

Maher Nahlawi, M.D.

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Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

RECEIVED

MAR 24 2018

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Re: North Dunes Dialysis (Proj. No. 17-066)

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am a Board Certified Interventional Cardiologist in Lake County, Illinois. I see patients at Lake Heart Specialists and I focus my clinical practice on treating patients with heart disease. I am also a member of Advocate Physician Partners, a partnership of more than 5,000 physicians committed to improving health care quality, safety and outcomes for patients across central Illinois.

I write to express my support for the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic - a much needed project to improve access to dialysis services in Waukegan, Illinois.

Due to the similar causes at the root of heart disease and chronic kidney failure, many of my patients have both heart disease and kidney failure or ESRD. These patients are among the sickest of those living with chronic disease and they require careful monitoring. Unfortunately, as I work to successfully treat heart disease through medication management and other interventions, these patients often survive heart disease only to suffer renal failure in the future. The special challenges associated with these comorbidities are especially troubling for my patients who live in Waukegan - an economically disadvantaged community with high minority populations, low levels of educational attainment, and poor access to health care services. These residents are among the most vulnerable patients in Lake County, and unfortunately their community is both a federally designated HRSA health professional shortage area and a medically underserved area.

Kathryn J. Olson

Page 2

These health care access issues also extend to dialysis services because both Waukegan dialysis clinics are at full capacity. As a provider for many patients suffering from both heart and kidney diseases, I know this is an untenable situation. Some Waukegan residents are currently dialyzing during an unusual fourth shift at DaVita Waukegan Renal Center that ends after midnight, and others have to seek care in other communities. For patients who are extremely ill, often rely on others for transportation, and need dialysis to survive, neither a fourth shift nor an out-of-town commute three times per week is sustainable, and I fear patients will fall out of compliance with this life-saving care.

We are thrilled that DaVita will help ensure all Waukegan patients have access to dialysis in their community with the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic. DaVita is a leading dialysis provider in the country and has a reputation for fantastic patient outcomes and care coordination efforts. For patients suffering from multiple comorbidities and being treated by multiple specialist physicians, these efforts are critical to reducing complications and ensuring quality patient care.

I support DaVita's commitment to its patients and to improving access in Waukegan, and I respectfully request the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the North Dunes application in full.

Sincerely,



Maher Nahlawi, M.D.
Lake Heart Specialists

Fahd Jajeh, M.D.

**Lake Heart Specialists
731 South IL Route 21, Suite 110
Gurnee, IL 60031
(847) 360-8440**

**Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761**

Re: Project 17-066 for North Dunes Dialysis Clinic

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am a Board Certified cardiologist, specializing in interventional cardiology, heart disease, and critical care medicine. I see patients at Lake Heart Specialists in Lake County and I am a member of Advocate Physician Partners. In the course of my practice, I often treat tremendously sick patient populations with complex health needs and other comorbidities. My patients from Waukegan face additional challenges in managing their disease because the community is a medical underserved area with a shortage of health professionals.

This is particularly true of my patients who also have chronic kidney disease or end-stage renal disease (ESRD) because Waukegan dialysis facilities are currently full and demand for dialysis services is projected to continue increasing. The proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic is perfectly suited to meet that demand and allow patients to continue to dialyze in their community. In the meantime, I understand that DaVita's Waukegan Renal Center is working to meet growing demand by offering a fourth shift, where patients finish their dialysis after midnight. As a provider who regularly treats patients suffering from heart disease and ESRD, I know that schedule is not sustainable for this extremely ill patient population, nor is it realistic to expect those patients - many of whom rely on others for transportation - to travel out-of-town for dialysis services three times per week.

Both kidney disease and heart disease take a tremendous toll on a person's quality of life and health care needs. Unfortunately, kidney disease and heart disease share two of the same main causes: diabetes and high blood pressure. As a result, patients who have heart disease are more likely to develop kidney disease and those with kidney disease are more likely to develop heart disease. Increasingly, as patients benefit from successful interventions to treat their heart

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Page 2

disease, such as medical management with drugs like Lipitor, they survive heart disease only to experience kidney failure and require dialysis to survive. Not surprisingly, these patients have complex health care needs and require ongoing care coordination.

When treating patients, I employ a holistic, multi-specialty approach, coordinating with patients' primary care doctors and other specialists. Teamwork is essential to my practice and helps me to address the individual needs of my patients. DaVita has a strong reputation for working closely with patients' other providers to ensure all are apprised of the patient's condition and any complications that may arise. DaVita is also known for having high quality outcomes at its clinics and offering exceptional patient care. I feel confident knowing my cardiology patients who have ESRD receive their dialysis from DaVita, and I am relieved to know that the proposed project will help to address the shortage of available dialysis stations in Waukegan.

I enthusiastically support the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic and respectfully request the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the application to ensure that those suffering from ESRD have one less thing to worry about.

Sincerely yours,



Fahd Jajeh, M.D.
Lake Heart Specialists

Raza Khan, M.D.

**UroPartners, LLC
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Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: North Dunes Dialysis (Proj. No. 17-066)

Dear Ms. Olson:

I write in support of the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic to help address the serious shortage of dialysis stations in Waukegan, Illinois.

I am a Urologist practicing in Lake County and I treat patients at UroPartners, LLC. We were the first group in the area to offer robotic surgery to address urology issues in a minimally invasive way. I am also a member of Advocate Physician Partnership, a group of more than 5,000 physicians committed to collaborative patient care. For me, the most rewarding part of my practice is helping my patients feel more like themselves again and knowing that I am truly helping my community.

In the course of my practice, I have diagnosed several patients with chronic kidney disease or end-stage renal disease. Both can be a terrifying prognosis for patients, but most especially for my patients who are from Waukegan, who often have limited financial resources and lack access to many health care services in their community. Waukegan is designated as a health professional shortage area and a medically underserved area. It can be a difficult place to live when you have a chronic disease, but especially when you have ESRD and require dialysis to survive, because both Waukegan dialysis clinics are full.

Currently, DaVita's Waukegan dialysis clinic has greater than 100% utilization, and the second facility in Waukegan, operated by Fresenius, was operating well above 80% as of December 31st, 2017. I understand DaVita's clinic has begun offering a fourth late-night shift to meet increasing demand. Patients who dialyze during that shift finish their treatment after midnight, and soon patients will have to seek dialysis services in other towns. These are both poor

Kathryn J. Olson
Page 2

options for those who often rely on others for transportation, have limited financial means, and are seriously ill. It is also unsustainable in light of projected increases in kidney disease in Waukegan due to the aging population, large Hispanic and African American populations who have higher rates of kidney disease, and the high incidence of other chronic diseases that often lead to kidney disease. It is essential that current and future residents with kidney disease can access dialysis services in their own community.

For these reasons, I enthusiastically support the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic and respectfully request that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the application.

Sincerely,



Raza Khan, M.D.

Arkan Alrashid, M.D.
Northshore Center for
Gastroenterology
1880 W. Winchester Rd.
Suite 201
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847-247-0187

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: North Dunes Dialysis (Proj. No. 17-066)

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am a Board Certified Gastroenterologist practicing in Lake County, Illinois. I see patients at Northshore Center for Gastroenterology, a division of GI Partners of Illinois. My specialty is diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopy including weight loss procedures. I employ a holistic approach to my practice, partnering with my patients to improve their health and working in collaboration with other providers across various specialties, which is essential for managing the whole patient.

I am also proud to also serve as the president of GI Partners of Illinois, which is the largest gastroenterologist specialty group in the state. In this role I have occasion to work with providers from all over the state and I know firsthand which areas of state have an abundance of highly qualified medical professionals and health services, and which are medically underserved and have patients in great need of health care services. Waukegan falls squarely into this second category. It is both a federally designated low income medically underserved area and a health professional shortage area. I applaud DaVita's efforts to bring additional dialysis services to this community.

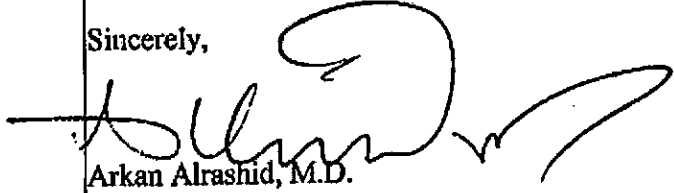
Waukegan is a low-income community that is home to a large minority population, which is more susceptible to kidney disease than the average individual. While there are currently two dialysis clinics in Waukegan, I understand that both clinics are full. The DaVita facility currently has greater than 100% utilization and offers a fourth late shift to meet the surging demand. For dialysis patients - individuals who are among the sickest of those living with chronic disease - this fourth shift option is sub-optimal and results in patients finishing their treatments after midnight. The second facility in Waukegan, operated by Fresenius, was also operating well above 80% as of Dec. 31, 2017. With these utilization numbers, dialysis patients in Waukegan face limited appointment availability and the choice of whether to accept inconvenient dialysis appointments or seek care out of town. Because Waukegan is an economically disadvantaged

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Page 2

community and many dialysis patients rely on public transit or their friends or neighbors for transportation, neither option is a good one.

I fully support the proposed DaVita clinic and respectfully request that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the application for North Dunes Dialysis and continue to improve access to these much needed services in Waukegan.

Sincerely,



Arkan Alrashid, M.D.
Board Certified Gastroenterologist
President
GI Partners of Illinois LLC

Dr. Maan Barhoum

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Chairwoman Kathryn J. Olson
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

RE: Project 17-066: North Dunes Dialysis Clinic

Dear Chairwoman Olson:

I write in support of the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic, a project to improve access to much needed dialysis services in Waukegan, Illinois.

I am a Board Certified Endocrinologist, specializing in adrenal disorders, diabetes, thyroid and parathyroid disease, obesity, pituitary disease and thyroid cancer. I see patients at the Advanced Diabetes and Endocrine Center in Lake County, and I am a member of Advocate Physician Partners, a partnership of more than 5,000 physicians committed to improving health care quality, safety and outcomes for patients across central Illinois.

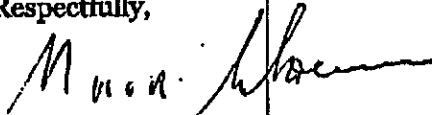
I treat a high number of diabetes patients from Waukegan, many of whom have or are at greater risk of developing kidney disease. Some of my patients are on dialysis and others may eventually require it. In my experience, these patients face different health challenges than exist in other areas of Lake County. Waukegan is a medically underserved area with a shortage of health professionals. It is also a low-income community with a lower level of education attainment than other parts of Lake County, both of which correspond with higher rates of hypertension, obesity and diabetes. More than one-third of residents live below 150% of the federal poverty level - the cut-off used for Illinois Medicaid program eligibility. These demographics and disease rates, coupled with a lack of health care resources, make Waukegan residents particularly vulnerable.

I applaud DaVita's efforts to improve access to dialysis services for this patient population. Waukegan patients need additional health resources - particularly related to ESRD. The two existing clinics are at full capacity, which jeopardizes access for patients who require dialysis to survive. Soon patients will have to seek care out of town. For the reasons discussed above, this is not a viable option for most Waukegan residents in need of dialysis. Dialysis patients are among the sickest living with chronic diseases and they often have comorbidities, such as diabetes, that further complicate their care. These illnesses are a lot for my patients to deal with - particularly in light of having few resources, limited health literacy, and the pain and discomfort associated with their poor health. The proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic will help ensure that convenient access to

dialysis is one less thing for ESRD patients to worry about. It will also help these patients comply with their prescribed course of medical care because it will be easier to do so.

I am in full support of the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic and respectfully ask that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the application in full.

Respectfully,



3/21/18

Maan Barhoum, M.D.
Board Certified Endocrinologist

Mohammad Kagzi, M.D.

*Midwest Sleep Institute
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Chairwoman Kathryn J. Olson
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: North Dunes Dialysis (Project # 17-066)

Dear Chairwoman Olson:

I write in support of DaVita's proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic because it will improve access to dialysis for Waukegan patients in great need of such services.

I practice internal medicine, with a focus on sleep medicine, at Midwest Sleep Institute in Lake County. My patient care philosophy emphasizes holistic treatment to help my patients understand their health issues and to customize their treatment based on their individual needs. My patients include obese individuals suffering from sleep apnea and other diseases, such as chronic kidney disease. I am a strong believer in patient education and, through these efforts, I enable my patients to take better care of themselves and be active partners in the management of their illness.

I am also a member of Advocate Physician Partners, a group of more than 5,000 physicians committed to population health management and innovative clinical integration. We take a comprehensive approach to coordinate patient care across the continuum to ensure care is delivered at the right place and the right time, with greater efficiency, better health outcomes, and significant cost savings for patients.

For care coordination to work, all involved in treatment must be committed to exceptional patient care. DaVita is a worthy partner in these efforts and works closely with patient's nephrologists to manage their dialysis services. We are confident that our patients are in good hands with DaVita. Their clinics consistently rank first in outcomes for the CMS ESRD Quality Incentive Program and DaVita is committed to quality initiatives, including Kidney Smart, IMPACT, CathAway and transplant assistance programs, to ensure patients are educated about their disease

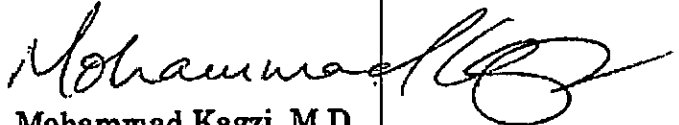
Chairwoman Kathryn J. Olson

2

and empowered to work with their dialysis and health care providers toward better health. Waukegan patients are fortunate to have such a partner in their health care.

Unfortunately, both Waukegan clinics are currently full. DaVita's Waukegan Renal Center is even offering a fourth shift to meet surging patient demand, despite the fact that those patients finish dialyzing after midnight. The status quo is unsustainable and puts Waukegan patients at risk due to lack of available dialysis services in their community. I fully support the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic and respectfully request that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve DaVita's efforts to address this critical need in Waukegan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mohammad Kagzi".

Mohammad Kagzi, M.D.

Dr. Abdul Aziz

Vista Physician Group
Internal Medicine
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Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Project 17-066 for North Dunes Dialysis

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am an Internal and Family Medicine physician practicing in Waukegan, Illinois. I see patients at Vista Physician Group, which is affiliated with Vista Medical Center East. For many of my patients, I am the first physician they have seen in many years, and I am reminded on a daily basis of the health care challenges that Waukegan residents face due to the shortage of health care providers in the area and socioeconomic barriers that often delay patients from seeking preventative health care.

DaVita is a leading provider of dialysis services in the nation and provides exceptional patient care. I and other area physicians welcome their efforts to bring much needed additional dialysis stations to Waukegan.

As the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board is likely aware, Waukegan is a federally designated Health Resources & Service Administration health professional shortage area and is also designated as a medically underserved area. This is particularly troubling in light of the health needs in Waukegan - a low-income community with large minority populations who are more susceptible to kidney disease, diabetes, and obesity. The majority of Waukegan residents are Hispanic, a population with an incidence of ESRD 150% greater than non-Hispanic population, and nearly 16 percent of Waukegan residents are African American, a group with an incidence of ESRD 350% greater than Caucasians. These residents need greater access to health care, but are underserved in Waukegan due to the shortage of health care professionals here. As a result, many Waukegan residents have kidney disease that goes undiagnosed until it is too late, and they are or will become dependent on dialysis for survival.

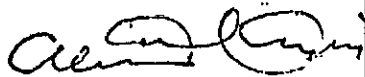
I coordinate care for my ESRD patients with their nephrologists who in turn work with area dialysis facilities to oversee their services. I know my patients are in good hands at Waukegan dialysis clinics; however, both clinics are currently full. One clinic - DaVita Waukegan Renal Center - is even offering a fourth shift, with dialysis care ending past midnight, to meet surging demand. The limited availability of dialysis services in Waukegan is troubling because many of our residents have limited financial resources and rely on public transit or others for transportation. They cannot easily travel out of town for their care. Additionally, the need for dialysis treatment is expected to increase in Waukegan based on current projections and the

aging population. We need additional health care dialysis stations in Waukegan and DaVita's proposed North Dunes dialysis clinic is well-timed to meet this need.

As a physician in Waukegan, I have had to inform patients that they have kidney disease. This is a difficult conversation regardless of the circumstances, but especially so when patients have limited resources and poor access to health services. Soon this conversation will be further complicated by patients having to navigate the task of receiving dialysis care outside of town, three times per week, or fall out of compliance with my and their nephrologist's recommendations for managing their disease. I respectfully urge the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to approve the proposed DaVita clinic so these patients will have one less access problem in Waukegan.

I strongly support the proposed North Dunes Dialysis clinic and hope that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board will do the same.

Best Regards,



Abdul Aziz, M.D.
Vista Physician Group - Internal Medicine