



Mercy Hospital & Medical Center Discontinuation
Project No. 20-039
Public Hearing: 10/28/2020

Grant Mayer, Executive Director of Mercy Medical Group, Mercy Hospital & Medical Center

As the Executive Director of Mercy Medical Group, the employed physicians who provide care at Mercy Hospital, I'm writing to urge your support of Mercy's plan to transform to an outpatient model.

It is exceedingly difficult for administrators of safety net hospitals to make ends meet within the structure of our current system. Over the many years I've served in this job, there have been dramatic changes to the financial structure within the model of health care, yet the infrastructure of our model lags and does not keep up with

the changes in what patients need and the best ways to meet those changes.

The reimbursement rates have changed in many ways over the decades, making it one of many reasons safety net hospitals struggle to survive today. In addition, costs of technology in health care have skyrocketed, requiring significant investments to keep up with the latest treatments needed to diagnose and treat illnesses appropriately. Since April 1, 2012, Trinity has invested more than \$124 million in infrastructure improvements at Mercy Hospital and provided more than \$112 million in funding so Mercy Hospital could meet its short-term operating needs. But our expenses continue to grow as our ability to meet these financial obligations has become increasingly strained.

This is not a sustainable path for the hospital and it is not providing access to the kind of care patients needs today.

The right answer for patients and our system of health is a move to outpatient care. The outpatient clinic proposed by Mercy will offer not just urgent care, but will also feature the diagnostic equipment needed to provide early diagnoses and preventive care that keeps patients from needing emergency or hospital care in the first place.

I urge you to support Mercy's application and pave the way for a stronger future of health on Chicago's South Side.