

March 19, 2021

Courtney Avery
Board Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, Second Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Letter of Support- Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, Exemption #003-21

Dear Ms. Avery,

I am a physician working in INSIGHT'S Wellness Center in Flint, Michigan, which focuses on providing comprehensive care to patients with Opioid Use Disorder and other addictions. I was born in Chicago and raised in the city of Chicago and the surrounding suburbs. I am a proud UIC College of Medicine graduate and I completed preventive medicine residency at University of Michigan. I also completed an Epidemic Intelligence Service fellowship at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

For the last 15 years I have worked mostly in public health here and abroad. I had an interest to eventually return to clinical medicine but my long commitment to public health made the return difficult in multiple ways. I have always had an interest in behavioral health and felt that interest can help with the opioid and larger addiction epidemic in the US. I am currently working at Insight's Flint, Michigan campus for over a year. Since I am new to the field, it has taken me time to start mastering the art and science of treating patients with opioid use disorder and other addictions.

I can think of no other institution that would be so patient in believing in human capital and in investing in individuals such as myself before the institution itself benefits financially. I have also seen how INSIGHT has invested so much in the residents around INSIGHT. Many inpatients indefinitely stay at INSIGHT's Healing Center, a neuro and trauma rehabilitation center if they have no place to live. INSIGHT also is helping to provide educational and safe recreational activities to hundreds of youth at the Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village.

I am happy that Dr. Jawad Shah and the visionary and compassionate leaders at INSIGHT can help touch, heal, and improve lives in Bronzeville, Chicago. I hope the leaders around Mercy Hospital seize the great opportunity to benefit the community through INSIGHT as it has helped me and countless others in Flint and elsewhere in Michigan.

With much respect,



Omer Abid, MD, MPH
Epidemic Intelligence Service Alumnus
Served as Lt Commander in US Commission Corps
(US Public Health Service) during EIS fellowship, 2003-2005