



August 5, 2024

VIA EMAIL

Stephen Davis, Director
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
Department of Public Health
67 Forest Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Re: Nashoba Valley Medical Center – Notice of Hospital Closure

Dear Mr. Davis:

We write on behalf of Steward Health Care System LLC (“SHC”) regarding Nashoba Valley Medical Center, located at 200 Groton Road, Ayer, MA 01432 (the “Hospital”). Pursuant to 105 CMR 130.122(B), and as authorized by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas Houston Division (the “Bankruptcy Court”), authorizing the closure of the Hospital, the Hospital hereby provides notice to the Department of Public Health (“Department”) of its decision to close the Hospital. The Hospital’s closure will include the following: 46 Medical/Surgical beds, 6 Intensive Care Unit beds, 5 Pediatric service Beds, 20 Psychiatric service beds, and all ambulatory care services at the Hospital. The Hospital anticipates closing on or around August 31, 2024. The Hospital operates at a significant loss and serves a limited patient population. We have tried to find alternatives for keeping the hospital open but given the mounting losses and the absence of a qualified bidder or actionable alternative, we have made the difficult decision to close the Hospital.

In further compliance with applicable requirements at 105 CMR 130.122(B), the Hospital provides the following information regarding the Hospital’s closure for review by the Department:

1. Current and historical utilization rates for the Hospital.

Service	FY ¹ 2022		FY2023		FY2024 ²	
	ADC ³	Occupancy	ADC	Occupancy	ADC	Occupancy
Medical/Surgical Beds	12	26.1%	11	23.9%	10	21.7%
Intensive Care Unit Beds	3	50%	3	50%	4	66.6%

¹ The Hospital’s fiscal year runs on the calendar year, January 1 to December 31.

² Through 6/30/24.

³ Denotes Average Daily Census.

Psychiatric Beds	18	90%	18	90%	14	70%
Pediatric Beds ⁴	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Service	Patient Volume FY2022	Patient Volume FY2023	Patient Volume FY2024 ⁵
Emergency Department ⁶	16,005	15,873	7,823
Outpatient Procedures ⁷	130,165	129,724	64,232

2. A description of the anticipated impact on individuals in the Hospital's service area following the closure of the Services.

Following an extensive sale process over the course of nearly five months, SHC did not receive any actionable offers for Nashoba Valley Regional Medical Center as part of the Chapter 11 Bankruptcy process. After exhausting the viable alternatives to transition the Hospital to another operator, SHC has made the difficult decision to close the Hospital.

This is a challenging and unfortunate situation, and the effect it will have on the Hospital's patients, employees, and the community served is regrettable. SHC's overwhelming priority is to our patients, their families and our dedicated employees. We are committed to facilitating a smooth transition for those affected, while continuing to provide quality care to our patients. Among other things, SHC will work closely with the Hospital's patients to help them find the best possible care alternative and with its valued employees and health care professionals to assist during this difficult transition.

The Hospital notes that the other facilities in the region, which are available to the patients currently served by the Hospital, include the following:

- UMass Memorial HealthAlliance – Clinton Hospital, Leominster Campus, 60 Hospital Road, Leominster, MA 01453
- St. Joseph Hospital, 172 Kinsley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire 03060

⁴ Pediatric services beds have been temporarily out of service due to the lack of patient demand and staffing limitations.

⁵ Through 06/30/2024.

⁶ Measured using total annual visits.

⁷ Includes surgical cases, diagnostic radiology procedures, CT, MRI, laboratory, endoscopy, pain management, occupational health, EMG, sleep center, and cardiac rehabilitation.

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- Emerson Hospital, 133 Old Rd. to 9 Acre Corner, Concord, MA 01742
- Holy Family Hospital – Methuen, 70 East Street, Methuen, MA 01844
- St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, 300 1st Avenue, Boston, MA 02129
- Lowell General Hospital, 295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell, MA 01854

3. Date for the closure of the Service.

The Hospital anticipates closing on or around August 31, 2024.

4. Names and addresses of any organized health care coalitions and community groups known to the Hospital when the notice is issued to DPH that would have an interest in the closure of the Services.

- National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI)
331 Montvale Avenue, 2nd Floor
Woburn, MA 01801

5. A detailed account of any community engagement and planning which has occurred prior to filing notice of the closure of the Services.

The Hospital has and will continue to engage with local stakeholders, including the Town Administrator and local elected officials. The purpose of such community engagement is to identify concerns with the closure of the Hospital and determine how they will be addressed. Additionally, Steward senior leadership is engaged in ongoing conversations with the Department and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to discuss the planned closure.

The following communications have occurred:

- SHC leadership notified Massachusetts Nurses Association, SEIU and Air Traffic Control.
- Hospital President Salvatore Perla notified the Board of Directors, Department Heads, Medical Executive Committee, and Credentialing Committee.
- Hospital President Salvatore Perla held department level meetings and active leadership rounds across all Departments.
- Senior Leadership team held a virtual meeting with staff of Congresswoman Lori Trahan.
- Hospital President Salvatore Perla met with Ayer Town Administrator.

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In addition, SHC provided notice to the Hospital's Patient and Family Council, each staff member of the Hospital, and every labor organization that represents the Hospital's workforce during the period of the essential services closure process. Notice was also provided to the members of the General Court, as well as local elected officials. The Hospital continues to engage with patients, staff, and community members to maintain open and ongoing communication regarding the closure process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Octavio (Tavi) Diaz MD, MPH
President, North Region &
System Chief Medical Officer
Steward Health Care System

cc: Walter Mackie, DPH
B. McLaughlin, DPH
Antonio Sousa, DPH
Judy Bernice, DPH
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Torey McNamara, DPH
Salvatore Perla, Steward
Center for Health Information and Analysis
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
Health Policy Commission
Office of the Attorney General