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Angie Hampton, MS, LCPC, LSW
Chief Executive Officer



March 27, 2025

Mr. John Kniery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Second Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Dear Mr. Kniery:

I write on behalf of Egyptian Health Department in support of the expansion of mental health in-patient beds and services at Harrisburg Medical Center. This project aims to improve access to in-patient mental and behavioral health services within the region - reducing need for patients to leave the area (and their families and support systems) to receive proper treatment. Successful completion of this project will also promote employment growth in high-wage positions.

As an organization which is an integrated public health and behavioral health agency serving Saline, Gallatin, White, Wayne and Hamilton Counties, Egyptian Health Department has been a lead entity in Southeastern Illinois providing integrated care and care coordination for children and adults with behavioral health issues. The organization also serves as the Mobile Crisis Response Team for Harrisburg and the surrounding counties responding to crises that require screening, assessment, and support services for both children and adults. It is through this work that we have seen the immediate need to improve and expand on available behavioral health services, and we look forward to the completion of this project to meet these needs.

The expansion of mental health in-patient beds and services at Harrisburg Medical Center will have far-reaching benefits for our entire community. Beyond improving direct patient care, this project will significantly enhance our region's capacity to address mental health needs promptly and effectively. By providing timely, local access to inpatient care, we can prevent the escalation of mental health issues and reduce unnecessary emergency room visits. Moreover, keeping patients closer to home will enable families to be more involved in the treatment process, fostering stronger support systems and potentially improving long-term outcomes. This expansion will also contribute to destigmatizing mental health treatment in our region, encouraging more individuals to seek help when needed. The ripple effects of improved mental health services will be felt across all sectors of our community, from schools and workplaces to community organizations and healthcare providers, creating a more resilient and supportive environment for all residents.

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We at Egyptian Health Department are excited about the enhanced collaboration possibilities this expansion will create between our organization and Harrisburg Medical Center. The increased capacity for inpatient care will allow for a more seamless continuum of services, bridging the gap between crisis intervention, inpatient treatment, and community-based care. Our Mobile Crisis Response Team will be able to work more closely with the hospital's expanded mental health unit, ensuring smoother transitions for patients requiring inpatient care. Additionally, we anticipate developing joint programs for patient education, family support, and post-discharge follow-up care. This collaborative approach will lead to more comprehensive, coordinated care for our community members, ultimately improving mental health outcomes and reducing readmission rates.

Egyptian Health Department strongly endorses this critical expansion project at Harrisburg Medical Center. The proposed addition of mental health in-patient beds and services addresses a pressing need in our community and aligns perfectly with our regional health improvement goals. We respectfully urge the State of Illinois to approve the Certificate of Need application, recognizing the significant positive impact this expansion will have on mental health care accessibility, quality, and outcomes in Southeastern Illinois. Our community's well-being depends on projects like this, and we are committed to supporting its success every step of the way.

Respectfully,

Angie Hampton
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