

Attachment D

North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council
May 28, 2008

Petition from Granville-Vance District Home Health Agency

Agency Report on the Petition
Petition

AGENCY Report:

Proposed 2009 Plan

Notes related to **Home Health Petition** from Granville-Vance District Home Health Agency

Request

Granville-Vance District Home Health Agency submitted a Petition requesting:

“ . . . a policy amendment to allow home health agencies that operate within a multi-area District Health Department to have the option of having their office located in the county which best serves both them and their clients. . . . I strongly recommend that you amend the present policy to allow District Health Department home health agencies to be considered located in each county served regardless of physical location.”

Background Information

The 2008 State Medical Facilities Plan has one policy, Policy HH-3, regarding Medicare-Certified Home Health Agencies. The Policy is located on page 26 of the Plan. The Policy describes circumstances that will result in a need determination being made for a Medicare-Certified Home Health Agency in a county. Based on the Policy, there will be a need determination in the Proposed 2009 Plan for Granville County. This need determination is based on the fact that Granville County does not currently have a Medicare-Certified home health agency office physically located within the county's borders and the population is more than 20,000 people. The population of Granville County is projected to exceed 56,000 people by 2010 which is the plan year for the Proposed 2009 Plan.

Policy HH-3 was first introduced in the 2005 State Medical Facilities Plan. Prior to 2005, the Plan contained two policies regarding need determinations for new home health agencies in counties that did not or would not have a home health agency office located in the county due to closure of the only agency in the county. Under the prior policies, need determinations would be made regardless the size of the county's population or distance from an agency in another county. If these policies had remained in effect, need determinations would be identified in three counties that do not currently have an agency or office located in the county. The counties are Graham, Granville and Pamlico.

ANALYSIS OF PETITION

There are six district health departments in the State covering 21 counties. They are: Albemarle (Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Gates, Pasquotank, Perquimans); Appalachian (Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga); Granville-Vance; Martin-Tyrrell-Washington; Rutherford-Polk-McDowell; and, Toe River (Avery-Mitchell-Yancey). The role of the district health departments in the provision of home health services is substantial. In as many as 14 of these 21 counties the district health department affiliated home health agency is the only agency physically located in the county.

In order for there to not be a need determination in the Proposed 2009 Plan for a new Medicare-Certified Home Health Agency office in Granville County, the 2008 Plan would need to be amended. Chapter 2 of the 2008 Plan indicates that after the Plan has been signed by the Governor, it will be amended only as necessary to correct errors, to respond to statutory changes, amounts of legislative appropriations or judicial decisions. The petition does not appear to address these circumstances. Further, the process for amendment calls for a public hearing to be held and the Council to recommend changes it deems appropriate for the Governor's approval.

Agency Recommendation

The Agency supports the current Policy. The Agency recommends that the petition be denied. It is noted that the Petitioner can submit a petition following publication of the Proposed 2009 Plan requesting that the need determination for a new home health agency office in Granville County be removed from the 2009 Plan.

Granville-Vance District Home Health Agency

W. RODWELL DRAKE, JR., M.D., DIRECTOR
125 CHARLES ROLLINS ROAD

Henderson, North Carolina 27536

(252) 492-5831
FAX (252) 492-3613

1-800-682-3887

February 25, 2008

Petition for Amendment and Revision to the State Medical Facilities Plan

W. Rodwell Drake, Jr., MD
Granville-Vance District Health Director
rdrake@gvdhd.org
252-492-7915 or 919-693-2144

North Carolina Division of Health Service Regulations
Medical Facilities Planning Section
2714 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2714

Granville-Vance Home Health Agency, a division of the Granville-Vance District Health Department, is requesting a policy amendment to allow home health agencies that operate within a multi-area District Health Department to have the option of having their office located in the county which best serves both them and their clients. The present policy does not properly address home health agencies operating in Health Districts.

Our Agency changed its physical location in January 2007 from Granville County to Vance County because of need for space, both in home health and in the health department. This has proven to be a cost-effective, efficient move for both and has not affected access to client care. Since care is provided in the home, it is not necessarily dependent upon office location and in fact, in our case we can just as easily provide services from our current location as well as actually increase services in Granville and Vance Counties because of more appropriate office space and increased efficiency. Our location is in the former Vance County Mental Health facility and was offered to us rent free. We are located 3.5 miles from the Granville County line and only 10 minutes from our former office.

We continue to maintain the same services in Granville County as we have for the last 34 years. The number of patients served in Granville County is twice the number served in Vance County and over the thirteen months since our location change the ratio has remained the same. I strongly recommend that you amend the present policy to allow District Health Department home health agencies to be considered located in each county served regardless of physical location.

We notified DFS of our plans and address change prior to our move which, of course, was no problem because we are licensed to provide services in both counties. Not until thirteen months later were we informed of the possibility that our move might precipitate a "determination of need" which could allow another home health agency to locate in Granville County. Since no change in "need" was created by our move it would seem appropriate to amend the policy, which in this case does not seem to be very sensible. I appreciate your consideration of this petition.



W. Rodwell Drake, Jr., MD
Granville-Vance District Health Director