RUSH

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15-053

January 20, 2016
Ms. Courtney Avery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Dear Ms. Avery:

I am delighted to provide my utmost support to the Master Design CON for a new comprehensive outpatient building on the Rush campus. As President of Rush University Medical Group and Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs of Rush Medical College I oversee the development of all ambulatory care initiatives, with the goal of improving effectiveness and efficiency of clinical programs as it relates to operations, patient access and clinical outcomes for our populations.

I cannot emphasize enough how this new ambulatory care building is important for this campus, which will become the primary ambulatory care site for all physicians on the Rush medical staff. Our current practice sites are old and fragmented both in organization and physical location, having been developed over many years. The buildings are not conducive to the excellent patient care and quality Rush is known to provide. It has been difficult to create multidisciplinary clinical spaces for team-based care, as the cost of reconfiguring large areas is increasingly prohibitive.

The new building will be organized to stimulate collaboration and knowledge exchange that ensures superior clinical outcomes. One of our guiding principles is to implement and pair state-of-the-art information and clinical technologies with excellent clinical care. We will also have adequate space for educational and clinical research activities, which are critical to supporting innovation and training of the workforce of the future.

Most importantly, we will design and structure the new ambulatory care building around the needs of the patient, to provide the most convenient and accessible experience possible for patients and their families. We will co-locate services and specialties in a way that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration among physicians, nursing staff, nutrition, rehabilitation and behavioral services, social work and all other disciplines important to the comprehensive care of patients with acute and chronic conditions.

This is the next major investment that Rush is committed to, ensuring that we continue to provide the best care to our community and to the broader region. Please feel free to contact me if I can answer any questions. Thank you for your consideration of the application.

Sincerely,

Antonio Bianco, MD

Rush is a not-for-profit health care, education and research enterprise comprising Rush University Medical Center, Rush University, Rush Oak Park Hospital and Rush Health.

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Dear Ms. Avery:

As the Chairperson of the Department of Pediatrics at Rush University Medical Center I am writing to express my strong support for the Master Design CON for a new comprehensive outpatient building on the Rush campus.

At Rush Children's Hospital, we have the privilege of providing care for children from birth until they enter adulthood. Every year, we care for thousands of children from Chicago and around the country, of which 60% are underserved and covered by Medicaid. These children are cared for by over 90 providers, including General Pediatricians and specialists like Cardiologists, Endocrinologists, Neurologists and more. A large number of the patients we see are actually healthy, visiting their pediatrician for well-child visits and minor concerns. Many times, however, these children become ill, requiring more specialized, intensive treatments for conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, Fragile X Syndrome, and cancer, to name a few. Regardless of whether a child comes to Rush annually for a checkup or weekly for chemotherapy, we recognize the extreme importance and impact that space and environment can make on their health and wellbeing.

As pediatric services at Rush have expanded over time, particularly in the outpatient setting, the demand now exceeds the capacity of our space. Our clinics are located in three different buildings on Rush's sprawling campus, often times forcing our families to travel several blocks buildings to complete their appointments. Pediatrics is uniquely challenged by this layout, as our patients are coming to Rush with their parents, siblings, and often times strollers. Traveling through campus with children and strollers can cause undue stress and complications for our families, and these challenges are compounded for our children in wheelchairs. This disjointed layout of our clinics also presents challenges to provider collaboration and team-based care, as caregivers often must also travel long distances to see patients. On top of this, our facilities and clinic spaces are dated, which over time becomes less of a concern about aesthetics, and more about infection prevention, environmental safety, and maintenance.

The consolidation of pediatric outpatient services in one building will provide our patients, their families, and our providers with a space built to support the unique needs of children while also allowing us to deliver care more efficiently. The new outpatient building will improve access to exceptional care to the population in our surrounding community by replacing our current facilities with one transformative, new facility designed around patient and community needs. In addition to supporting team-based care of patients with acute and chronic illness, this building will support the provision of preventive care, immunizations and screening services. With this new building, our patients will be able to see everyone from a general pediatrician to a specialist in one visit. Additionally, we will have the opportunity to offer our patients and families a space that is designed with children in mind. This is even more important when considering the care of children, as we know that a welcoming, comforting, and child-friendly space can positively impact stress levels, overall experience, and possibly outcomes.

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It is of the utmost importance that our patients receive the highest quality of care possible, and they should be receiving that care in a space that is not only designed support their medical needs, but to provide an engaging, comforting, family-centered environment built to meet their unique needs. Every day, our pediatric healthcare providers strive to deliver evidence-based care and treatments with the goal of improving the lives and overall health of their patients. Similarly, we should be providing this care in space that was built using evidence-based design principles, with the ultimate goal of providing a healing environment for our children and their families.

Sincerely,

Anna Spagnoli, M.D.
Chairman
Department of Pediatrics