

University of Vermont Medical Center Outpatient Surgery Center- Letter of Support

I am writing to support the Certificate of Need (CON) application for the proposed Outpatient Surgery Center submitted by the UVM Medical Center. As a Trustee on the Medical Center's Board, and as a clinician, I have seen firsthand the increasing challenges faced by our communities regarding health care access, and long waits, especially among the older and most vulnerable populations. These long waits contribute to worsening health care conditions, especially should important surgeries be needed to address critical health care issues. By not addressing access now, we run the risk of a worsening scenario.

The access problem has grown exponentially since the pandemic and as the medical center projects future needs, we know that this issue will only continue to grow. Statistics show that if we do not approve this CON, there will be projected surgical case deficits of 4,300 per year by 2030. If we do not act now, we will not be able to catch up, without making significant *future* investments at higher costs, both financial and human.

In my years of working with older Vermonters, I have witnessed them struggle daily with their health-related social needs including access to quality health care. If we believe that health access and health equity should be a reasonable expectation for all Vermonters, we must seriously consider all the appropriate investments into our health care system now. This is critical as it will allow us to meet current and future demands, which are being influenced by the tremendous shift in our aging population.

We all understand the significant cost of these investments, and balancing access, cost and quality was at the center of planning for this new facility. The CON application presented by the Medical Center has been thoughtfully evaluated and vetted by financial and health care experts and with the "Quintuple Aim" in mind. This included a focus on patient experience, population health, reducing costs, care team wellbeing and health equity. The plan is practical and allows for future needed expansions, with flexibility and economies of scale in mind.

Making important health care investment decisions is difficult, especially as we balance this with the rising costs of health care. We must, however, set ourselves on the right health care course to meet future needs and do the right thing for our communities. By approving the Certificate of Need for the proposed Outpatient Surgery Center at the University of Vermont Medical Center, we will take those important steps.

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UVMCC Board Trustee