

**From:** [Colleen Burns](#)  
**To:** [DPH.HFSRB](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Fwd: CON Project #25-013  
**Date:** Thursday, October 30, 2025 4:32:46 PM

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I also don't see this letter posted. Thanks

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Colleen Burns <[colleenburns710@gmail.com](mailto:colleenburns710@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Oct 27, 2025 at 11:33 AM  
**Subject:** Re: CON Project #25-013  
**To:** Melissa Nordstrom Terry <[mmnterry@gmail.com](mailto:mmnterry@gmail.com)>

This is excellent, thank you so much!!!

On Mon, Oct 27, 2025 at 11:29 AM Melissa Nordstrom Terry <[mmnterry@gmail.com](mailto:mmnterry@gmail.com)> wrote:

Re: Discontinuation of ICU and OB services at OSF St. Elizabeth Medical Center

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Dr. Melissa Terry. I'm a lifelong resident of Ottawa, IL and was born at Community Hospital of Ottawa. My involvement with Community Hospital of Ottawa and its subsequent iterations have included everything from the discovery of my major birth defect at 3 days old, to minor stitches for my kids, to cancer treatment and major surgeries for relatives. My life was saved by the conscientious care I received at birth and I have been grateful for the access that I and my family have had for all the big and little medical needs we have had since.

I currently work in Ottawa as a clinical psychologist and have worked at all levels of our local mental health services. If there is one thing I have seen when receiving and providing healthcare services in our rural area, it is that distance and transportation are significant barriers to encouraging people to participate in healthcare. When time or distance are added as one more barrier, on top of the many financial and emotional barriers already involved in healthcare, people often opt out or delay care. When it comes to physical and mental health, procrastination and delay almost never have positive benefits. Our community needs to know that we can receive the care we need from our local providers. That knowledge and security will serve to increase participation at all levels of healthcare, which in turn benefits our public health.

In a recent meta analysis (citation below), Mseke, Jessup, and Barnett (2024) highlight the problem of distance decay- as distance or travel time increases, healthcare utilization decreases—often leading to delayed care, lower screening rates, and worse health outcomes. The opposition to OSF's plan to move services out of Ottawa is not just a bunch of small town community members mad about having to drive to Peru sometimes. This opposition comes from lay people and medical professionals alike who want to advocate for access to the services we already use and will continue to need in the future. Moving those services farther away may be more efficient from a corporate planning standpoint, but it will have deleterious effects on the health of our community as more and more people opt out.

I respectfully request that the hospital review board deny OSF's request to close OB and ICU services in Ottawa in order to continue to provide our community with the continuum of healthcare that we need.

Regards,

Dr. Melissa Terry,  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist  
Nationally Certified School Psychologist

Mseke, E. P., Jessup, B., & Barnett, T. (2024). *Impact of distance and/or travel time on healthcare service access in rural and remote areas: A scoping review*. Journal of Transport & Health, 37, 101819. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2024.101819>