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QMG surgical center would harm health care

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To The Herald-Whig:

Regional Health Funding 101 dictates that people say absolutely no to Quincy Medical Group's proposed free standing surgical center.

Quincy is unique in its location for health care and what it needs to offer to the region.

There are tertiary health centers located at: the University of Iowa in Iowa City which is 131 miles away, Peoria has one, over mostly two-lane roads, at a distance of 129 miles, Columbia, Mo., is 106 miles, St. Louis, Mo., is 139 miles away and Springfield, Ill., is 115 miles.

None of these tertiary health providers are within 60 minutes. It is well known that if one experiences a trauma there is a "golden hour of trauma care." One needs to be within 60 minutes of a center that can help you. The same is true for access to health care, the closer the care, the better the health.

As trauma and illness occur to all, regardless of their ability to pay, the current health care system mandates there to be a Blessing Hospital which publicly addresses regional health care needs with coordinated and educated responders, ambulances, helicopters along with the best of the best 24 hours per day with MRIs, CT scanners, personnel, surgeons, physicians, nurses and more.

To do this, those that can pay, pay for those that cannot. This funding is through charitable donations, smart prevention funding, public health dental appointments to prevent hospitalizations, educating and coordinating better community health and private insurance.

A free-standing surgical center does not have to meet the same standards of 24-hour care. Those surgical centers don't face hospital regulations, regional health care responsibilities, public outreach/education/coordination and do not have to take all comers regardless of the ability to pay.

It is all about what is the best for area and regional public health.

A private surgical center has the potential to siphon off money paid for non-emergency surgeries which in the past have helped Blessing Hospital leverage and address the regional needs, so we are all protected.

A free-standing Quincy Medical Group surgical center would totally negatively impact regional health and should not be allowed to happen.

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