

From: Cole, Peter A - RH Ortho
To: [Simon, Alisha \(MDH\)](#)
Cc: [Cole, Peter A - RH Ortho](#)
Subject: More beds for our the marginalized citizens-Please!
Date: Monday, April 2, 2018 11:20:49 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)

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Dear Ms. Simon,

I am the Division Medical Director for HealthPartners Orthopedics, and the Chairman of Orthopedic Surgery at Regions Hospital in Saint Paul. I am writing in strong support of Regions Hospital's proposal for 100 additional in-patient beds, and specifically for an exception to the "Moratorium Law" which limits the number of hospital beds available to our community.

I have worked at this hospital since 2002 when I was recruited to help build an Ortho Trauma Department for our Level I Center. Previous to that time, back to the Ramsey Hospital days, most of the victim-patients of accidents on our city streets, people with complex broken bones and fractures, had to bypass Regions Hospital or be sent out to Hennepin County Medical Center or North Memorial, because we just did not have that expertise. With the tremendous support of leadership, in collaboration with the University of Minnesota, we were able to recruit a great team for this work, which is now nationally recognized as a leader in patient care, education and research. Indeed, in the past fifteen years, I am proud to say that Saint Paul has a great resource for its citizens; but that has become a two-edged sword.

To say that this reputation, which parallels the great work in other medical and surgical divisions at Regions, has created a black hole for medical and surgical and behavioral pathology, is a major understatement. I decided to move to Minnesota in 2002 to lead this initiative for Orthopedics, because I loved the idea of building a program at a "Mission Hospital," indeed a Safety Net hospital for the community and beyond, to the adjoining states who do not have our services. The perspective of our leadership was simply to "take it on," the most difficult, the most complex, the downtrodden, under-represented, marginalized patients of our city, that no one else wants to take on, "Bring it on!" And the patients came, and they haven't stopped coming.....Please consider that we have experienced a 25% increase in census in the past five years; and that Medicare and Medicaid patients increased a lot (16 and 3 %) over the same time while our percentage of commercial payers dropped

by 3% according to our discharge data. We just cannot afford to shut down the growth of our hospital in the face of these facts in addition to the urban migration Saint Paul is now enjoying. The resource is necessary.

I am happy to say that our leadership, and physician community have led tremendous efforts to optimize stewardship of our resources, to enhance the utilization of every unit, from Emergency, to Operating Room, to Intensive Care units, to patient floors. We have nearly optimized, holding units, discharge planning, appropriate length of stays, to an inflection point which needs rescue. I am very proud of the work, collective effort, committee moxie, to solve the current problem of a nearly overwhelming census, but we must allow this bed exception to the law which is placing a moratorium on beds in a very capable hospital, to have an even greater influence for good on our community.

Regions Hospital is a Level I Pediatric Trauma Center and a Level I Adult Trauma Center, and a Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Hospital, and a Regional Burn Center and the only major teaching hospital in Saint Paul and Western Wisconsin, and the largest Charity Care hospital in the East Metro. We are bursting at the seams, running at nearly 100% census daily. Consider too, that we developed a nationally acclaimed model for the treatment of the elderly with fragility fractures, and that the elderly are the fastest growing age demographic with an expected 69% increase in the next thirty years.

For these reasons I urge you to find Regions proposal for 100 additional inpatient beds in the public interest.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further help toward this end.

Respectfully,

Peter A. Cole, MD



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