

**Presentation of Special Needs Petition for
Two Specialty Vascular Access Operating Rooms in HSA VI,
Proposed 2024 State Medical Facilities Plan
Raleigh, July 25, 2023**

Presented by: Dr. Nakshatra Saxena

Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Nakshatra Saxena and I am a nephrologist with Boice Willis Clinic in Rocky Mount, NC and HSA VI. I am here today to speak in support of Carolina Vascular Care's special need petition for two additional operating rooms dedicated to vascular access procedures in HSA VI for the 2024 Plan.

As you all might already know, patients with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) need to receive lifesaving dialysis treatments three times a week via vascular access. These vascular accesses are known to develop dysfunction over time and frequently require maintenance procedures to keep them functional. If not treated in time, they can lead to missing dialysis which can be life threatening. In HSA VI these outpatient procedures are not available in any ASC or hospital outpatient department (HOPD) and are only performed at three office-based centers, who unfortunately have been struggling to stay open due to extensive Medicare reimbursement cuts over the last 6 years. Despite these significant and ongoing cuts, these centers have been taking care of our patient's vascular access needs but may not be able to do so any longer. If they close down, our dialysis patients would have no choice but to either get admitted to a hospital and get a dialysis catheter or travel long distances to Raleigh. Based on Medicare's reimbursement rules, these centers can only survive if they convert to an Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) which has more favorable payments.

While the grant of a singular operating room dedicated to vascular access procedures in HSA VI in the 2023 plan was greatly appreciated, it is not enough to serve HSA VI's population. Along with comprising 28 percent of North Carolina's land mass, HSA VI is home to approximately 20

percent of the state's dialysis patients. For such a large portion of North Carolina's residents who rely on these specialized procedures, there is an additional need for two specialty ORs dedicated to vascular access care in HSA VI. I request that these should be implemented into the 2024 Plan so that dialysis patients can continue to get timely and affordable care in a local ASC setting.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any further questions.