

Significant Amendment - Shields Imaging at Heywood Healthcare, LLC
Responses to DoN Questions #5

Please Respond by Monday October 6th, 2025. <mailto:DPH.DON@State.MA.US>

While you may submit each answer as available, please:

- List question number and question for each answer you provide;
- Submit responses as a separate word document, using the above application title and number as a running header and page numbers in the footer;
- When providing the answer to the final question, submit all questions and answers in one final document;
- Submit responses in WORD or EXCEL; include a table in data format (NOT pdf or picture) with the response.
- When providing a table of data, provide a narrative explaining the trends or significance of that information (such as what reason for the year-over-year changes are attributed to and how it relates to information already provided.)

1. Are there other entities that are not owned by Shields that are near Heywood and could provide these services? In other words did you only consider Shields JVs as alternatives or are these truly the only options of alternative sites for patients to receive their MRI?
 - Closest non-Shields option by distance was the former Steward Nashoba locations that has since closed down, further highlighting the need for patients in the region to have access to MRI imaging.

Location	Address	Town	Zip	Distance from Heywood
Steward Nashoba	200 Groton Rd.	Ayer	01432	28.3 miles
St. Vincent's Hospital	123 Summer St.	Worcester	01608	28.9 miles
Reliant Medical Group	5 Neponset St.	Worcester	01606	34.9 miles
Rayus Chelmsford	187 Billerica Rd.	Chelmsford	01824	40.2 miles
Cooley Dickinson Hospital	30 Locust St.	Northhampton	01060	47.8 miles
Lawrence General Hospital/MVHS	323 Lowell St.	Andover	01810	49.4 miles
Lawrence General Hospital	1 General St.	Lawrence	01841	53.4 miles
Holyoke Medical Center	575 Beech St.	Holyoke	01040	54.1 miles
Metrowest Medical Center	115 Lincoln St.	Framingham	01702	54.8 miles
Rayus Haverhill	1 Park Way	Haverhill	01830	59.9 miles

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2. With regard to the need for ED patients to have access, are you asserting that on Sunday there are patients in the ED who need an MRI but aren't getting one and therefore they are being admitted to the hospital for a one night stay to get the MRI on Monday? If so, provide data to support that assertion. Further, if you are not open full hours on Saturday and Sunday and can't do complex cases on Saturday and Sunday, how does this impact the management of ER patients on those days. Folks will still need to be admitted and wait until Monday for them to get the scan they need.
- a. No, patients are not admitted as inpatients to a hospital for an MRI only. Rather, the Applicant is seeking to provide its patient panel with access to MRI imaging 7 days per week at Heywood Hospital. As stated in the Application and subsequent responses to DPH questions, this fixed MRI unit currently operates 6 days per week at the Hospital. Should a patient present at the ED on a Sunday and require MRI imaging, as ordered by an ED physician, that patient must to wait for the imaging to occur on operational day or be forced to travel to another location.

As demonstrated through the Application and subsequent responses to DPH, the Applicant has exceeded the original volume projections for the service. This has created a demonstrated need for additional access to MRI imaging. Without greater access to services, patients are forced to wait for imaging services, travel a greater distances or forced to seek care at a Hospital Outpatient Department, where, according the Health Policy Commission's DataPoints Series: Issue 7: Variation in Imaging Spending "prices are typically twice as high".

Given the rural location of Heywood Hospital, it is not ideal to have patients travel greater distances or be forced to seek services at an HOPD location where prices can be twice high.

3. Since the aging population was the basis for the original DoN has there been a shift on these demographics that would necessitate the extra day. Has this rural area is seen a increase (since the DoN was approved) in the population. Please provide data to support this shift.
- a. According to census data, the number of 60-69 yr olds in Gardner is 25% higher than in Worcester County and Massachusetts as a whole. As this population continues to age, the imaging needs grow.

<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2525485-gardner-ma/>

It is estimated that by 2030, approximately 20% of all Americans, or about 70 million people, will be 65 years or older. This population currently uses about 30% of imaging resources each year and that usage is increasing, which is why it is important to provide adequate access.

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<https://www.rsna.org/news/2024/august/imaging-needs-older-patients#:~:text=By%202030%2C%20approximately%2020,and%20risks%20for%20geriatric%20patients>

4. There is a presumption the reason the hours are less on Saturday is because of staffing issues, will this also be true for Sunday too? How are you going to staff this machine for Sundays?
 - a.) The Applicant's experience is that staffing weekend evenings slots can be challenging. The Applicant is proposing to staff the machine on Sunday's for eight operational hours to avoid these same challenges.