

**Long-Term & Behavioral Health Committee
Agency Report
Adjusted Need Petition to
Create 40 Skilled Nursing Facility Beds in Guilford County
Proposed 2013 State Medical Facilities Plan**

Petitioner:

Bell House
2400 Summit Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27405

Contact:

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Request:

The petitioner requests an adjusted need determination for 40 Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) beds in Guilford County earmarked for serving adults with physical disabilities caused by musculoskeletal conditions resulting from neurological disorders, such as cerebral palsy and spina bifida, in the 2013 State Medical Facilities Plan.

Background Information:

Chapter Two of the State Medical Facilities Plan (SMFP) describes the purpose and process for submitting petitions to amend the SMFP during its development. Petitions can be sent to the Medical Facilities Planning Branch twice during the course of plan development. Early in the planning year petitions that are related to basic plan policies and methodologies that have a statewide effect can be submitted. "Changes with the potential for a statewide effect are the addition, deletion, and revision of policies and revision of the projection methodologies." The change requested by these petitioners affects the need methodology and should be considered before publication of the Proposed 2013 SMFP.

Later in the planning cycle when need projections are complete, petitions can be submitted seeking adjustments to the projected need determination in any service area based on extenuating circumstances if the area believes its needs are not fully addressed by the standard methodology. These petitions are considered before publication of the 2013 SMFP.

Need is determined by calculating the statewide five-year average use rate per 1,000 population for each of four age groups based on data from annual license renewal applications. The utilization per county is then calculated into a five-year average annual rate of change statewide utilization rate, establishing a trend line per Age Group, projected forward for 30 months, which is then applied to the projected population going forward three years, for each county. The amount of need per county is then established based on the size of the county's projected surplus

or deficit when the projected utilization is compared to the inventory of existing and approved beds.

Analysis/Implications:

The 2013 Proposed SMFP shows a surplus of 834 SNF beds for Guilford County. None of these beds are located in facilities that specialize in the care of the population addressed in this petition and there are no existing skilled nursing facilities in the state that specializes in serving this population. Bell House, currently licensed as a 22 bed Adult Care Home, is the sole provider of long-term care for this population exclusively in North Carolina.

Individuals who are diagnosed with ortho-neurological disabilities, such as cerebral palsy or spina bifida are not routinely served by traditional SNFs. Typical skilled nursing facilities primarily serve an elder population of individuals who are nearing the end of their lives and need limited, partial, extensive or total assistance with more than two activities of daily living. Data taken from North Carolina's 2012 Nursing Home Renewal License (LRA) applications show that fewer than 13% of residents (n= 4,961) in SNFs in 2011 were under the age of 65 out of a total of 38,771 SNF residents. In contrast, Bell House's 2012 Adult Care Home LRA shows that 95% (n=21) of its residents in 2011 were under the age of 65. Alternatively, mental health group homes in the community serve individuals with cognitive disabilities, mental illness or substance abuse issues. These populations have distinctly different needs than the one addressed in this petition. Neither option, SNFs or mental health group homes, takes into account the needs of adults who are not cognitively impaired or mentally ill and who are seeking to engage as an active part of the community while requiring the assistance with their physical disabilities that a skilled nursing facility provides. While these facilities may have the necessary equipment to provide care for an individual within this population, the emotional and social needs of a younger person who is not cognitively disabled would be challenging to address in such a setting given that the person would likely be isolated from his or her own peer group. In addition, the social support garnered by being in frequent contact with individuals who have similar goals and challenges would be difficult to achieve.

While there are no existing data on the number of adults with these conditions in North Carolina, an estimate can be formed based on the current number of residents in Bell House (n= 22) and the number of potential residents on its waiting list (n=13). In addition, recent changes in Medicaid policy in North Carolina may make it necessary for adults meeting this description who are currently receiving care in other settings, like adult care homes, to seek the services of a specialized provider for skilled nursing care, adding to the number of beds such a facility would require. In such cases, an environment that attends to continuity of care for these residents as they transition from adult care homes to an SNF should be considered.

A skilled nursing facility designed to provide for this population is the best option for providing appropriate care in a group setting because it is best equipped to address the unique quality of care and quality of life needs of this population.

Agency Recommendation:

The petitioner requests an adjusted need determination for 40 Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) beds in Guilford County earmarked for serving adults with physical disabilities resulting from ortho-neurological disorders, such as cerebral palsy and spina bifida, in the 2013 State Medical Facilities Plan. Given available information submitted by the August 17, 2012 deadline, and in consideration of factors discussed above, the agency agrees with the requested change based on the specialized needs of this population and absence of viable alternative for care in a group setting and recommends that an adjusted need determination for 40 SNF beds in Guilford County be added to the 2013 State Medical Facilities Plan. Furthermore, the agency recommends that the adjusted need determination include the following language:

- The beds shall serve adults with physical disabilities caused by musculoskeletal conditions resulting from neurological disorders, such as cerebral palsy and spina bifida.
- In choosing among competing applicants, priority shall be given to applicants who demonstrate that they currently serve adults with ortho-neurological disorders who require assistance with physical disabilities in a licensed long-term care facility.