

# AFT Vermont

96 Colchester Ave Burlington VT 05401 \*

[info@AFTVermont.org](mailto:info@AFTVermont.org)

- 1. Your March 3, 2023, letter requests that AFT-VT be granted interested party status or, in the alternative, amicus curiae status. In 2021, when UVMMC applied for a conceptual certificate of need to plan the outpatient surgery center, it was the Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (VFNHP) that requested interested party or amicus curiae status. Please clarify whether these are different organizations or the same organization and, if they are different, confirm that the request is appropriately submitted on behalf of AFT-VT.**

VFNHP is part of AFT-VT as are the nurses at the Porter Medical Center. We are filing on behalf of AFT-VT as to include Porter which would like also be affected by this project.

- 2. In its March 3, 2023, request, AFT-VT states that it is best situated to help the Board determine “whether ... and to what extent, the project will have an adverse impact on existing facilities to provide medically necessary services to all in need, regardless of ability to pay or location of residence” (quoting GMCB Rule 4.000, § 4.402(3)(f)). Please explain how the interests AFT-VT has identified in “adequate safe staffing” and the ability to provide “safe medical care amidst worker shortages” relate to this criterion.**

As staff working in these facilities we are very aware of the issues of staffing shortages as well as safe staffing measures. UVMMC has failed to explain how they plan to staff this surgical center without the use of expensive travel nurses and staff. At UVMMC we are chronically short staffed and have up to 25% or more of our operating room staff made up of travel nurses and techs. The medical center states it is doing everything it can to rid our facility of travelers, but again we have seen no concrete plan. We are very concerned that they will pull from our existing staff to run the surgical center and leave our main OR even more short staffed than they are right now.

- 3. Please provide further information, with any appropriate examples and explanations, regarding whether prior large capital expenditures undertaken by UVMMC, including the Replacement of Inpatient Beds (the Miller Building), Docket No. GMCB-021-14con, have substantially and directly affected AFT-VT’s asserted interests in adequate safe staffing.**

The Miller Building Project has caused many unintended consequences. UVMMC failed to recognize that the joining of network hospitals has caused UVMMC to have a census that is consistently in the RED (which is leading to many of our short staffing issues). Immediately after the opening the Miller Buildings we had to open additional beds on a unit that was supposed to be shut down. This entailed many of the nurses from our Resource pool having to work on this unit and unavailable for other floors that needed an additional nurse. This further led to having to change McClure 6 which was supposed to be revamped for the Neonatal ICU into another Medicine floor (this is where most of our covid patients

were slated). There was no one to staff this unit initially and it was run by travel nurses and our Resource pool again depleting resources for other floors that needed help.