and a total of 430 staff. The practice limits its care to the internal medicine subspecialties of hematology and medical oncology.

The practice provides inpatient medical oncology and hematology care at OSF St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria. It also provides consultative inpatient care at OSF HealthCare Medical Centers in Ottawa, Kewanee, Galesburg, and Bloomington.

In addition to the OSF HealthCare facilities the practice provides inpatient care at the three UnityPoint Health Medical Centers and hospitals in Peoria and Pekin.

Outpatient care is provided in independent regional clinics in Bloomington, Galesburg, Pekin, Peru, Dixon, Princeton, Macomb, Carthage, Canton, and Eureka.

In the vast majority of these less populated areas in Illinois, the practice provides the only medical oncology and hematology sub-specialty services. In addition to the above, patients have been referred from additional surrounding counties.

It is our intention to continue to fully serve all of these locations and hospitals. We have no intention to change this in the foreseeable future.

Illinois CancerCare is the largest medical oncology practice in the state, and one of the largest in the United States. The practice has approximately 30,000 active patients, approximately 6000 new patients per year, and approximately 100,000 visits per year.

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Universal access for all patients regardless of payer status is a fundamental commitment from our physician partners. The practice has worked with every private payer and every public payer in the state. The practice does not discriminate patient access based on payer status. The practice has a robust program of financial assistance for those patients who are underinsured and uninsured. The practice takes an aggressive approach to counter act financial toxicity caused by expensive cancer treatments.

The practice works closely with three large integrated health networks in Illinois—OSF HealthCare, UnityPoint Health, and Advocate-Aurora. It is our intention to maintain our commitment to provide care for patients in the two Advocate-Aurora Hospitals when they convert ownership to Carle Health System, as well as maintaining all of our ongoing patient care in the UnityPoint Health Medical Centers and hospitals as well as all of the independent hospitals that we currently serve.

Excellence in cancer care is highly dependent on experts in surgical oncology, internal medicine subspecialties, imaging, hospital medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, nursing, pharmacy and the innumerable medical professionals that participate in the care of a cancer patient. Our physicians have a decades-long commitment to working with all of the providers in our area, as well as maintaining cordial professional relationships with our academic colleagues in Chicago and nearby academic centers outside of Illinois.

Clinical research is essential to improving the outcome of cancer patients. Our physicians have participated in publicly NCI funded clinical research since 1983 and have added privately funded research. The practice maintains an active collaboration with the University of Chicago. Improving access to patients in rural areas and improving funding for that access is the single best way to improve cancer care for all patients.

We expect OSF HealthCare to continue to actively participate in the cancer community, using this project to engage the many specialists in an open and collaborative way, as well as engaging members of the broader health care community to improve the cancer care of every patient in our part of Illinois.

We are not specialists in radiation therapy, or in the selection of best techniques to use. However, we embrace and fully support our collegial partners as they adapt newer technologies in their specialty.

The physician partners welcome the introduction of new space at the OSF St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria for brachytherapy, as well as the introduction of new proton technology in central Illinois for adult and pediatric patients who may benefit from this radiation therapy technology.

Paul A. S. Fishkin, MD  
President  
Illinois CancerCare, P.C.

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