

1/25/19

Ms. Courtney R. Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Re: Opposition to CON 18-042, Quincy Medical Group Surgery Center in Quincy, Illinois

Dear Ms. Avery:

My name is Caitlin Barton-Holland and I am a Lead Pharmacist with Illini Community Hospital/Blessing Health System. I have worked at Illini for almost 5 years. I explicitly oppose the development of the Quincy Medical Group Surgery Center as a separate entity from the Blessing Hospital Campus. My reasons being: Financial impact on my employer and the potential impact of our communities, the impact of job security within Blessing Health System, the ability of Blessing Health System and Illini Community Hospital to provide the community benefits as well as the best care to indigent families in the region, I am not convinced there is a need for a surgery center in the area, and finally, the patient safety aspect of stand-alone surgery centers.

Our non-profit organization provides care to many in the Pike and Adams County communities. Many of the care we provide is funded by the revenue brought in by the QMG/Blessing Health System partnership at the cancer and surgery center in Quincy IL. By QMG separating this care from the Health System, we will likely lose this revenue and the financial outlook on my organization will be unclear. We provide care to many indigent individuals, whether that be through volunteer work, Blessing Foundation charity work, transportation vans to escort Pike patients to Quincy free of charge, have an excellent care coordination team that provides resources to patients of all ages and backgrounds. Both Pike and Adams communities benefit from the work of all of Blessing Health System as well as providing secure jobs for all employed. I myself came to Pike Co. IL from Missouri in search for a hospital pharmacist position and now call this area my home as well as the community I serve.

I do not believe that Quincy has a need for a facility that performs these surgeries separate from Blessing Hospital. I don't believe there is a population or economic growth in the Pike/Adams area in order to support projections of increased opportunities for care. I believe the intention of the project is for Quincy Medical Group is to break ties with the Blessing Health System.

Another concern I have in the development of an outpatient surgery center is that I believe that many surgery centers state their intention is to provide efficient and affordable care to patients, but I more so believe monetary profits to be the main driver in the development of these facilities. I am not stating that this is the intention of Quincy Medical Group, but I have read into the statistics of the large amount of surgery centers and their growth across our country in recent years. There have been many studies performed on the safety aspects of surgery centers and the risk that patients have in needing immediate transport to the main hospital campuses. As we know, there is a delay in patient care when EMS has to transport patients from one facility to the other. I believe having surgery centers separate from available ERs and ICUs puts patients at undue risk for benefit of "cost-savings". Adequate training of staff, appropriate determination of risk of patients to receive stand-alone surgery center care, and appropriate discharge timing are all factors that have been involved in the higher rates of complications and mortality in care at Surgery Centers. I believe patient safety and the best outcomes should be the key driver in providing care to patients and I don't believe that surgery centers are the answer.

I have attached an article that discusses the safety concerns seen in surgery centers across the country. Patients should be aware of risks associated with choosing "cheaper" care at Surgery Centers.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/03/02/medicare-certified-surgery-centers-safety-deaths/363172002/>

In closing, I respectfully ask that the Health Facilities and Services Review Board deny CON application 18-042. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caitlin M. Holland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Caitlin Barton-Holland, PharmD
Lead Pharmacist
Illini Community Hospital
Blessing Health System
Pittsfield, IL
217-285-2113 Ext. 3291