

**8.22.18**

**Determination of Need Public Hearing Testimony**

**Deb Cronin-Waelde, RN**

Good evening, my name is Deb Cronin-Waelde. I am senior vice president of clinical operations and Chief Nursing Officer at Melrose Wakefield Healthcare. I have more than 35 years of nursing experience in community care. My family, friends and neighbors who know me well understand that patient experience & delivery of high-quality care are my passions. I am here tonight to ask for your approval of the ambulatory surgery center as an environment that will deliver on both quality and excellence to the patients in our communities.

On the matter of patient experience, an ambulatory surgery center is focused on specialty day-surgery needs with consistent scheduling. Today in traditional hospital-based ORs schedules can be disrupted and delayed by emergent or unexpected surgery needs. An ASC allows patients the benefits of these efficiencies. The evidence also supports reduced surgical and recovery times, allowing patients to have their procedures and return home to recover vs. having to endure a hospitalization. Ambulatory Surgery Centers improve access to outpatient surgical services in a community-based setting. Currently, patients needing less complex day surgery procedures can experience a wait time of 1-2 weeks for hand

surgery, 3-4 weeks for other outpatient orthopedic procedures, and 4+ weeks for ENT procedures. ASCs are able to adhere more uniformly to a surgical schedule, which ultimately will result in overall reductions in patient wait times for surgeries. Growing costs effect patients and their experience and the decision to have a necessary surgery to improve their health. The ambulatory surgery center is a much lower-cost setting.

Quality and patient safety is our top priority. Building for specific types of day-surgery procedures allows for the design to take into consideration the latest in technologies, services and access points of entry for patient service, including adults, children, and family members.

Staffing an ASC is highly focused on the scope of procedures and employment of the expertise to support them. This allows highly specialized teams to be in place leading to better outcomes like reduced infection rates and improved pain levels. ASCs are focused on and often exceed national quality benchmarks such as reduced surgical site infection rates.

To summarize, I strongly support the ASC, as it not only delivers on quality, safety and the patient experience, it aligns with a greater vision of bringing more ambulatory care to the communities and reducing the cost of care. I look forward to partnering with Shields Healthcare and the surgeons involved in making this

project successful for the benefit of our patients. It will bring a new level of exceptional care to the community.