

July 20, 2020

To the members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board,

I am writing this letter in support of the merger between Northwest Community Hospital (NCH) and NorthShore University Health System (NS). I have been a radiologist at NCH for the past 19 years and was elected President of the Medical Staff in January of 2020, previously serving as Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer of the Medical Staff.

The Northwest Suburbs are so fortunate to have such a wonderful medical institution to call its own. Founded over 60 years ago by a group of community members, NCH has grown to be an established and well-respected tertiary care center with numerous immediate care centers and physician offices throughout the area. Its medical staff has grown to almost 1300 physicians.

More importantly, the staff of NCH strives to provide the best possible patient care. This is exemplified by recent "A" rating by The Leapfrog Group and Magnet status by the American Nursing Credentialing Center as well as numerous other awards. The administrative teams are constantly working to make sure the staff utilize best practices and quality standards.

Despite a desire to remain independent, the reality of the health care field has necessitated NCH to partner with another health care provider. The selection of NS will allow NCH to continue to provide care to its patients in the Northwest Suburbs while allowing them access to additional medical experts and research at other locations.

Additionally, the agreement will allow NCH to maintain its employed and physician partnerships. These partnerships have been well appreciated by the NCH medical staff and have allowed NCH to provide expert care to the community.

Local board control over NCH will ensure quality measures are met and are aligned with the NS system. Furthermore, the NCH foundation which has for many years provided philanthropic support and community programing for NCH will continue to be a separate entity.

I hope members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board will appreciate the long work that went into finding a suitable partner for NCH and approve the merger of NCH and NS.

Respectfully,



Kenneth A. Spero, M.D.