

November 4, 2021

Ms. Alisha Simon
Health Economics Program
PO Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

RE: Minnesota Hospital Moratorium Exception – Prairie Care

Dear Ms. Simon,

Hennepin Healthcare System has proudly served Minnesotans in need of critical mental health and recovery services for decades. Hennepin Healthcare offers 24/7 Acute Psychiatric Services (APS), partial hospitalization, day treatment and crisis respite services, as well as psychiatric consultations and outpatient therapies. Like many health systems, Hennepin Healthcare is experiencing significant pressures, placing programs at risk. We are supportive of the addition of psychiatric beds at Prairie Care, and we respectfully request your consideration of the following:

We support adding more psychiatric beds to meet the needs of the children of Minnesota. Our pediatricians and child mental health providers have frequent concerns about the lack of appropriate placement for children in need of acute mental health care. However, all children should be able to access these new beds and services, especially those on public programs. We request that Prairie Care collect and report the numbers of those they serve on public programs in their psychiatric services. We are concerned that if all children cannot access these services equitably, there will be further damage to health equity in Minnesota.

Like all health systems, we are experiencing staffing challenges. Competing with other systems whom have a greater commercial insurance source on the salaries they are able to pay their workforce is a significant challenge for our safety-net system. We ask that the state takes this imbalance into consideration and helps to ensure our safety-net system is able to staff to an adequate level to maintain the inpatient services that the state relies on to care for Medicaid patients.

Hennepin Healthcare System supports adding more mental health beds if it is done in an equitable manner, so children in Minnesota, regardless of the type of their health insurance, are able to access this service.

Sincerely,



Jennifer DeCubellis
Chief Executive Officer
Hennepin Healthcare System