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To: [DPH.HFSRB](#)
Subject: [External] ATTN: Debra Savage
Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 1:23:05 PM

October 29, 2025

Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
Attn: Debra Savage Chairwoman
525 W. Jefferson, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL

I am a resident of Ottawa, Illinois. I have a severely disabled son (A.J.) who is 29 years old. Last June he was having an issue and we felt it necessary to go to the ER. We debated, which ER we should go to. Morris? RUSH/Copley? Ottawa? We chose to stay in town and go to the Ottawa ER. The dr in the ER admitted A.J. Due to his complex needs, the decision to place him in the ICU was made. This is where we spent the next 5 days.

We're no stranger to hospital stays. Over the years we have spent many days and weeks inpatient. Usually it was out of town. We would be admitted and many times not see anyone but hospital staff until we were released. Don't get me wrong, dad did everything he could to visit, but with work and another child, it was difficult. The care we received at St Elizabeth was wonderful. I say we because A.J. is nonverbal and needs help with every aspect of his care. He needs someone familiar with him at all times. I am at the hospital and if we are out of town, it is just he and I. Dad works, little brother has school/his activities. We divide and conquer. This time was different. Family was able to visit. Each day dad and brother came to the hospital. We had dinner together each night. We watched tv. We discussed the days activities and kept life as normal as possible. It kept our family unit intact. I was able to run home and take a shower. That may seem like a little thing, but it was huge when we're stuck in the hospital.

Back up to when I was pregnant with my youngest son. I was so happy I could have him at the Ottawa hospital. I was born there.

When I had my oldest we had an HMO that made us go out of town for care/delivery. The ride while in labor was horrible. Family was unable to visit due to the drive.

So now I'm in labor with my youngest. It's 2am and I call my friend to drive me because my husband is at work. The OB ward was so accommodating to us and our situation. The pediatrician popped in to see how we were doing. That meant the world to us. Our family was able to be there for the delivery. We were able to have visitors after the birth. Family could make it because it wasn't a drive.

We are a medically complex family that has lived this life for 29 years. Having accessible healthcare close to home is invaluable to us. I pray the board denies OSF the permit to reduce services at St. Elizabeth in Ottawa.

Thank you,
Diana Lee Sent from my iPhone