

Alisha Simon
Health Economics Program
Minnesota Department of Health
P.O. Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

Dear Ms. Simon,

My name is Craig Harvey. I am the Director of Pharmaceutical Services at Regions Hospital. I have been working at Regions for 14 years in various roles within the pharmacy.

I am writing in support of Regions Hospital's proposal for 100 additional inpatient bed license. Regions serves a unique role in the east metro as safety-net, level 1 adult and pediatric trauma center, and burn center. We are a community asset that needs to be maintained.

Regions Retail Pharmacy is unique and fills a special niche serving the community. In many cases, we are the safety net Pharmacy for patients who are without insurance or funds to purchase prescription products to self-administer when discharged from the hospital or the Emergency Department. I have witnessed patients who would have gone without medication at home had it not been for a free prescription from Regions Hospital Pharmacy. In most cases, chain retail pharmacies operate as a cash/carry business – if you can't afford the co-pay or prescription cost, you won't leave with a medication in hand. That is not the case at Regions Hospital. Regions Pharmacy serves all, regardless of ability to pay. It is our mission to provide high quality pharmaceutical care to all who are in need. Because of the need in our community, our Retail Pharmacy is open 24x7, ready to serve.

Recently, Regions InPatient Pharmacy has been challenged when admitted patients are not assigned a specific room due to bed availability. We typically provide medications to a patient in a designated room. When the hospital is full and patients must be housed in the Emergency Department or hallway, it can be challenging for the Pharmacist to locate the patient to obtain a medication history or to provide necessary medications. Unfortunately, it is becoming too frequent that patients are housed in non-standardized bed locations for short periods of time. Data shows that when non-standardized practices are employed, the risk of a medication error increases. We need more beds.

For these reasons I urge you to find Regions proposal for 100 additional inpatient beds in the public interest. The community is depending upon us to be there when needed.

Sincerely,

Craig Harvey, Pharmacist
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