

Comment on Proposed Fairview Health Services - Acadia Healthcare Mental Health Hospital

Date, Time:

6/9/2022 11:19:19 AM

Name:

Katie Freeman, MD

Where do you live:

St Paul, MN

Do you represent an organization?

No

What organization do you represent?

What is your comment on the proposed mental health hospital?

As a local St Paul resident and primary care physician, my biggest concern is who will be served by the new hospital located on the Bethesda Hospital site. Certainly, increase mental health beds are needed, both locally in St Paul and Ramsey County, as well as across the state of MN. These resources are in high demand and there will be competition for spots. It is an important service.

The MHealth Fairview proposal indicates a service area of the "greater 15 county region." What percentage of patients from St Paul and Ramsey County will be served from this site? What percentage of state insurance (Medicare and Medicaid) patients will be served by this site? How will patient intake and selection be made? Given that MHealth Fairview has no acute care hospitals/ERs within 6 miles of the Bethesda site, and no urgent care within 4 miles, how will local residents and community members who might benefit from these programs be able to access this site and these important services? How can local outpatient mental health and primary care providers help patients to access services at the hospital? What supports will be in place for chemical dependency and addiction medicine needs for those admitted? The St Joseph's inpatient chemical dependency unit provided high need essential care--will this also be available at the new site? What process will be in place for transferring to an acute care hospital if needed? Where will patient with medical needs be transferred?

Unfortunately, when I look at this proposal, what I see is a large major health system discontinuing healthcare services in an urban, diverse setting, and opening up a new mental health hospital where they can ship in patients from their higher paying, white, suburban hospitals and clinics, while limiting

access to those diverse patients in the neighborhood who need these programs. This hospital should have benefits for St Paul and the local community, especially for patients, and not just for the system as a whole. This is a health equity issue.