



Transitions

of Western Illinois

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1/30/2019

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

RECEIVED

FEB 04 2019

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: CON #18-042

Dear Ms. Avery:

My name is Mark Schmitz and I am Executive Director of Transitions of Western Illinois. For over 60 years, Transitions has served the Adams County and surrounding area as a provider of mental health and other rehabilitative services, particularly to individuals in need of safety net services.

Blessing Health system plays a vitally important role in assisting Transitions in meeting its mission of helping people with mental health and intellectual disabilities live full and meaningful lives in our community. At a time when many community hospitals have closed or narrowed the scope of their psychiatric inpatient capacity, Blessing has continued to show a commitment to making inpatient services available in our area. Without this access, individuals in need would have to travel long distances to obtain hospitalization or not receive it at all.

Blessing Psychiatrists continue to play a vital role in access to psychiatry for many individuals being served at Transitions. Since access to psychiatric care can play a large role in the stability of individuals with severe mental illness, the availability and access to this services is a huge benefit to our community and the individuals we serve.

While normally Transitions would be silent about the application of Quincy Medical Group for the proposed surgery center, the potential impact as predicted by Blessing Health system on the system of care for individuals in need of behavioral health services has prompted this letter.

If Blessing has to scale back or eliminate its behavioral health services due to loss of revenue from their current surgery center, the impact on individuals with mental illness in our community could be significant. Without access to Blessing Hospital inpatient psychiatric units, area patients will likely be transferred across the state for care, or boarded in the emergency department. Either scenario would not likely lead to more positive health outcomes for these individuals and harm our community.

Additionally, if access to psychiatric outpatient services is reduced or eliminated, Transitions may have a crisis of accessing psychiatry services for its safety net populations which it services as part of a partnership with SIU Center for Family Medicine and Blessing Physicians Services.

In order to preserve the system of safety net mental health services in our area, Transitions of Western Illinois opposes the application for a certificate of need by Quincy Medical group for an outpatient surgery center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Schmitz", written in a cursive style.

Mark Schmitz, LCSW
Executive Director