

**A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.**

**Submit Time:** 5/25/2023

**Name:** Patrick Flood

**Affiliation:**

**Town/City:** Woodbury VT

**Topic:** Hospital Budget

**Comment:** The GMCB must hold the line on hospital budget increases. Hospitals are absorbing all the available funding for health care leaving little to no money for prevention and community services that will actually keep Vermonters healthy and out of hospitals. The Green Mountain Care Board knows, per a consultant's report the board commissioned, that a significant portion of hospital funding goes for "avoidable care". The report declared that between 10% and 34% of inpatient care was avoidable. This fact is the key to real health care reform. By reducing avoidable care Vermont can fund the services to help prevent hospitalization in the first place and help patients be discharged sooner to the right setting, such as primary care, mental health and home health. Savings from reducing avoidable care can be used to: fund primary care and make it affordable and universally available; fund the woefully underfunded mental health system; and, fund the myriad services needed to address the social determinants of health. ,Even 10%, the low end, of hospital funding is over \$200 million. Are Vermonters aware that they are spending over \$200 million on avoidable care? Care that could be provided more appropriately and at lower cost in other ways and settings? We hear almost no discussion of reducing avoidable care because to pursue it means a review and restructuring of Vermont's hospital system, which is long overdue. But it is the only effective path to reform and meeting the needs of Vermonters. To just keep funding the status quo means continuation of our failures: even higher costs, even less access. At a minimum the GMCB should require each hospital, as part of their budget submission, to provide a plan for reducing avoidable care in their institution. Furthermore the board should begin a planning process for addressing avoidable care and restructuring the hospital system. Vermonters deserve no less.

**Post Comment:** Yes