



Virginia MIRC <vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

[REDACTED]

Mon, Oct 14, 2013 at 11:43 PM

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

First Name - Greg

Last Name - Neal

Organization Name - Wellmont Health System

Comment -



MIRC Wellmont Neal.pdf

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October 13, 2013

Dear Chairman Hanger and Members of the Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission:

As Interim President of Bristol Regional Medical Center (a member hospital of Wellmont Health System in SWVA), I would strongly urge the Commission to implement thoughtful and meaningful reforms to the Medicaid system, while also enabling the expansion of Medicaid. I have worked in the healthcare industry for over 20 years, and these times are certainly unprecedented in terms of the financial pressures on hospitals for providing high quality of care under the financial constraints we are facing.

When the American Hospital Association agreed to certain cuts for our hospitals during negotiations for the Affordable Care Act, those were made with the understanding/expectation that states would be expanding their Medicaid guidelines, which would in turn offset a portion of those agreed upon cuts. I dare say that no one ever expected that the Supreme Court would rule that this was "optional" for states. With that Supreme Court ruling, hospitals lost a major offset that was predicated on that agreement. As a result, hospitals have been forced to assess the services they are able to continue to provide and some hospitals are and will be closing their doors completely, mostly those in the most rural communities of Virginia.

I would also add that currently, non-profit hospitals such as ours are already taking care of the patients who would qualify for the coverage under expansion (and will continue to do so as long as we are able to remain financially viable), but we are caring for these patients mostly uncompensated.

Thank you for your dedication to the patients of our great Commonwealth, and please consider the expansion of Medicaid under the guidelines of Medicaid reform.

Greg Neal
Interim President, Bristol Regional Medical Center
Wellmont Health System