



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality  
Determination of Need Program  
250 Washington Street, Boston MA 02511

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February 5, 2021

Gregory Mirhej, Vice President  
Behavioral Health Service  
Harrington Hospital  
100 South St  
Southbridge, MA 01550

Re: [Harrington Hospital - Application to Add Psychiatric Beds at Webster Campus Pursuant to Order of the Commissioner of Public Health Regarding Determination of Need Approvals Related to COVID-19](#)

Dear Mr. Mirhej:

The Department received the notification above on February 2, 2021 to add ten (10) adult inpatient psychiatric beds to address the needs of its patient panel. The hospital currently houses a 14-bed adult psychiatric unit (2 South, presently at the Southbridge campus). The 14-bed unit, in combination with the additional 10 beds, will be sited on the Webster campus, at 340 Thompson Road, Webster, MA 01570.

The need for expanded capacity of inpatient psychiatric beds has increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for those individuals with a pre-existing mental health condition. Both the number of psychiatric patients requiring inpatient admissions and length of time boarding in Emergency Rooms have significantly increased during this public health crisis,<sup>1</sup> and the regional need, as well as the demand throughout the state, have surpassed available resources. Increased capacity of psychiatric beds will improve access to a vulnerable population, contributing to better outcomes.

The cost associated with the Proposed Project is \$4,255,000 which includes construction and renovation to the space to accommodate 24 inpatient adult psychiatric beds (14 existing beds to be moved from Southbridge campus to Webster campus, plus 10 additional beds).

After review, DPH has determined the need for the Proposed Project relates to the State of Emergency

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn E. Delisi, *COVID-19 Pandemic: Impact on psychiatric care in the United States*, 289 PSYCHIATRIC RES 113069 (2020); *Hospital Emergency Room Wait Times Increasing for People in Need of Psychiatric Care*, MASSLIVE (Oct. 11, 2020), <https://www.masslive.com/news/2020/10/er-wait-times-up-for-psychiatric-patients-needing-admittance.html>.

and therefore the DoN approval requirement is waived pursuant to the COVID-19 order. As a result, you may commence the Proposed Project.

Sincerely,



Lara Szent-Gyorgyi  
Director, Determination of Need

cc: Sherman Lohnes, Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification, DPH  
Rebecca Rodman, Senior Deputy General Counsel, DPH  
Elizabeth Kelley, Director Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality, DPH  
Margret Cooke, Deputy Commissioner, DPH  
Harry Lemieux, VP, Harrington Hospital  
Ed Moore, CEO, Harrington Hospital  
Tom Sullivan, CFO, Harrington Hospital  
Janet Ross, Assistant Commissioner for Clinical and Professional Services, DMH