

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

Submit Time: 10/14/2024

Name: Peggy Stevens

Affiliation:

Town/City: Charleston, VT

Topic: Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167

Comment:

To the GMCB and all parties concerned,

The recent "Oliver Wyman" report commissioned and accepted by Green Mountain Care(less?) Board, that would degrade and curtail services provided by our North Country Hospital in Newport, is just one more example of the disrespect heaped on Orleans- Northern Essex counties by the State of Vermont.

The contempt shown time and again for Vermont's most rural, least populated region knows no bounds. Apparently, we are deserving of one of Vermont's six state prisons, and our state's only landfill- with all of the accompanying social and environmental fallout- but are *not* deserving of the health care resources required to fully protect and provide for our citizens in this economically and socially marginalized corner of our state.

Research indicates Orleans and Northern Essex counties rank among the highest in the state for negative health risk factors and negative health outcomes. Yet the GMCB's heartless and harmful report, *based on faulty data*, proposes to reduce the continuum of pre-natal to end-of-life care we have been accustomed to historically, and instead have our citizens travel up to an hour or more to St. Johnsbury's already stretched NVRH. How will our citizens in need of hospital care, and their care teams, obtain needed services at greater distances when our transportation resources are totally inadequate already? This is just one of many questions that arise in the face of the GMCB report.

The citizens of Orleans-No. Essex require accountability from our Governor, Agency of Human Services and our legislature. We require appreciation of this "out-of-sight, out-of- mind" corner of Vermont for the inestimable value our natural resources and resilient people provide to our state. The well-being of our region's people and our regional economy relies on a safe and healthy community network, which includes a full range of accessible health care resources, among them our intact and invaluable North Country Hospital.

Peggy Stevens

Charleston, VT

Post Comment: Yes