

Good afternoon. My name is Lance Sisco and I am an orthopedic surgeon who has been practicing for 16 years. I have been on active staff at Randolph Hospital for the last 5 years. I am here today to speak on behalf of a petition that is being filed jointly between Randolph Hospital and 10 surgeons who practice in Randolph County. **This petition asks the State Health Coordinating Council (SHCC) to adjust the 2009 State Medical Facilities Plan to allow for a special needs adjustment for one Operating Room in Randolph County.**

Some of you will recall that we filed a similar petition one year ago and also submitted a letter during the March 2008 SHCC meeting asking that the need in Randolph County be reviewed. **The reason we keep coming back is that OR access is still a challenge in Randolph County, and this is not reflected by the current OR need methodology.** We will submit a written petition that will provide complete details including qualitative and quantitative support for our petition. Today, I want to spend a few minutes highlighting the reasons this is imperative for my patients and the citizens of Randolph County.

Access to surgical care for Randolph County citizens is our foremost concern. Additional OR capacity would greatly enhance our ability to recruit more orthopedic surgeons and other specialists to our community. Over the last 4 years, the hospital has been unsuccessful in recruiting an additional orthopedic surgeon. There are 4 orthopedic surgeons here, including myself. Two are in their 60's and very near retirement. My partner is 58, and wants to retire in 2 years. Soon, I may be the only orthopedic surgeon in Asheboro. This would very negatively impact patient access to orthopedic care because Emergency room orthopedic coverage would not be 24/7. We need at least 4 orthopedic surgeons here. We have interviewed several orthopedic surgeons over the last 4 years and all were very concerned over the lack of an Ambulatory Surgery Center and block time availability and this played a major role in their decision not to come here.

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In addition, I am concerned about **quality of care, patient comfort, and good outcomes**. Our current OR capacity is not always conducive to ideal patient care. Due to our current capacity constraints, we often have patients who have to be scheduled for procedures in the afternoon. This can be a particular strain when patients have to go without water and food nearly all day prior to the procedure. This can be especially challenging for pediatric patients and their families. There is emerging evidence that good outcomes are more difficult to achieve with afternoon surgery times. By moving some of the out-patient surgery to an ASC, this would decompress the O.R. schedule at the hospital. The result of this would be increased room availability for emergency cases and less delayed cases.

As I have referenced earlier, we need to develop an **ambulatory surgery alternative**. Randolph Hospital is currently the sole provider of surgical services in Randolph County. The entire current Operating room inventory of 5 rooms (excluding one c-section room) is on the hospital campus. Ninety percent of the surgery I do is out-patient. Because all of our operating rooms are located at the main hospital, hospital inpatients must take priority over outpatients, which sometimes result in cancellations or postponements of several hours for outpatients. An additional O.R. in Randolph County would allow this to happen, as a joint-venture between the physicians and the hospital.

An ASC delivers care much more efficiently, and this reduces costs. Health Insurance companies know this and steer their patients to ASC's in their preferred provider network. This is an inconvenience to the patients in Randolph County. This out-migration of out-patient surgery patients greatly reduces our volume of surgery. This is one reason our current O.R. volumes are artificially low.

The aforementioned reasons combined with the statistical data we will provide in our petition, all lead us to request that the State Health Coordinating Council allocate one operating room in Randolph County in the 2009 SMFP. This will allow the hospital and its surgeons to work together to address these issues of capacity and allow the citizens of Randolph County improved access, continued quality, and cost-effective health care.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.