

October 26, 2021

Stefan Gildemeister, Director Health Economics Program
Minnesota Department of Health
Submitted via email to Alisha Simon

Dear Mr. Gildemeister,

On behalf of Allina Health, thank you for your outreach and request for comments as part of the public interest review process for the Regions Hospital proposal to add 45 inpatient bed licenses through an exemption to Minnesota's hospital bed moratorium law.

This is an unprecedented situation as during the June 2021 special session the legislature approved Regions Hospital to move ahead with the addition of 45 beds, 5 of which must be used for mental health, prior to the completion of the public interest review. Despite this legislative action, we remain supportive of the public interest review process to provide lawmakers with additional perspective with which to evaluate the request of a single hospital within the context of a community's needs, as well as its existing capacity. Additionally, we appreciate the public review process as means to ensure that the needs of the community can be met in a way that is responsible from a long-term perspective and supports the spirit of ongoing collaboration among providers in the East Metro.

Care needs in the East Metro continue to evolve with the response to the ongoing pandemic as well as sustained high volumes with the recent loss of an ED and other services within the community. Allina Health's United Hospital, as well as Regions Hospital continue to face sustained capacity pressure. Given the known and immediate needs in the community, we do not oppose the addition of the 45 beds and look forward to Regions adding the committed mental health beds as soon as they can.

Thank you again for the opportunity for our organization to comment on the Region's proposal to add additional inpatient beds. Please reach out to Kristen McHenry, Director of Government Relations at Kristen.mchenry@allina.com with any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Sara Criger
Senior Vice President, Allina Health
President, Mercy & United Hospitals