



CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY FOR 50 YEARS



CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

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OCT 22 2013

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

October 14, 2013

Ms. Courtney Avery
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson, Springfield, IL. 62761

Re: Alexian Brothers Medical Center Project 13-062

Ms. Avery,

I write with pleasure to support the Alexian Brothers Medical Center Project to open a much needed psychiatric unit at ABMC in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. As you are already aware, Illinois has decrease its state-operated psychiatric inpatient capacity from over 35,000 beds in the 1960's to approximately 1,000 beds currently. Additionally, due to poor reimbursement structures, the Illinois Hospital Association has reported, licensed psychiatric beds have decreased from 5,350 in 1991 to 3,869 in 2010 (a 28% reduction).

As a community mental health provider for over 51 years, we are seeing firsthand the challenges and struggles clients and family members go through as they seek a local inpatient bed for a psychiatric condition. Sadly, due to the shrinkage in state and local hospital inpatient capacity, local hospitals are often full. When this happens, individuals may be transferred to the only available bed, perhaps many towns away. This inhibits the ability for a local response and regular family involvement. In so doing, it inhibits the success of treatment.

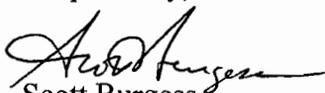
At the same time inpatient hospital options have shrunk and the need for mental health services has increased, the community mental health system "safety-net" has been financially decimated and hit disproportionately hard by state budget cuts resulting in individuals not being able to attain treatment until they are in crisis. According to recent IHA data, between 2009 and 2012, emergency room visits for the uninsured with primary mental illness or behavioral health disorders increased by 17%, rising from 48,820 visits to 57,003. It was noted that ED visits grew at a rate 10.6% higher than those with general medical emergencies.

It is clear there is a significant, unmet demand for acute mental health services, including increased access to psychiatric inpatient services. The Alexian Brothers Health System has long been recognized, in our community and nationally, as a leader in behavioral health care. The Alexian Brothers Order, having provided psychiatric services for roughly four centuries throughout the world and for almost 150 years in America, has demonstrated a heritage and commitment in a manner almost unprecedented in healthcare.

I respectfully encourage the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to approve the Alexian Brothers Medical Center request to add a psychiatric unit to assist in meeting the local community's desperate need for more psychiatric resources.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information you may need.

Respectfully,


Scott Burgess
Executive Director

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Alexian Brothers Medical Center
St. Alexius Medical Center
Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital
Alexian Rehabilitation Hospital
Bonaventure Medical Group
Community Family Health Center
Alexian Brothers Center for Mental Health
Alexian Brothers Corporate Health, Inc.