

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

Sent on: Sunday, September 29, 2024 3:17:14 PM

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Subject: Public Comment: Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167 2024-09-29T15:17:10Z

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

Submit Time: 9/29/2024 3:17:10 PM

Name: Susan Maxwell-Thompson

Affiliation: North Country Hospital

Town/City: Newport

Topic: Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167

Comment: The recommendation to consolidate North Country Hospital with Northeast Vermont Regional Hospital will not only have a significantly negative affect to healthcare access for our patients and communities that we serve but will also negatively affect the economies of one of the poorest communities in Vermont. As an employee of North Country Hospital, I see first-hand the daily struggles our patients and their families endure when healthcare is needed, and the lack of resources are not available to provide to those in need. At times patients wait days for beds to open, and this proposed consolidation will only continue to impact this situation in a negative way. This will in turn impact the patient's ability to heal by causing more strain to the patient's family, who may not be able to travel much further distances to visit with loved ones, and this has been proven to impact a patient's ability to heal. Over the years, healthcare professionals continue to work harder and harder, with less and less resources available. We, as an organization, have tightened our budget year after year, while reimbursements from insurance companies are less and less. Supply expenses also increase year after year, yet there is no regulation from this perspective. All of this negatively affects our ability to provide necessary healthcare to our patients. Instead, GMCB looks at the facilities in the state performing healthcare services and states that we need to do better. This is wrong and you need to do better. GMCB needs to employ better methods to keep insurance companies from charging outrageous out of pocket rates to patients while healthcare facilities are reimbursed so little. Cost increases by supply companies should have oversight to minimize these increases to a manageable level. All of these issues are impacting our not-for-profit entities. Take another look at the map of the state of Vermont and look at the large gap you are proposing to eliminate healthcare in. It's shameful! You should be very ashamed of yourselves, you're obviously not supportive of our state.

Post Comment: Yes