

October 15, 2021

Via E-mail

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761-0001

Mr. Michael Constantino
Supervisor, Project Review Section
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761-0001

Re: Woodlake Hospital, COE Project No. 011-021
1225 West Lake Street, Melrose Park, Illinois

Dear Ms. Avery and Mr. Constantino:

As you know, we are counsel to Woodlake Specialty Hospital LLC and Woodlake Pacific Holdings LLC (the "Exemption Holders") for COE Project No. 011-021. During the Review Board hearing on the Project, Review Board Member Hardy-Waller asked me the following question:

"Can you talk to us just briefly about how you see this as answering the call for healthcare equity for this particular community and why you believe that long-term care and rehab is what this community needs."

Please see the Exemption Holders' response to Review Board Member Hardy-Waller's question:

First, this Project is more than just long-term care and comprehensive physical rehabilitation. In fact, the largest component of the Project involves 80 acute mental illness beds and outpatient acute mental health services involving drug addiction and alcohol dependency counseling and services. To that end, as set forth on page 7 of the COE Application, the "lockdowns and social isolation caused by COVID-19 have also ushered in an unprecedented need for inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services. For example, opioid overdose deaths in Cook County have doubled since 2019 as patients have been unable or afraid to seek help because of COVID-19." See, e.g., "West Side Overdoses Surge as Coronavirus Shutdown Makes It Harder to Access Addiction Help," Block Club of Chicago (August 27, 2020)." Indeed, when representatives from the Exemption Holders met with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services ("DHFS"), the number one issue identified by the

DHFS was the need for additional inpatient and outpatient mental health services in the community previously served by Westlake Hospital. And during the two public hearings for this Project, both primary care physicians and psychiatrists spoke about the need for mental health services in the community.

Second, in terms of long-term care beds, the service area is actually showing a need for long-term care beds. Indeed, COVID-19 has “forced area hospitals to reconsider the types of services they offered due to finances and COVID-19. For example, a number of hospitals within Westlake Hospital’s service area discontinued their long-term care/skilled nursing units. See, e.g., Project No. E-042-20 (Rush Oak Park Hospital received a COE on 9/17/2020 to discontinue its 36 bed long-term care/skilled nursing unit due to the fact that only 6% of their long term care patients generated revenues in excess of expenses); Project No. E-058-20 (AMITA Health St. Elizabeth Hospital received a COE on 12/8/2020 to discontinue its 28 bed long-term care/skilled nursing unit due to COVID-19).” See page 7 of the COE Application.

The Exemption Holders also spoke to former members of the Westlake Hospital medical staff, elected officials representing the communities served by Westlake Hospital, community members, local federally qualified health centers, and other healthcare providers and medical professionals about the need for the specific services set forth in this COE Application. Thus, I would submit that the categories of service identified in the COE Application are needed by the community. At the same time, the service area data indicates that medical/surgical, intensive care and obstetrics beds are not needed in the service area given access to those services at hospitals like Gottlieb Memorial Hospital and West Suburban Medical Center (the two closest hospitals to Woodlake Hospital).

Another component of health care equity involves the need for diverse candidates to have a “seat at the table” in terms of actually leading healthcare facilities. In this case, Ms. Shannon Jones, a woman of color, was hired to serve as the CEO of Woodlake Hospital. Just last night, at the 2021 Annual Scholarship and Awards Banquet in Bellwood, Illinois, House Speaker Chris Welch commended the Exemption Holders, who were in attendance, for moving forward with the Project, investing over \$40 million in an underserved community, and selecting Ms. Jones as the CEO for Woodlake Hospital.

Woodlake’s Local Board of Directors, comprised of local community leaders and physicians, are also very connected to the community and helped shape (and will continue to help shape) the services provided at the Hospital.

To date, the following individuals have agreed to join the Local Board of Directors:

Ms. Courtney Avery
Mr. Michael Constantino
Woodlake Hospital, COE Project No. 011-021
October 15, 2021
Page 3

Hon. Thomas "Ned" Benigno, Deputy Illinois Secretary of State and Chief of Staff
Hon. Andre Harvey, Mayor of Bellwood
Dr. Glenn Kushner, Last President of the West Lake Hospital Medical Staff
Dr. Martha Kushner, Melrose Park resident and community activist
Doug Olson, Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce
Hon. Anthony Sanchez, Village of Melrose Park Trustee
Sergio Saurez, Entrepreneur, Philanthropist and Melrose Park resident
Hon. Katrina Thompson, Mayor of Broadview
Hon. Anthony Williams, Proviso Township Clerk

Please call or write if you need anything else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward J. Green". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Edward J. Green

cc: Ms. Shannon Jones, CEO, Woodlake Specialty Hospital