## Roate, George

**From:** Beth A. Shaw [bas@renalcareassoc.com]
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 16, 2012 12:41 PM
**To:** Constantino, Mike
**Cc:** Roate, George
**Subject:** Project 12-004
**Attachments:** Response to Letter of Opposition.pdf

12-004

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May 15, 2012

*Via Email and U.S. Mail*

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Opposition to Project 12-004

Dear Ms. Avery:

RenalCare Associates is an independent physician practice with 12 nephrologists and 2 surgeons with offices located throughout Central Illinois. On behalf of our practice, we are writing to respond to the comments of Drs. Usman and Shakaib regarding the North Pekin dialysis facility project 12-004. These physicians oppose the establishment of a Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) facility because they would prefer to compete in a facility which they own and operate. They make several arguments in their letters of opposition which we feel must be addressed.

Drs. Usman and Shakaib both have full privileges to provide care for dialysis patients in the Pekin and Peoria Fresenius dialysis facilities. As physicians caring for patients, they are important members of the medical staff and have significant opportunity to impact the quality of care these facilities provide. While RenalCare Associates and Kidney Health Care are competing physician practices, we each work within Fresenius dialysis facilities restricted only by the medical staff bylaws governing good patient care. RenalCare Associates physicians have a long history of working closely with Fresenius Medical Care to oversee patient care and quality as facility Medical Directors. We anticipate continuing to serve as Medical Directors of our area dialysis facilities but have in no way restricted Drs. Usman or Shakaib from participation in the care or quality improvement process. It is entirely inaccurate for them to state that they have been "locked out of the Pekin/Peoria dialysis market".

These physicians also make statements raising concern about the quality of care provided in the Fresenius dialysis facilities. The Pekin/Peoria Fresenius facilities are a part of the North Division within Fresenius Medical Care. These and the other central Illinois facilities where we provide care work very hard to ensure

RenalCare Associates, S.C.

other central Illinois facilities where we provide care work very hard to ensure that patients receive the safest and highest quality care. Dedicated managers, nurses and technicians work closely with physicians to serve a very challenging, elderly and ill patient population. These facilities consistently score high in quality outcome and patient satisfaction parameters compared to other Fresenius facilities as well as national benchmarks provided through the Forum of ESRD Networks. Indeed, the Fresenius dialysis facility at Pekin Hospital campus is in the 85th percentile of all FMC units for anemia management, 73rd percentile for phosphorus control, and 73rd percentile for limiting catheter use. We were only at the 43rd percentile within FMC for dialysis adequacy and identified that this was in part due to patients dialyzing for too short a period. We instituted policy change to ensure that all new patients dialyze a minimum of 4 hours and at least 3 times per week, unless the physician documented the patient's adequacy on a monthly basis. All members of the medical staff were given opportunity to provide input prior to implementing the policy. It is very clear that Fresenius dialysis facilities provide high quality patient care.

Dr. Shakaib strongly argues that RenalCare Associates hinders patient care through being the sole provider and even accuses us of "neglect and mistreatment" of patients. RenalCare Associates was founded in 1975 when Drs. Robert Pflederer and Kent Bryan began providing life-saving dialysis treatment with OSF St. Francis Medical Center. This cutting edge therapy was heretofore not available to dialysis patients in Central Illinois or much of the country. The number of patients suffering from chronic kidney disease has progressively grown since that time. RenalCare Associates has continued to grow and provide care in outpatient dialysis facilities owned by OSF, Midwest Kidney Centers, Renal Care Group, and Fresenius Medical Care. The 12 nephrologists and 2 surgeons of RenalCare Associates have provided compassionate and high quality dialysis, vascular access, and transplant care now for over 30 years. RenalCare Associates has been a tireless advocate for the needs of patients suffering from kidney disease working closely with the National Kidney Foundation and local patient advocacy groups related to diabetes, polycystic kidney disease, and transplantation – to name a few. Recognizing the often dire financial needs of our patients, RenalCare Associates was instrumental in the establishment of the Central Illinois Memorial Kidney Fund – a non-profit community organization that raises financial assistance for kidney patients in central Illinois. RenalCare Associates physicians hold faculty appointments at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria and are active in teaching medical students and residents as well as in research related to kidney disease. Our physicians hold leadership positions in national nephrology societies and are greatly respected in their fields. Most importantly, RenalCare Associates has a strong local community reputation as a physician practice that provides the highest quality, compassionate care to everyone in need – irrespective of their status or ability to pay. We are committed to that philosophy and business model that was established in our culture from the very beginning. Accusations to the contrary are blatantly false.

Finally, we want to point out the area that RenalCare Associates and Kidney Health Care are in complete agreement. Dr. Usman and Shakaib's opposition letters make it clear that they believe a new dialysis facility in Pekin is very important. The letter from their patient also emphasizes this point, demonstrating the frustration involved when an ill patient has to dialyze even a moderate distance from home. We strongly concur with them that a facility is needed and urge the board to approve the Fresenius Medical Care application before you. Project #12-004 is very worthy of your support.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Sparrow, MD
President, RenalCare Associates

Timothy A. Pflederer, MD
President-elect, RenalCare Associates
Medical Director, FMC Pekin dialysis facility