



Pat Quinn, *Governor*

Michelle R. B. Saddler, *Secretary*

Greater Illinois - Central Region
Andrew McFarland Mental Health Center

● Jordan Litvak, Network Manager
● Karen Schweighart, Hospital Administrator

April 4, 2011

Chairman
Illinois Facility Planning Board
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

To whom it may Concern:

Please be advised that the Division of Mental Health is in support of continuing inpatient psychiatric care provided by Blessing Hospital. Blessing admits over 1,600 behavioral health patients each year and serves as a regional access hub for west central Illinois. The next closest facilities are in Springfield, Peoria, and Rock Island, all of which periodically exceed inpatient capacity at their respective area hospitals. Blessing also has the only Child and Adolescent unit within a 100 miles radius in Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa.

Blessing already admits patients from hospitals with inpatient behavioral health units at St. Johns, Memorial, and Methodist Hospital Emergency Rooms. The impact of the loss of inpatient behavioral health at Blessing Hospital would also include difficulty in retaining psychiatrists and psychiatrist contracts to community organizations.

It is my understanding that the current occupancy at Blessing inpatient psych unit is affected by suites of four patients who share bathrooms and showers. This limits admissions due to patient issues of gender, age, and severity of psychiatric illness. The proposed unit will provide for private and semi private beds and increase accessibility while decreasing the total number of behavioral health beds.

Sincerely,

Jordan Litvak
Executive Director, Regions 3 and 4
Department of Human Services
Division of Mental Health