

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

**Sent on:** Wednesday, October 25, 2023 9:28:30 PM

**To:** LaJeunesse, Kristen<Kristen.Lajeunesse@vermont.gov>; Watson, Hilary<Hilary.Watson@vermont.gov>; Melamed, Marisa<Marisa.Melamed@vermont.gov>; Boles, Julia<Julia.Boles@vermont.gov>

**Subject:** Public Comment: Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167 2023-10-25T21:28:27Z

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

**Submit Time:** 10/25/2023 9:28:27 PM

**Name:** Jill LaRock

**Affiliation:** Copley Hospital

**Town/City:** Hyde Park

**Topic:** Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167

**Comment:** This comment is for Oliver Wyman for public comment on Act 167. I am a community member of Copley Hospital, I am a mother but I also am an employee. I believe in Copley or I would not be here like I have been for the last 19 years. Copley is like no other. The culture here serves as a family and not only the employees but the patients feel it. I cannot imagine my having to drive or having to work at the Big Hospital. That is not what I want. I want to work for an organization where I am not just a number. I want to work in my community and not outside of my community. I would love to see the GMCB truly see the value in rural community hospitals and work to make them sustainable. What has frustrated me for years but mostly this year is to see the disparity among all of the hospitals in Vermont and what they can charge for their services which is governed by the rate increase that hospitals are allowed. Copley is given high marks for their quality of care at a low price. Copley puts forth a very true and accurate budget. Our budget was put forth with a rate request which would allow us to make a small margin and it was cut to have the hospital starting out with a negative operating margin. You want to talk about affordability, but it needs to go hand in hand with sustainability. It is not sustainable to have a negative operating margin. If Copley were allowed to charge average of all of the hospitals, we could be sustainable. Copley presents forth data which is accurate and can also paint the picture of what we need again to be sustainable. How is that too much to ask? Why is it acceptable if Copley can provide a service at a low cost and still get the best quality in the state why would you allow another hospital to raise their rates on a service that is already overpriced, and they are not getting the same quality outcomes. Please just allow Copley to charge average or give them the rate increase to allow them for once to have a bottom line. Copley also needs to be able to invest in its infrastructure, IT and its employees. The only way that we can do that is to have a margin at the end of the year. Copley does things and does it well. Have others learn from Copley but give them a change to catch up to where others are given that we overall over the last 10-15 years have a negative rate increase if you add up every year. Even with that we are still providing high quality care at a low price and being successful, but we can only do this for so long. As a mother it is comforting knowing that in an emergent situation you can be at a hospital to receive life saving care in 15 minutes. Without Copley the closest urgent care you can receive is 1 hour away. Please continue to support this local hospital. We are transparent, we supply you with accurate and informative data to make decisions, we tell a story and a good one at that. We answer all of your questions and are just asking for you to allow average. Let us be able to invest in this hospital so we can continue to provide care to the patients of Lamoille County and Beyond for the next 90 years. Keep Copley Hospital being sustainable so we can continue to provide expert care close to home.

**Post Comment:** Yes