

Petition to State Health Coordinating Council

Adjustment to the Inpatient Hospice Bed Need Included in the Proposed 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan

July 30, 2010 (Wilmington, NC Public Hearing)

Petitioner: Lower Cape Fear Hospice, Incorporated
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DFS HEALTH PLANNING
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Medical Facilities
PLANNING SECTION

Statement of Requested Change

Background

Since its inception in 1980, Lower Cape Fear Hospice has provided care to more than 30,000 patients and their families throughout southeastern North Carolina. Lower Cape Fear Hospice serves more than 3,900 patients each year in its hospice and palliative care programs with services available in New Hanover, Pender, Brunswick, Bladen, and Columbus counties.

Originally for patients with a cancer diagnosis, hospice care helps people with a variety of non-cancer end-stage diseases, including but not limited to ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), dementias including Alzheimer's disease, heart disease including congestive heart failure, kidney, liver, and lung disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and stroke.

Most hospice patients are served wherever they live – their home, hospitals, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes. For individuals whose needs cannot be met at home, Lower Cape Fear Hospice offers two inpatient hospice facilities where patients receive round-the-clock, short-term medical and respite care. The Dr. Robert Martin Fales Pavilion at the Hospice Care Center is in Wilmington (New Hanover County) and the Angel House Columbus County Hospice Care Center is in Whiteville (Columbus County).

Petition

Lower Cape Fear Hospice is submitting this petition to the State Health Coordinating Council requesting an adjustment to the need determination for inpatient hospice beds. Chapter 13 of the Proposed 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan identifies a deficit of three (3) inpatient hospice beds for New Hanover County. However, this deficit is based on the need methodology included in Chapter 13, which fails to address actual utilization of inpatient hospice services in New Hanover County. Lower Cape Fear Hospice is specifically requesting that the need for inpatient hospice beds in New Hanover County be adjusted for one year based on the following data and result in a need determination in the 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan for six (6) additional inpatient hospice beds.

Proposed 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan Inpatient Hospice Bed Need Methodology

The Proposed 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan identifies a deficit of three (3) inpatient hospice beds in New Hanover County, which results in no need determination of additional inpatient hospice beds. The following excerpt of the need methodology shows the calculation of the inpatient hospice bed deficit for 2014:

- In Step 6c of the need methodology the 2014 days of care for estimating inpatient care was projected to be 77,095 days of care.
- Step 7 multiplies the 2014 days of care for estimating inpatient care by 6 percent, which results in 4,626 projected inpatient days [77,095 days of care x 6% = 4,626].
- Step 8 divides the projected inpatient days of care by 365 days and then divides that quotient by 85%; this results in a projected 2014 total inpatient bed need of 15 beds [(4,626 projected inpatient days / 365 days) / .85 = 15].
- As a result of this calculation, New Hanover County is identified as having a deficit of three (3) inpatient hospice beds [15 beds – 12 beds = 3 bed deficit], but no need determination for any additional inpatient hospice beds in New Hanover County.

Proposed Inpatient Hospice Bed Adjustment to Need Determination Data and Information

• **Data and Information from All Patients and from All Counties**

Currently, Lower Cape Fear Hospice is licensed to operate a 12-bed inpatient hospice facility referred to as the Wilmington Hospice Care Center (Wilmington HCC) in Wilmington, New Hanover County and a 7-bed inpatient hospice facility in Whiteville, Columbus County.

Over the past three years, the Wilmington HCC has operated at an occupancy rate of near 100%. The following table highlights the inpatient hospice days of care provided at the Wilmington HCC from 2008 through annualized 2010 and the Wilmington HCC's projected 2011 inpatient days of care:

**Wilmington HCC
IP Hospice Days of Care**

	2008	2009	Annualized 2010	Projected 2011
IP Hospice Days of Care	4,336	4,210	4,401	4,461
Average Daily Census	11.88	11.53	12.06	12.22
Occupancy Rate	99.0%	96.1%	100.5%	101.9%

Source: LCFH&LCC; Data includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender Counties.

It should be noted that it is possible to have an occupancy rate of over 100%. The need at the Wilmington HCC is so great that when a patient dies in the morning or afternoon, another patient is admitted that afternoon or evening.

The previous table highlighted only the inpatient hospice days of care provided at the Wilmington HCC; however, Lower Cape Fear Hospice also contracts the use of acute care beds at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, Cape Fear Hospital, and Pender Memorial Hospital, as well as skilled nursing beds at Davis Health Care Center to provide additional inpatient hospice care in the service area. The following table highlights the inpatient days of care provided at both the Wilmington HCC and at the contracted IP care sites from 2008 through annualized 2010 and the inpatient hospice days of care projected to be provided at these facilities in 2011:

**Wilmington HCC and Contracted IP Care Sites
IP Hospice Days of Care**

	2008	2009	Annualized 2010	Projected 2011
Wilmington HCC Days of Care	4,336	4,210	4,401	4,461
Contracted IP Days of Care	952	1,055	1,451	1,921
Total Days of Care	5,288	5,265	5,852	6,382
Average Daily Census	14.49	14.42	16.03	17.48
85% IP Bed Need	17.1	17.0	18.9	20.6

Source: LCFH&LCC; Wilmington HCC data includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender Counties.
Contracted IP data only includes New Hanover and Pender Counties.

Lower Cape Fear Hospice has experienced a plateau in the number of inpatient hospice days of care it can provide at the Wilmington HCC, but has seen the number of contracted inpatient hospice days of care at its contracted inpatient care sites continue to increase.

Finally, the previously identified days of care only took into consideration inpatient hospice days of care, but Lower Cape Fear Hospice must also provide access to both residential and respite hospice care. The following table highlights the actual average daily census (ADC) at the Wilmington HCC over the past year by month:

	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10
Inpatient ADC	10.81	11.90	11.53	10.74	11.37	11.84	12.00	12.36	11.35	11.80	11.90	12.20
Residential ADC	0.10	0.03	0.03	0.16	0.00	0.13	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.07	0.13	0.10
Respite ADC	0.61	0.16	0.43	0.58	0.33	0.32	0.26	0.00	0.35	0.43	0.39	0.40
Total ADC	11.52	12.10	12.00	11.48	11.70	12.29	12.29	12.36	11.74	12.30	12.42	12.70
Occupancy Rate	96.0%	100.8%	100.0%	95.7%	97.5%	102.4%	102.4%	103.0%	97.8%	102.5%	103.5%	105.8%

Source: LCFH&LCC; Data includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender Counties.

Again, the previous table illustrates the fact that the Wilmington HCC is routinely operating at over 100% occupancy and Lower Cape Fear Hospice does not expect a decrease in the utilization of hospice care services any time in the future. This high utilization further complicates a patient's ability to be admitted at the Wilmington HCC for residential and respite care and is a barrier to access for hospice patients who are receiving hospice care at home and then require more intensive palliative care in an inpatient facility.

Lower Cape Fear Hospice requests that the State Health Coordinating Council adjust the inpatient hospice bed need determination for New Hanover County to reflect actual inpatient hospice bed utilization in both the Wilmington HCC and its contracted inpatient care sites, which would result in an a conclusion different from that identified in the Proposed 2011 SMFP.

- **Data and Information on Patients and Counties, Excluding Brunswick County**

Lower Cape Fear Hospice has a CON to develop an inpatient hospice facility in Brunswick County, plans call for this facility to be completed by April 2012. The following table highlights the inpatient hospice days of care projected to be provided at the Wilmington HCC in 2011, excluding Brunswick County patient days of care:

**Wilmington HCC
Projected IP Hospice Days of Care
Excluding Brunswick County**

	Projected 2011
IP Hospice Days of Care	3,673
Average Daily Census	10.06
Occupancy Rate	83.9%

Source: LCFH&LCC; Data includes Bladen, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender Counties.

The previous table highlighted only the inpatient hospice days of care projected to be provided at the Wilmington HCC; however, Lower Cape Fear Hospice also contracts the use of acute care beds at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, Cape Fear Hospital, and Pender Memorial Hospital, as well as skilled nursing beds at Davis Health Care Center to provide additional inpatient hospice care in the service area. The following table highlights the inpatient days of care projected to be provided at both the Wilmington HCC and the contracted IP care sites in 2011, excluding patient data from Brunswick County:

**Wilmington HCC and Contracted IP Care Sites
Projected IP Hospice Days of Care
Excluding Brunswick County**

	Projected 2011
Wilmington HCC Days of Care	3,673
Contracted IP Days of Care	1,921
Total Days of Care	5,594
Average Daily Census	15.33
85% IP Bed Need	18.0

Source: LCFH&LCC; Wilmington HCC data includes Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender Counties. Contracted IP data only includes New Hanover and Pender Counties.

Even after excluding the projected patients days of care that would relocate to the local inpatient hospice facility in Brunswick County, if it was available in 2011, Lower Cape Fear Hospice projects a need of 18.0 inpatient hospice beds in New Hanover County in 2011. This projection, just one year out, also supports the adjustment to the need determination for six (6) inpatient hospice beds.

Support

Lower Cape Fear Hospice has ongoing referral relationships with most hospitals, skilled nursing care facilities, home health agencies, as well as, other hospice care providers within the 5-county service area. Lower Cape Fear Hospice has met with representatives from several of the agencies that provide hospice care in these counties and has included letters of support for the adjustment to the need determination. The following health care providers and local agencies have provided a letter of support to Lower Cape Fear Hospice:

- New Hanover Regional Medical Center
- Davis Health Care Centers
- Hanover Medical Specialists
- WellCare
- Wilmington Health & Rehabilitation Center
- Health Partners
- New Hanover County Veterans Council
- Cape Fear Volunteer Center
- Area Agency On Aging – Cape Fear Council of Governments
- Carolina East
- AssistedCare Management Group

Summary

Lower Cape Fear Hospice is requesting that the three (3) inpatient hospice bed deficit in New Hanover County, as identified in the Proposed 2011 State Medical Facilities Plan, be adjusted to show a need determination of six (6) inpatient hospice beds for New Hanover County for the purpose of this planning year only.