



**DUKE UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SYSTEM**

March 15, 2022

Re: Amended Letter of Support from March 2, 2022

North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council  
809 Ruggles Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council:

I am writing to support the petition submitted by Long Term Care Management Services, LLC d/b/a Liberty Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services (“Liberty”) to allow for the development or expansion of a kidney disease treatment center at a skilled nursing facility. If such a program is considered, it will be important to first engage the North Carolina nephrologists currently providing community dialysis care in the development of best practices for care delivery and implementation of a program embedded within a skilled nursing facility.

I am the Assistant Vice President for Care Coordination with Duke University Health System. Duke University Health System includes three hospitals, over 200 clinics, a number of clinical affiliate hospitals and a network of community hospitals that are part of Duke Lifepoint.

Oftentimes, the Duke University Health System Hospitals struggle to find placement at outpatient centers for medically complex residents needing dialysis. Many skilled nursing communities cannot accept these higher acuity residents due to the travel demands and cost associated, and the outpatient centers are unable to support patient comorbidities. Therefore, patients have prolonged inpatient stays and upon discharge, these residents are often readmitted to the hospital.

Having the availability to discharge patients with dialysis needs to a nursing home and have one facility address both skilled and dialysis care would be a clinical innovation and enhance patient experience. Same location care would allow for better collaboration of care, fewer hospital readmissions, and stronger relationships between nursing home operators and Duke Health.

I strongly encourage you to approve the development of a one location care delivery model for both skilled nursing facility and dialysis care in North Carolina as this is currently an unmet need.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely, 

Katie Flanagan, MSW, LCSW, ACM-SW  
Assistant Vice President Care Coordination  
Duke University Health System