

Frank Corrado

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AUG 26 2019

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

August 21, 2019

Courtney Avery, Administrator
IDPH
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Dear Ms. Avery,

Per your verbal instruction, I am formally requesting a public hearing (Public Hearing Request E 040 19 Amita Health St. Francis) relating to Amita's Health's request to discontinue its Obstetrics operations at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston.

I believe that IDPH needs to be made aware of community concern over the potential loss of this birthing unit and the potential impact on the community.

Sincerely,


Frank M. Corrado

Michael & Kathleen McGinty

Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Dept. of Public Health
525 West Jefferson St., 2nd floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Ms. Avery:

Please accept this request to schedule a public hearing to gather views from the Evanston community regarding the proposed closure of the obstetrical unit at AMITA St. Francis Hospital in Evanston.

Enclosed for your interest is a letter I penned for news media consideration reflecting my views on this issue, and which also reflects the views of other residents concerned about the planned discontinuation of this important health care unit.

While we do not deny that AMITA has logical business-related reasons for the planned shutdown, there is a danger nevertheless existing for emergency cases requiring immediate care.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter and hope for a positive response.

Respectfully,


Michael J. McGinty

Enclosure

To the Editors

From: Michael McGinty/ August 10, 2019

What about these emergencies?

In the health care debate we hear and read much about large populations being underserved, but what follows is a good example of a small underserved population that faces serious jeopardy.

At a time when hospital systems tell us that bigger is better, some argue that smaller, community-based hospitals provide essential services that are irreplaceable in emergency situations.

One such argument comes from an experienced medical professional who also describes himself as “a friend of the community.” He is concerned about the planned November closing of the obstetrical unit at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, a facility that is now part of Amita Health, one of the largest hospital operators in Illinois. While that unit delivered and cared for thousands of babies annually in the 1950s, its yearly number of deliveries is down to 400, while neighboring Evanston North Shore Hospital, for example, records about 4000 births on an annual basis.

AMITA cites low utilization as one reason for the shutdown of the unit, but while the spokesman agrees to the low utilization argument, his look beyond the cold numbers shows a different picture for some expectant mothers in the south Evanston and Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago.

He admits that many pregnant women who show up at St. Francis with a medical issue can be routinely evaluated and then transported to a hospital with a full-service OB unit. But such is not the case in certain emergency situations. He explained that a pregnant woman who presents at St Francis while hemorrhaging, or suffers from excessively high blood pressure, a footling breach delivery or a ruptured placenta requires emergency OB treatment so significant that she or her baby might not survive ambulance transportation to a hospital even 15 or 20 minutes away. He further points out that St. Francis in large part serves a poor community where many women lack health insurance, lack knowledge of medical services and lack sufficient pre-natal care, deficiencies that can lead to the emergency care situations he describes.

What bothers him most after conversations with colleagues and at neighborhood forums on the planned shutdown, AMITA in his view has not stated a detailed plan for dealing with the life-threatening cases bound to occur if the community-serving OB unit closes its doors.

“We can’t wish the situation away,” he said, adding that adequate planning for such a closure requires getting the word out to the whole community that pregnant women in trouble will need to go elsewhere for this vital form of health care.

Mike McGinty

Evanston, Illinois

August 24, 2019

Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
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Dear Ms Avery

I am writing this letter to request that a public hearing be held in Evanston, IL regarding the application of Amita Health to close the obstetrical unit at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, IL.

St. Francis Hospital serves in large part a poor community where many women lack health insurance, knowledge of medical services and sufficient pre-natal care that can lead to emergency situations. A woman may arrive at St. Francis requiring emergency OB treatment so significant that she or her baby may not survive transport to another hospital 15 or 20 minutes away.

I feel that the continued operation of the obstetrical unit at St. Francis Hospital is necessary to serve the needs of the community of South Evanston and Rodgers Park.

I feel that a public hearing in Evanston is necessary so that the voices of the community can be heard on this issue.

Sincerely,



Edward P. Signatur