

APR 23 2025

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Debra Savage, Chair
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Support for Project #24-041- Addition of Urology at Metroeast Endoscopic Surgery Center (MESC)

Dear Chair Savage:

I am writing you to reiterate my support for the Certificate of Need application to add urology services at Metroeast Endoscopic Surgery Center (Project #24-041) and to affirm my commitment to refer at least 122 outpatient procedures per year to MESC as outlined in my previous referral letter that was included in the CON application.

I'm a Board-certified urologist who has been practicing in Southern Illinois for well over 25 years. As an African American physician, I can significantly benefit communities of color by improving health outcomes through enhanced communication, trust, and cultural competence in healthcare delivery, resulting in more effective and personalized care. By expanding my practice to Fairview Heights in the diverse Metroeast St. Louis Region of Illinois, I hope to increase the number of patients that I serve who are people of color. To this end if the CON permit application is approved, Dr. Ahmed has offered to introduce me to primary care physicians in the area that plan to refer patients needing urological procedures to me so they know I am willing and able to accept their patients. Most urology patients are seniors and their ability to receive this care locally is important for ensuring that the care is actually delivered. Specifically, Dr. Ahmed has mentioned Dr. Benedicta Umoru, Dr. Shabbir Shaikh, and Dr. Charles Ampadu as primary care physicians who would welcome a urologist who accepts Medicaid HealthChoice patients as I do.

Urological surgeries play a crucial role in addressing age-related complications in men's urinary tract function and reproductive health. As men age, they are more susceptible to various urological conditions, such as prostate enlargement, cancer, erectile dysfunction, and urinary incontinence. These conditions can significantly impact quality of life, making surgical interventions necessary for maintaining health and well-being. Accordingly, sexual health and cancer are among the needs identified within BJC Memorial Hospital Belleville's Community Health Needs Assessment for St. Clair County.

I also wanted to address a question posed by the State Board regarding the feasibility of me expanding my practice to Fairview Heights, as I do not foresee any issues with doing so. My plan to care for this community is to practice as a visiting specialist. I would initially visit Fairview Heights once or twice per month with a plan to perform procedures at MESC and to provide pre and post procedure visits in Dr. Ahmed's clinic adjacent to MESC. I hope to increase this frequency as my reputation in the area grows. I'm already a visiting specialist in the Mount Vernon area, which is an hour and 10 minutes away, so I could

combine my visits to both communities within a single trip. Further, I'm looking to hire a physician extender (Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner) that can help with my pre and post-procedure visits. I also am very adept at using telehealth to see patients remotely, as my practice already covers patients in several locations.

Given the significant benefits that urological surgeries provide in managing age-related conditions, it is important that the State Board supports their performance in ambulatory surgery centers. Ensuring access to these procedures can greatly enhance men's health outcomes and quality of life as they age.

I apologize for not being able to attend the State Board meeting; however, I feel an obligation to patients to keep my scheduled appointments. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, I'm happy to address those with your staff.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Hatchett, MD

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Specialty: Urology

Subscribed and sworn to me
This 10th day of APRIL, 2025

Samuel R Lambert
Notary Public

