

STATE OF VERMONT
GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD

In re: University of Vermont Medical Center)
 Inpatient Bed Replacement Project)
_____)

GMCB-021-14con

ORDER AMENDING CERTIFICATE OF NEED

On July 26, 2021, the University of Vermont Medical Center (UVMMC) requested permission to quickly open 15 additional medical beds within existing hospital space to accommodate a surge of medical patients. Specifically, UVMMC sought to add three beds on McClure 6 by opening a previous “step down” open bay area, and another 12 beds, six on McClure 5 and six on McClure 6, by opening currently private rooms for potential double occupancy. UVMMC characterized the addition of these 15 beds as an interim solution to the census challenges it has been experiencing. UVMMC stated that the beds will not be used unless they are needed and that it can suspend the use of the beds if and when they are no longer needed.

If inpatient volumes remain high for long enough to justify the increased number of beds on a permanent basis, UVMMC stated that it will promptly return to the Board with a proposed long-term solution that does not rely on simply adding beds to space that is outdated or converting single-occupancy rooms to double-occupancy. UVMMC noted that its Hospital Operations Committee is working with the University of Vermont Health Network Planning Department to better forecast its long-term medical and surgical bed needs and offered to report back to the Board with the results of that work once it is complete.

UVMMC acknowledged that its proposal involves non-material changes to the “Miller Building project,” Docket No. GMCB-021-14con. UVMMC identified three inconsistencies between its plans and the language of the Miller Building certificate of need (CON), as amended on March 20, 2020.

First, UVMMC noted that while the Miller Building CON was premised on the idea that it would be replacing and reducing the number of inpatient beds it has, this proposal adds 15 inpatient beds, at least for the time being.

Second, UVMMC asserted that it will not be able to comply with Condition B.7 of the CON, which requires the hospital to report on its plans to cease using 32 beds on McClure 5 that were reopened on a time-limited basis last year so that McClure 5 could accommodate a relocation of the hospital’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).¹ UVMMC states that while it is committed

¹ In an implementation report dated July 1, 2020, UVMMC noted that these beds were located in McClure 6, not McClure 5, as originally planned.

to replacing its NICU, planning for that project needed to be put on hold during the pandemic. UVMMC explained that it intends to file a CON for a NICU expansion within the next 18 months but will not have finalized those plans by March of 2022, as currently contemplated by the Miller Building CON conditions.

Third, UVMMC stated that it will likely need to continue to use Shepardson 3 North for inpatient rehabilitation patients as it works to resume its use of the Fanny Allen inpatient rehabilitation unit or find an alternative location for that service. The reopening of 32 medicine beds on McClure 5, as permitted in the Board’s March 20, 2020 decision, was supposed to allow UVMMC to vacate space in Shepardson 3 North, as had been contemplated in the original CON. UVMMC states that if it can move inpatient rehabilitation back to the Fanny Allen campus later this year, it will return to the Board to discuss how Shepardson 3 North should best be used in light of the patient volumes and needs.

On July 27, 2021, we notified UVMMC that, due to the urgency of the situation, it could proceed with the plans outlined in the letter while we considered potential modifications to the CON. Having now considered the issue, we hereby make the following amendment to Condition B.7 of the CON, as previously amended on March 20, 2020:

7. The Applicant shall report to the Board no later than January 2023 ~~March 20, 2022~~ on its plans ~~to cease using the 32 new medicine beds in McClure 5 and its plans to apply for a certificate of need in relation to its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit~~ regarding the inpatient beds it has added since the certificate of need was issued.

So ordered.

Dated: December 1, 2021 at Montpelier, Vermont

s/ <u>Kevin Mullin, Chair</u>)	
)	GREEN MOUNTAIN
s/ <u>Jessica Holmes</u>)	CARE BOARD
)	OF VERMONT
s/ <u>Robing Lunge</u>)	
)	
s/ <u>Tom Pelham</u>)	

Filed: December 1, 2021

Attest: Jean Stetter, Administrative Services Director