



Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Dear Ms. Avery,

I'm writing to encourage the Board to support the plan put forward by Mercy Hospital & Medical Center to transform to an outpatient model of care.

As vice president, I work with Trinity Health to support community health and well-being, looking at the best ways for our ministries to provide access to critical health care services in their communities. Part of my job requires assessing the landscape and outcomes of health and ensuring Trinity Health's services are aligned with what communities need. In the case of Mercy Hospital's patients, it is clear that what the community most needs is stronger access to outpatient and preventive care.

Before I joined Trinity Health, I had the honor of serving as the Deputy Commissioner for the Chicago Department of Public Health and am deeply familiar with the health disparities and inequities that contribute to the poor health outcomes that have plagued areas like Chicago's South Side for far too long. I also worked, in that time, across the network of care providers on the South Side and saw the beginnings of what we see today in even starker terms, which is a lack of access to comprehensive, affordable and culturally responsive health care.

I've watched for nearly 20 years as the needs of patients on Chicago's South Side have been unmet by the status quo. I was hopeful that the transformation Mercy proposed earlier this year would be the beginning of a new era in health. I remain disappointed it did not come to fruition, but the desire to address outpatient care needs continue and that's what Mercy is proposing in its plan for the future. I am particularly hopeful for the care coordination services planned, as that's an urgent and unmet need for South Side residents.

I urge the Board to endorse the transformation of care Mercy is proposing.

Sincerely,

Jaime C. Dirksen
Vice President, Community Health & Well-Being
Trinity Health