

July 23, 2025

Dear Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board,

I am writing to express my concern regarding recent decisions that may limit access to essential health care services for patients across Illinois. Earlier this year, the for-profit health system, Prime Healthcare, acquired 8 former Ascension hospitals in Illinois. These hospitals provide health care to beneficiaries of federal health programs, with several Prime Healthcare hospitals serving a population in which more than two-thirds of inpatients have Medicare or Medicaid health coverage. As part of Prime's approval by the Illinois Health Facilities & Review Board for the change in ownership, Prime committed to, among other provisions, "not make any material reductions to, or material changes in, the mix or level of services offered at any Hospital ... to meet community needs." Prime further stated, "No changes to the scope of services or the levels of care provided at the facility are currently anticipated to occur within 24 months." Unfortunately, the decisions that have followed since have led to the discontinuation of several critical health care services.

Now Ascension Illinois has informed the community and Women & Infants staff at Ascension Alexian (ABMC) of plans to consolidate maternity services, closing the maternity unit in Elk Grove Village and only provide maternity care at Ascension St Alexius in Hoffman Estates (SAMC).

Hospitals often measure their success by the patients they save and the ability to improve health in their surrounding neighborhoods. How far will patients, in the community Alexian now serves, have to travel for Maternity Services? How many of them will not make that trek and show up to deliver by an inadequately staffed or trained ER department? How many health care providers and personnel have been or will be affected as a result of this closures? How will this impact patient wait times and their ability to continue their plan of care with a provider?

The Women and Infant Services (WIS) staff at Alexian have formed a cohesive unit where we work together to care for these families at a vulnerable time and provide excellent care with the best outcomes. This happens due to the experience and knowledge that comes from a majority of the staff being together for over 20 years. The units at St Alexius cannot compare. Physicians that practice at both hospitals have made it clear to ABMC management that the culture fostered in WIS is not present at SAMC. The retention rate in SAMC's L&D and NICU units is known to be poor.

I am an Alexian RN who has worked in WIS for 38+ years & hope to celebrate my 44th ABMC anniversary in August. I hoped to retire from there but this is now in jeopardy.

Does Ascension have future plans to shut down, consolidate or reduce additional health facilities or services in Illinois?

I ask that you petition, whomever in the state of Illinois decides if this healthcare system has the right to consolidate these services, if it is wise or beneficial at all, on our behalf.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your prompt reply.



Barb Carroll RNC-OB