



Hospice & Palliative
CARE CENTER

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DHS Health Planning
RECEIVED

Dr. Thomas J. Pulliam, Chair
Long Term and Behavioral Health Committee
State Health Coordinating Council
DHSR Medical Facilities Planning Section
2714 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2714

AUG 02 2010

Medical Facilities
PLANNING SECTION

Ref: Hospice of the Piedmont special need petition to add a need determination for 6 hospice inpatient beds in Guilford County

Dear Dr. Pulliam,

This letter is written in support of Hospice of the Piedmont's petition to add a special need determination for six hospice inpatient beds in Guilford County in the *2011 State Medical Facilities Plan*.

The needs of a hospice inpatient are most demanding and challenging. A dedicated hospice and palliative care team, involving doctors, nurses, chaplains, medical social workers, counselors and aides is the optimal support system for care of the patient and support of their families. This level of care is the "gold standard" of intensive end-of-life care when families and/or caregivers cannot meet their loved one's needs at home. No one should be denied or delayed in receiving this level of care because a bed is not available.

As you are aware, our Hospice and Palliative Care Center has long been a committed advocate for excellence in end-of-life care with ease of access for all patients and families that need hospice and palliative care. We have worked collaboratively with Hospice of the Piedmont (as well as all hospice agencies across the state) and are committed to supporting efforts of other hospice agencies that are operating at full capacity to expand access to services. Hospice of the Piedmont has demonstrated this commitment in opening Hospice Home in High Point and have successfully operated it for 4 years.

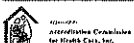
We understand from our own experience the difficulty and the challenge of operating a hospice inpatient facility at 100% occupancy and the sometimes difficult situations that result when some patients are delayed or even deferred to other agencies. We also recognize that while there may be a low occupancy at the other hospice in Guilford County, it is not reasonable for Hospice of the Piedmont to transfer patients outside their facility and network of referring physicians. In addition, the patients and families are entitled to receive hospice care from the provider where they have sought treatment.

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The standard methodology identifies a need for additional hospice inpatient beds in Guilford County. We believe that issuing a special need determination for these beds is appropriate, given the high occupancy of the Hospice of the Piedmont's beds and their demonstrated commitment to improving access to patients who need end-of-life services.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "JoAnn Davis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

JoAnn Davis
President and CEO
Hospice & Palliative CareCenter