

Everest Hospital, LLC
DON # 23101112-TO

APPLICANT QUESTIONS 6

Responses should be sent to DoN staff at DPH.DON@mass.gov

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
- We accept answers on a rolling basis however, when providing the answer to the final question, submit all questions and answers in order in one final document.
- Submit responses in WORD or EXCEL; only use PDF's if absolutely necessary. **Whenever possible, include a table in data format (NOT pdf or picture) with the response.**

In order for us to review this project in a timely manner, please provide the responses by **September 12, 2025**.

1. Please provide the following information regarding the consulting agreement:

- a. The cost per month/year
- b. The scope of the consulting agreement
- c. Would the Applicant have the resources needed if they need to increase the amount of consulting work?

Response: The Applicant has a three-year consulting agreement with Whittier Health Network. The consulting agreement is consistent with industry standards and identifies a broad array of consulting services. Whittier is available to provide, and the Applicant will obtain, Whittier's ongoing advice concerning the Hospital's operations and practices on a daily basis, as needed with no cap on hours, and with the added ability to obtain assistance on specific projects. Consulting services will cover a broad scope of areas including: admissions, marketing, provider contracting, medical coverage, case management, revenue cycle management, regulatory filings, budgeting, staffing and operational reviews. Like many such agreements, the consulting agreement is for a fixed percentage of revenue which does not fluctuate depending on the level of consulting needs required at any particular moment in time, thus it accounts for the changing needs of the Applicant. The expectation is that this consulting arrangement will involve a significant number of hours during the first year and then level set.

2. In Round 5 Question #3 responses, the Applicant states that they, "aim to expand and enhance the physician coverage and hope to attract additional physicians to work at the Hospital and expand the Hospital's relationships with other providers."

- a. Please provide details on how the Applicant will accomplish this.
- b. Why does the Applicant think they need more than what UMMHC is already providing?

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Response: As previously noted, the Hospital has a Medical Director and there is 24/7 physician coverage in accordance with LTCH requirements. The Medical Director will remain in place after the transfer of ownership and the Applicant does not anticipate any change to the existing physicians providing coverage, many of whom are associated with UMass Memorial Health Center affiliated practices. In addition, the Applicant aims to attract additional physicians to have consulting arrangements to round at the hospital to enhance back-up coverage and increase the number of physicians in the community that have familiarity with the Hospital and LTCH services. The Applicant has not defined a specific need or hiring goal and has no specific plans to attraction additional physicians other than for the usual methods of getting out into the community to publicize the availability of its facility. Providers also must regularly take steps to ensure that as physicians age out or otherwise decide to leave the practice of medicine or modify schedules that there is a continuous pipeline of physicians that are able to take their place. The Applicant is looking to build its brand and reputation in Central, Massachusetts so it can continue to be a resource for the health care community to ensure that Massachusetts residents are cared for in the most appropriate, cost effective setting for their health care needs.

3. In response to Round 5 Question #4, the Applicant did not address what had changed since Round 1 responses to make the Proposed Project necessary for the Hospital's continued operation. Please explain what has occurred to cause the reversal.

Response: The healthcare marketplace is dynamic and plans evolve as providers continually assess their alternatives based on a variety of factors including patient census. Accordingly, Vibra's response to the Applicant about the future of the Hospital in light of the Proposed Project has fluctuated during the DoN application process. Most recently, Vibra reconfirmed to the Applicant if the Proposed Project is not approved that it will close the SNF because operating nursing homes is not part of their business model. Vibra has also told the Applicant, noting the increasing census, that before embarking on a decision to close the Hospital that they would look to renegotiate the lease in order to keep the Hospital open. The Applicant is not in a position to give the Department assurance about Hospital's continued operations without the Proposed Project beyond what they have been told by Vibra. All the Applicant can do is commit to operating the Proposed Project which would keep both the Hospital and SNF in place. Having both Hospital and SNF level of care on the campus ensures that patients can timely and efficiently step down from the LTCH level of care to the SNF setting all in one place while achieving economies of scale to meet the Commonwealth's access and cost containment goals.