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July 28, 2011

Honorable William Wainwright, Chairman  
State Health Coordinating Council

Christopher Ullrich, MD, Committee Chairman  
Technology and Equipment Committee

Elizabeth Brown  
Chief, Planning Section  
Division of Health Service Regulation  
2714 Mail Service Center,  
Raleigh, NC 27699-2714

RE: Support for Petition from Iredell Memorial Hospital for Special Need for Shared  
Fixed Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory

Dear Chairmen Wainwright and Ullrich, and Ms. Brown,

Thank you for taking time to consider my comments on Iredell Memorial's proposed change to the *2012 State Medical Facilities Plan*. Iredell Memorial Hospital has developed an excellent set of services that reach the needs of most of the people who have heart disease in Iredell County and surrounding communities. Hospital leadership has worked with the physician community, and community service providers, gradually building components of the heart care program, assuring that staff and equipment capabilities were of the highest caliber with each service expansion.

Today, the hospital offers the best cardiac care in the county. Physicians and our patients are supported by a menu of services that include: a community health center offering primary care to people who cannot afford to pay, a wellness program that includes a Diabetes program that meets standards established by the American Diabetes Association, a Medicare Certified Cardiac Rehabilitation program and a full service cardiac catheterization program, offering both therapeutic and diagnostic procedures, monitored beds with specially trained nurses, and state of the art testing in our hospital laboratory.

Inside the hospital, nursing and technologist staff are exceptionally well trained. To assure maximum safety for our therapeutic catheterization patients, staff routinely participate in emergency procedure drills with the open heart surgery hospitals in Charlotte and Winston-Salem. The open heart staff at those hospitals are always on standby alert when Iredell Memorial conducts one of these procedures. Our local emergency transport staff is similarly integrated into the patient safety program.

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Medical Facilities  
PLANNING SECTION

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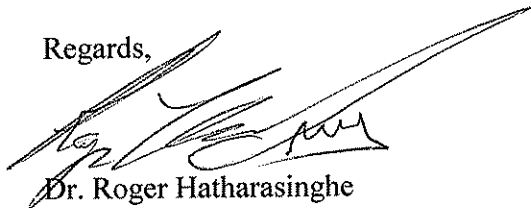
I particularly appreciate Iredell Memorial Hospital's willingness to put together a quality interventional cardiology program. I personally have had many patients' lives saved by this program.

We now have a problem. The equipment is about to exceed capacity. Extended hours do not work for our community, because so many of our patients travel rural roads. We have a solution – use the hospital's angiography/EP lab as a “shared fixed laboratory.” It will require no capital cost, it can use just about the same staff and support, and no patients will be displaced.

I understand that existing chronically underused laboratories at Davis and Lake Norman hospitals mean that the State Medical Facilities Plan may never show need for more cardiac catheterization laboratories in Iredell County. That makes recognition of this special need essential.

Please approve Iredell Memorial's request, as quickly as possible.

Regards,



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