

Heywood Determination of Need (DoN) Questions:

Currently, MRI services are provided at Heywood Hospital and Athol Hospital. Through the Proposed Project, MRI services will only be offered at Heywood Hospital. How will eliminating MRI services at Athol Hospital impact access to MRI services for emergent/urgent patients who are cared for at Athol Hospital?

The current part-time MRI services offered at Athol primarily serve outpatients, with a very minimal number of non-urgent inpatients requiring MRI (typically 0-2 patients per month). Due to the consistently low number of inpatient MRIs, any inpatients requiring an MRI at Athol will be transported to Heywood. If an urgent MRI is requested by Athol Hospital, Heywood Hospital has the ability to accommodate the patient immediately. Heywood Hospital presently reserves daily three emergency slots per day for urgent MRI requests, which will continue and the availability of emergency slots will be increased to accommodate any increased demand from Athol.

How will removing MRI services at Athol Hospital impact access to these services for patients who lack transportation? Does the Applicant screen for and provide assistance with transportation needs?

Heywood Healthcare works individually with patients who identify transportation challenges. Historically, we have provided transportation vouchers, mostly funded through grants, when patient needs arise with respect to transportation. With this particular service line (MRI), we have not seen a significant need. As a community hospital, we work very hard to ensure that our patients receive timely care, and that transportation does not become a barrier. There is a bus (via Montachusett Regional Transit Authority) between Athol and Gardner that is available to patients for outpatient visits as well. The bus stops in front of both Athol Hospital and Heywood Hospital.