FRESENIUS KIDNEY CARE

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July 12, 2016

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HEALTH FACILITIES & SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Ms. Kathryn Olson
Chairman
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Project #16-024, Fresenius Kidney Care East Aurora, Response to Opposition

Dear Ms. Olson:

The following comments are being submitted in response to an opposition letter submitted by Fox Valley Dialysis (FVD). First we disagree that the project does not meet the service accessibility requirement set forth in section 1110.1430(b)(5)(A). The project is only required to meet one out of five factors. The project meets the following:

- ii) *"Access limitations due to payor status of patients, including, but not limited to, individuals with health care coverage through Medicare, Medicaid, managed care or charity care";*

- iv) *"The area population and existing care system exhibit indicators of medical care problems, such as an average family income level below the State average poverty level, high infant mortality, or designation by the Secretary of Health and Human Services as Health Professional Shortage Area, a Medically Underserved Area, or a Medically Underserved Population"*

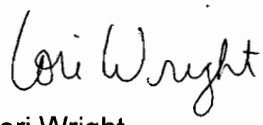
Pages 74 & 75 (Attachment 26b – 5) of the application detail the Medically Underserved Area (MUA) of Aurora, the number of undocumented Aurora residents (currently the Fresenius Aurora facility is treating 22 undocumented patients), low income status, % of uninsured residents, minority population and the double the State level of incidence of ESRD in the Aurora area. We are fully aware that the MUA designation does not suggest a need for additional dialysis stations and in no way are we attempting to "mislead" the Board. Our intent is to serve a patient population, many of which reside in the MUA, that because of their economic and social status, experience higher incidence of ESRD and greater difficulty traveling to obtain care. However, we are not relying solely on the MUA status to support our proposed facility. We also rely on the population demographics, ESRD growth, current 100% utilization of our existing Aurora facility, and a stated need in the planning area. The MUA status simply supports our documentation of the patients the facility will serve and the hardships these patients will experience if they have to travel 10-20 miles for dialysis.

Fresenius Kidney Care does not discount the clinics within 30-minutes travel time that have available access. We fully acknowledged that there is available access within 30 minutes, however as stated, the two Aurora clinics are at 87% combined utilization and the next closest facilities with access are between 10-20 miles/20-30 minutes away and most in different Health Service Areas and are covered by different physicians.

While it may be true that any facility could technically serve (treat) a patient from any location, for many of the minority patients who reside in East Aurora who are undocumented, may not speak English and are living in poverty, a clinic 10-20 miles/20-30 minutes away realistically "does not serve Aurora residents". Travelling these distances for treatment would create transportation difficulties and also loss of continuity of care as they would have to switch their treatment to a different physician and healthcare system. This is never in the patient's best interest. We do not ask the Board to disregard these facilities but to consider the needs of our patients. If these other clinics were viable options, the patients living in the area would be going to them now and not dialyzing on a 4th shift at our existing Aurora facility.

Thank you for your time reviewing and considering this information.

Sincerely,



Lori Wright
Senior CON Specialist

cc: Clare Ranalli