



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
67 Forest Street, Marlborough, MA 01752

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June 26, 2023

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Re: Review of Response Following Essential Services Finding

Facility: Morton Hospital

Services: Morton Hospital's Comprehensive Addiction Program ("MORCAP")

Ref. #: 2022-606

Dear Mr. Levine:

On June 15, 2023, the Department of Public Health (the "Department") received from you, on behalf of Morton Hospital, A Steward Family Hospital Inc., a response to our June 1, 2023 letter indicating that Morton Hospital (the "Hospital") must file a plan with the Department detailing how access to services will be maintained following the discontinuation of Morton Hospital's Comprehensive Addiction Program ("MORCAP") at Morton Hospital in Taunton, MA. Thank you for responding to our request in a timely and comprehensive manner.

Pursuant to 105 CMR 130.122(G) the Department has completed its review of the submitted access plan. As a result of this review, the Department has prepared the following comments:

- 1. Transportation:** In your response dated June 15, 2023, you noted the towns in Morton Hospital's service area represent 32.5% of MORCAP's total discharges; however information was not provided on how the Hospital will assure ongoing access to the service, as required by MGL c. 111, s. 51G(4) and 105 CMR 130.122. The Department requests information on how the Hospital intends to facilitate transportation for patients in need of substance use disorder services out of Morton Hospital's service area to Carney Hospital Comprehensive Addiction Program (CARCAP) or another facility.
- 2. Equity and Inclusion:** In your response dated June 15, 2023, you stated the individualized plan of care post-discharge takes into account the needs of

marginalized patients including MassHealth patients. The Department requests a detailed breakdown of the specific needs which have been identified by the Hospital and how they will be addressed in discharge planning, as well as information on the Hospital's plan to address concerns regarding the MORCAP closure's disproportionate effect on marginalized communities.

3. **Community Engagement:** In your response dated June 15, 2023, you stated the Hospital will continue to provide updates on its closure plan to various interested parties and elected officials in monthly community forums. The Department requests additional information on the form and content of these community forums, including how long the forums will continue and the means by which interested parties will be made aware of upcoming forums. Additionally, the Department requests the Hospital confirm that these updates will note for the community the ongoing availability of 18 treatment beds at MORCAP until the 25 beds planned to open at CARCAP are operational.
4. **Staffing:** In your response dated June 15, 2023, you stated the required nursing staff for the 18 Level 4.0 beds will be available while MORCAP remains open, “. . . to the extent the census and the nursing staff support such staffing.” Elsewhere in your response (see 2.(a)), you indicated “MORCAP will maintain 18 beds in operation until CARCAP opens with 25 beds.” The Department requests the Hospital confirm it will continue operation of 18 staffed beds at MORCAP until the 25 beds planned to open at CARCAP are operational, in fulfillment of the requirement the plan assure ongoing access to the service.

Under the provisions of 105 CMR 130.122(G), the Hospital must submit a timely response to the comments of the Department. Please submit your comments within 10 days of your receipt of this letter to my attention, in order that we may complete our review of the pending closure.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in this process. If you have any questions, please contact me at Stephen.Davis@Mass.Gov.

Sincerely,



Stephen Davis
Division Director

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