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Medical Facilities
PLANNING SECTION

August 2, 2010

Our Region's CHOICE
for TECHNOLOGY & CARE

North Carolina Division of Health Service Regulation
 Medical Facilities Planning Section
 Attn: Elizabeth K. Brown, Section Chief
 2714 Mail Service Center
 Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2714

Re: Petition for Adjustment to Need Determinations for Mobile PET/CT Scanner

Dear Ms. Brown:

On behalf of Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital, I am writing to express support for neo-pet, llc's petition for an adjustment to the need determinations for an additional mobile PET scanner to serve the west planning region of North Carolina. PET/CT is a valuable diagnostic tool that helps in the early detection of cancer and other diseases and in turn leads to better prognosis for patients and less cost burden on the health care system. In addition, PET/CT, when used appropriately, has been proven to dramatically improve the accuracy of cancer staging and management of patients. Appropriate usage of the modality during the planning process can include more accurate radiation treatments to better target tumors and decrease radiation damage to surrounding tissue and organs. Significantly improved patient management leads to more efficient use of the health care system's assets and cost savings as well as improved or better defined outcomes for patients at an earlier point in time.

Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital previously offered PET/CT services to its patients on a very limited schedule of twice a month, half day service through a contract with the sole mobile PET/CT scanner for western North Carolina. Unfortunately, the limited schedule resulted in low utilization because physicians and patients were unable to wait 2 weeks for a PET/CT scan on the mobile scanner for purposes of diagnosing or beginning/monitoring a treatment plan. Thus, our PET/CT services were suspended last fall and since then we have been unable to offer PET/CT services to our patients. The limited schedule of the PET/CT services hampered our physicians' effective use of the equipment to manage patients locally to the degree available elsewhere in the state and resulted in patient inconvenience due to the distance of 50 miles that they must travel for PET/CT services, often several times during treatment. We are currently referring approximately 5 patients a week to receive PET/CT services elsewhere.

Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital supports neo-pet, llc's petition for an adjustment to the need determination to allow for an additional mobile PET/CT scanner for the west planning region so that we can provide access to our patients to PET/CT services due to the availability of a mobile PET/CT scanner at our hospital.

Sincerely,



David Loving, CEO

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