

From: LaJeunesse, Kristen<Kristen.Lajeunesse@vermont.gov>

Sent on: Thursday, September 12, 2024 3:58:06 AM

To: GMCB - Health Systems Finances<GMCB.HealthSystemsFinances@vermont.gov>; Foster, Owen<Owen.Foster@vermont.gov>; Barrett, Susan<Susan.Barrett@vermont.gov>; Barber, Michael<Michael.Barber@vermont.gov>; Walsh, Thom<Thom.Walsh@vermont.gov>; Murman, David<David.Murman@vermont.gov>; Lunge, Robin<Robin.Lunge@vermont.gov>; Holmes, Jessica A.<Jessica.A.Holmes@vermont.gov>; Hengstler, Mark<Mark.Hengstler@vermont.gov>; LaJeunesse, Kristen<Kristen.Lajeunesse@vermont.gov>

Subject: Public Comment: Hospital Budget 2024-09-12T03:58:04Z

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

Submit Time: 9/12/2024 3:58:04 AM

Name: Jason Beckta, MD, PhD

Affiliation: Rutland Regional Medical Center

Town/City: Rutland

Topic: Hospital Budget

Comment: Dear Members of the Green Mountain Care Board, As the sole full-time Radiation Oncologist at RRMC, I provide radiotherapy to the majority of cancer patients in our community, with Rutland home to the only linear accelerator for a large section of the state. I see firsthand the vital importance of timely and accessible care for Vermonters facing cancer. I am deeply concerned that the GMCB's proposed budget actions will undermine our ability to maintain the high standards Vermonters need. Cancer treatment is exceptionally time-sensitive; even brief delays can turn manageable conditions into severe, life-threatening events. The GMCB's proposal, which effectively penalizes hospitals for an unavoidable increase in patient volume, jeopardizes our capacity to deliver essential services. With Vermont's elderly population having doubled over the past decade, the demand for Oncology services has surged. Addressing this need requires sufficient staffing and updated equipment. Without these resources, delays and reduced quality are unavoidable. The proposed financial constraints threaten patient outcomes by creating obstacles in delivering effective, modern care, impacting not just individuals, but also their families and the wider community. The Board's restrictive measures unquestionably harm our ability to meet the rising demand. Our staff are already overstretched, our equipment is aging, and attracting new physicians increasingly depends on Vermont's natural appeal rather than competitive compensation. The fundamental principle that supply should meet demand is compromised when hospitals are unable to expand capacity through reinvesting in our workforce and facilities. Bizarrely, we are now confronted with a potential scenario where insurance premiums receive double-digit increases while hospital rates are cut - decisions that favor commercial interests at the expense of patients and providers alike. This approach not only jeopardizes patient health but also threatens the economic stability of the entire region. I urge the GMCB to reconsider its proposal and support hospitals in delivering the services Vermonters deserve. As my colleagues have noted, we share the same goal of accessible, high-quality healthcare. Unfortunately, harsh budgetary decisions risk creating a future with no access at all. Sincerely, Jason M. Beckta, MD, PhD Radiation Medicine Rutland Regional Medical Center

Post Comment: Yes