

Name: Katharine Hikel md

Affiliation, if applicable: Lown Institute

Topic: Hospital Budgets

Comment:

Over a decade of economic data shows that mergers and consolidations drive up patient costs; this supply-side issue is the unexamined problem in healthcare budgeting in Vermont; and indeed, the so-called 'ACO' - yet another level of management hierarchy - is part of the problem. It is time to restore local control - AND cap management budgets. If a hospital CEO isn't smart enough to live on the wages of the governor of the entire state, he's not smart enough to manage a hospital. We hope for less corporate indulgence from this regulatory board, and more patient advocacy - which means patient-centered economics. That means: ASK THE PATIENTS what they are able to afford. There is no reason that any working family should be charged 25% to 30% of wages - before deductible costs - to preserve this bloated, overbuilt, overmanaged model, exemplified by UVMHC:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/14/health/hospital-mergers-health-care-spending.html?action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage>

GOOD LUCK! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!