

**Delaware Health Resources Board**  
**Bayhealth and Beebe Freestanding Emergency Department**  
**Review Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 28, 2019 1:00 PM**  
**Delaware Technical Community College (Deltech Terry Campus)**  
**Corporate Training Center Conference Rooms 400 A&B**  
**100 Campus Drive Dover, Delaware 19901**

**Review Committee Members Present:** Carolyn Morris, Leighann Hinkle and John Walsh

**Staff Present:** Latoya Wright and Joanna Suder

**Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting of the Review Committee for Bayhealth and Beebe Healthcare Freestanding Emergency Departments was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

**Review of Bayhealth and Beebe Healthcare Freestanding Emergency Department Applications**

It was stated that on December 28, 2018, Bayhealth submitted a Certificate of Public Review (CPR) application to construct a freestanding emergency department (FED) in the city of Milton along the Georgetown Highway Route one mile east of Harbeson. The estimated capital expenditure is \$16.5 million. Beebe also submitted a CPR application to construct a FED in the city of Georgetown DE. The estimated capital expenditure is for their proposal is \$20 million-\$23.7 million. Both applications were deemed complete on January 14, 2019. Both public notices were posted on January 16, 2019. The review period for both applications will be a 180-day review period.

Before the Review Committee began their review of both CPR applications, it was stated that staff requested that Dr. Allison Shevock (the Board's epidemiologist) conduct some research on FEDs and how other states evaluate these proposals. The Delaware Health Resources Management Plan (HRMP) does not have mathematical criteria for addressing the need for FEDs. Dr Shevock presented a PowerPoint presentation on FEDs with the following highlights:

- Recent rapid growth of FEDs
  - FEDs compete with urgent care centers, retail clinics and physician offices for low-acuity patients.
  - Patients who receive ED services generate two claims:
    - Physician claim for ED visits
    - Facility claim for ED visits
  - Urgent care facilities do not generate facility fees as do FEDs
  - Providers have financial incentive to treat patients in ED because Insurers' total ED payment (physician + facility fee) is higher than its total payment made to other settings for a comparable-acuity case
  - In 2018, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission recommended that Congress cut payments rates for FSEDs located within six miles of an on-campus hospital ED by 30%
- Experts' Recommendations:

- Policymakers are encouraged to review state-specific regulations and payment policies
- Encourage expansion of FEDs in ways that will improve access, reduce costs, and not duplicate services
- Additional research needed to study how expansion of FEDs impact local health care needs, access to care, healthcare costs, and health outcomes
- No organization tracks FEDs at the national-level
- Delaware: 2 FEDs
  1. Middletown Freestanding ED
    - 18-bed facility affiliated with Christiana Care Health System
  2. Smyrna Freestanding ED
    - 7-bed facility affiliated with Bayhealth
- Regulation of FEDs largely occurs at the state-level
- States differ dramatically on policies and requirements of FEDs
- As of 2015, fewer than half of all states required CON approval before FED development
- Difficult to identify specific criteria for which to evaluate FED applications because the field of FEDs has only proliferated in recent years; the lag in data means many questions are not yet able to be answered.
- Delaware's HRMP currently provides Statutory Criteria and Guiding Principles for the consideration of FED applications

***Project Summary and Background Information for Bayhealth and Beebe proposals***

**Bayhealth**

Bayhealth is seeking approval for the development of a freestanding emergency department (“FED”) to be located in Bayhealth’s forthcoming ambulatory care facility in Sussex County, Delaware (the “Route 9 FED” or the “Proposed Project”). The Proposed Project is a result of Bayhealth’s master facility and ambulatory care planning process, which focuses on assessing unmet needs of patients across central and southern Delaware. Through this process, Bayhealth has identified the opportunity, through the Proposed Project, to simultaneously reduce barriers to accessing emergency services and enhance the quality and timeliness of care for residents of eastern Sussex County. The Route 9 FED will be co-located with Bayhealth’s forthcoming ambulatory care facility (the “Ambulatory Care Facility”), which will be situated along the Lewes Georgetown Highway (Route 9), at the intersection of Hudson Road, approximately one mile east of Harbeson.

The emergency department and laboratory are expected to occupy 10,730 useable square feet (“USF”) and will accommodate eight treatment bays/exam rooms, 1 negative pressure exam room, and one medical resuscitation room. The imaging department is expected to occupy 5,460 USF and contains and x-ray, CT and ultrasound capabilities. The construction and equipment costs for the freestanding ED component of the project are projected to be approximately \$16.5 million. The estimated completion date is May 2021.

**Beebe**

Delaware residents in and around Georgetown have a greater unserved need for emergency medical services than in any part of Beebe Healthcare's Primary Service Area. Poverty and poor health are the most significant risk factors for emergency department utilization, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The high number of residents in and around Georgetown living at or below the poverty line make emergency care an importance service to add. Lower-cost alternatives for non-emergent care are available in Georgetown, including multiple primary care practices, two walk-in care centers, the Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic and La Red, a Federally Qualified Health Center; however, emergency care is not currently available in Georgetown despite the high need of this community.

Since no Emergency Medicine services are currently located in Georgetown, 100% of residents and visitors travel from 20 to 50 minutes to reach the nearest Emergency Department, varying depending on direction of travel, time of day, and season. Timely access to emergency care will be improved for all residents and visitors in the Georgetown area.

The proposed Georgetown Emergency Department will include 14,413 square feet of space for emergency medical triage, treatment, diagnostic imaging, and laboratory. (Attachment D.2 - Beebe Emergency Medicine Georgetown Floor Plan). The Emergency Department will include:

- 21 Emergency Exam/Treatment Rooms (i.e., exam, triage, holding, resuscitation, isolation)
- Diagnostic Imaging (Computed Tomography, X-ray, )Ultrasound
- Onsite laboratory
- Onsite Facilities/Materials Management including receiving facility

Total construction costs are estimated to be \$20 – \$23.7 million, including equipment and fixtures. Construction of the proposed freestanding Emergency Medicine Department will relieve some of the burden on the emergency department at the hospital in Lewes, eliminating the need to invest in capital expansion of that facility and improving patient throughput at both facilities.

### **Conformity of Project with Review Criteria**

Criterion I: The relationship of the proposal to the Health Resources Management Plan (HRMP). Bayhealth's stated their application is consistent with the HMRP emphasizing the following:

- Improving the accessibility of emergency medical care for patients across Southern Delaware, by delivering care closer to home;
- Improving the patient experience, outcomes, and quality, by reducing the burden that seeking emergency care places on patients and families;
- Decreasing the costs associated with travel away from home for emergency care; and
- Enhancing the satisfaction of health care providers in the local community.

The application also stated Bayhealth is an active participant in the Delaware Health Information Network (DHIN). The Route 9 FED will similarly share information through DHIN in an effort to coordinate care for patients across the system. Bayhealth provides medically necessary care to all patients regardless of ability to pay. In FY17 Bayhealth provided in excess of \$21 million in indigent care (bad debt and charity) representing approximately 4% of net patient service revenue.

Beebe's application stated their charitable mission is to encourage healthy living, prevent illness, and restore optimal health with the people residing, working, or visiting the communities they serve. This mission guides Beebe towards providing care for all in our community, regardless of their ability to pay, and their charity policy formalizes this practice. Beebe is a provider of care to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. The proposed Georgetown Emergency Medicine Department, as part of Beebe Healthcare, would operate under this same mission, Medicare and Medicaid participation, and Charity Care Policy.

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO) accredits the health system. Beebe Healthcare has been a continuous participant with and financial supporter of the Delaware Health Information Network since its inception, and we submit inpatient, emergency, and ambulatory records to the DHIN daily and access care information to support caregivers and care coordinators. Beebe Healthcare has a formal Charity Care Policy, most recently updated in 2010. It is hospital policy that no one will be denied medically necessary hospital services based upon the patient's ability to pay for those services.

Beebe developed a population health department which provides care coordination and follow up care for patients discharged from the hospital or the ED. This same level of service and coordination will be offered to patients of the proposed Georgetown Emergency Medicine department. The team includes registered nurses, social workers, and non-clinical coordinators.

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion I. The following questions were sent to Bayhealth and Beebe:

- If a patient is transported by ambulance, do they go to the nearest emergency department (ED) (whether freestanding or hospital), ED of their choice, or does it depend on the severity of their condition (i.e. high severity goes to hospital ED and less severity goes to freestanding ED which is closest)?
- Does Bayhealth have plans for a helicopter pad?
- Does Beebe have a current lease in place for the new ED and if so, does the cost of this lease affect the financials included in the application?

It was discussed that Bayhealth and Beebe's FEDs would be less than 10 miles apart from one another.

#### Criterion II: The need of the population for the proposed project

Bayhealth's application stated the proposed project defined by the need for improved access to emergency care in Sussex County, as well as improving the level of service. The Route 9 FED will enhance access to emergency care for the Service Area's more than 40,000 residents, residing west of Route 1. The Route 9 FED will enhance access to emergency care for the Service Area's more than 40,000 residents, residing west of Route 1. The Route 9 FED is located in the second-highest population growth area in the entire state of Delaware<sup>1</sup> since 2010. For residents over the age of 65, the Route 9 Service Area has seen the highest population growth of any area in the State. The Service Area is a target for continued growth. According to the Sussex County Planning and

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<sup>1</sup> Between 2010 and 2018. Data obtained from The Claritas Company, 2018.

Zoning Commission, as of December 2018, four new major residential housing developments were approved and will all be located less than four miles from the Route 9 FED. Bayhealth states, currently, access to the area's closest emergency department, located at Beebe Medical Center ("Beebe") in Lewes, can be extremely difficult, particularly for residents who reside west of Route 1. As the primary north-south corridor in Delaware, traffic on Route 1 is congested throughout the year but is particularly congested during the summer months.

The Route 9 FED would be the only emergency department along the Route 9 corridor and will significantly reduce the time that area residents and visitors have to travel to receive emergency care. The Route 9 FED will dramatically improve access to emergency care for residents located west of Route 1. A significant portion of the population in the proposed service area is over the age of 65. Senior citizens west of Route 1 are currently required to navigate ever increasing congestion on the road and take the added time associated with traffic to access emergency health care services. The Route 9 location will also assist Emergency Medical Services ("EMS") providers in the area. The time it takes for an ambulance to transport a patient to the hospital from an area west of Route 1 is time that an ambulance cannot respond to other calls. The Bayhealth FED on Route 9 provides a closer option for ambulances on diversion. Further, ambulances that pick-up residents on the west side of Route 1 can take the patient to the Route 9 FED initially to avoid both the Route 1 traffic and also avoid diversion upon arrival at the Beebe emergency department.

Beebe's application stated the population of Sussex County has grown significantly in the last 10 years and is expected to continue growing. This growth has put a burden on the current healthcare infrastructure, and planning for future demand is at the core of this proposed expansion. Capacity at Beebe's Lewes Emergency Department is 55,000 visits annually, and in the fiscal year that ended in June 2018, over 48,000 patient visits were supported. Average occupancy is running at 88% of capacity and expanding to serve the growing community is essential before overcrowding occurs. The Sussex County population has grown over the years. There are approximately 64,300 residents in the towns that make up the communities that are expected to be primarily served by a freestanding emergency department in Georgetown.

The growth in Sussex County over the past 20 years has not been matched with improvements in transportation infrastructure. According to Delaware Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic on Route 9 between Georgetown and Lewes ranges from 16,386 trips (at the junction of Route 5 in Harbeson) to 21,845 (at Westcoats Road in Lewes crossing Highway 1 into Lewes). Route 9 remains a two lane road over its entire length between Lewes and Georgetown, and though only 14.7 miles from the Circle in Georgetown to Beebe Healthcare in Lewes, can take over 32 minutes to travel without heavy traffic and up to 50 minutes during peak travel times. Roadways to the west to reach Nanticoke Health Services in Seaford are of similar size. Only the North-South route of Highway 113 is wider.

Beebe Healthcare has selected Georgetown as its location for a proposed emergency department because of the high need for emergency medicine among the Georgetown population. Emergency medicine is an important safety-net service, and the demographic characteristics of the resident population suggest a high risk for emergency medicine need.

Criterion III: The availability of less costly and/or more effective alternatives to the proposal, including alternatives involving the use of resources located outside the state of Delaware.

Bayhealth's application stated the Route 9 FED would create access to critically important emergency care in an area where such services are otherwise difficult to access. Residents of the Service Area primarily receive emergency medical care at Beebe Hospital in Lewes or at Bayhealth in Milford, which are located approximately 20-30 minutes away, based upon average drive time from communities within the Service Area. The Route 9 FED will offer emergency care that is of similar cost as other emergency departments, including Beebe, but that is more effective and efficient for patients.

For patients whose medical conditions require urgent, but not emergent, evaluation and treatment, primary care practices that offer walk-in appointments along with walk-in centers/medical aid units are appropriate services that offer extended and weekend hours. There are currently two such facilities located in Georgetown and one facility located in Lewes. Although urgent care centers offer convenience relative to a traditional physician office visit, the level of care provided is considerably lower than that available in an emergency department and is not an appropriate substitute for emergency care. While less costly, walk-in clinics typically do not offer significant diagnostic imaging capabilities, on-site lab processing are often staffed with advanced practice clinicians, such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants in lieu of physicians, few if any RNs and are not open 24 hours per day.

Beebe's application stated there are currently no Emergency Medicine services in Georgetown, Delaware. Presently, 100% of patients from these communities drive or are taken by ambulance from 20 to 50 minutes out of their community for diagnosis and treatment of emergency medical conditions. The highest visitation to an emergency room is typically afternoon to early evening, so planning for peak travel time is important to ensure timely access to care. The proposed Georgetown emergency department would be approximately the same distance to Beebe Healthcare, Nanticoke Memorial Health System, and Milford Memorial Hospital as the existing freestanding emergency department in Smyrna, which is 16.6 miles from Kent General Hospital in Dover. Primary Care services are available in Georgetown for non-emergent conditions, care coordination, and chronic disease management. Beebe Healthcare, Nanticoke, Bayhealth, Veterans Affairs Health Clinic, La Red (FQHC), and several independent physician practices provide primary care.

In addition to primary care, walk-in care offers low-cost care for non-emergent conditions. Beebe Healthcare now operates four (4) year-round urgent care Walk-In Centers, including one in Georgetown, Delaware, each staffed full time with physicians in addition to nurses. The growth of Walk-In Center visits has reduced the number of people with low-acuity conditions presenting at the hospital's emergency department in Lewes. Walk-In Care settings offer an improved patient experience for those who do not have emergency medical needs, with lower out-of-pocket costs, shorter total visit time, extended hours and convenient locations. Despite operating losses, Beebe plans to continue operating its year-round Walk-In Care Centers after a Georgetown Emergency Department is constructed and opened, ensuring that this lower-cost service is available. Despite the growth in the number of community members seeking Walk-In Care, Beebe has continued to experience growth in visits to its Lewes Emergency Department

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion III. The following questions were sent to Bayhealth and Beebe:

- Of the total visits to the ED, what percent is emergent and non-emergent? If possible, break out percentages by payer mix: Medicaid, Medicare, Commercial, etc. Non-emergent is defined as those conditions that can be treated at a PCP or urgent care center.
- Of the total visits to the ED that are emergent, what percentage of patients are admitted to the hospital?
- Why continue to operate Beebe walk in urgent care centers if operating at a loss? Is there a plan to close the Georgetown facility after FED is open?

Criterion IV: The relationship of the proposal to the existing health care delivery system.

Bayhealth's application stated the Route 9 FED will operate as a department of the Bayhealth system; as such, all policies and procedures will mirror those of Bayhealth's existing emergency departments. Onsite diagnostic imaging and clinical laboratory services will be available around-the-clock, and patients whose conditions require a higher level of care will be immediately transferred to one of the region's acute care facilities, including Bayhealth's Kent and Sussex campuses. Patients treated at the Route 9 FED will not only have access to the comprehensive emergency services offered on-site, but also to the broad spectrum of services available across Bayhealth's network of facilities and providers.

Bayhealth expects the Route 9 FED to enhance the ability of other providers in the region to deliver the most appropriate and timely care possible and does not foresee a material negative impact. As discussed throughout this application, the Service Area does not currently contain an emergency department. The emergency departments that will experience the most impact are the Bayhealth Sussex Campus and Beebe, which is frequently forced to divert patients due to high demand for emergency care. The Route 9 FED will primarily serve patients whose conditions require emergency treatment, but not necessarily inpatient hospitalization, resulting in increased ED capacity at Beebe and Bayhealth's hospitals to allow them to better serve more acutely ill patients. The Route 9 FED will benefit the residents by helping to improve service at all area emergency departments.

Beebe's application stated the FED in Georgetown, Delaware will be owned and operated by Beebe Healthcare and managed and staffed by the same team that currently serves patients and manages programs at the Emergency Medicine Department at the hospital campus in Lewes. The Georgetown Emergency Department will utilize the same policies and procedures that govern the care that is provided at the Lewes Emergency Department in Lewes. A few new policies are being developed to address communication and transfer of patients who require the services of an acute care hospital. The site of the proposed Emergency Medicine Department has multiple important contiguous medical services, making it a convenient destination for a variety of healthcare needs. There are two retail pharmacies within less than ½ mile, an important convenience for discharged patients who require prescription medication. For patients who need services not available at the proposed Emergency Department or at Beebe Healthcare's acute care hospital in Lewes, formal transfer agreements are in place with 52 organizations. These include all the tertiary hospitals in Delaware, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Jefferson University Hospital, Nemours A.I. DuPont Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and many others. Beebe Healthcare is part of the State of Delaware's Trauma System. Though no freestanding emergency department would be a trauma center, the same relationships, processes and policies will be in

place to support smooth and timely transfer of patients when needed. Beebe Healthcare has an active partnership with area Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) units. The Medical Director of Emergency Medicine at Beebe Healthcare is the Medical Director for the EMS for Sussex County. Beebe does not anticipate any negative impact on the employment or availability of services at other emergency medicine services in the region. The addition of an Emergency Medicine Department in Georgetown will provide a convenient, high quality choice for patients who are best served with immediate emergency treatment close to their homes.

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion IV. The following question was sent to Bayhealth and Beebe:

- Do you have plans to operate a 24-hour urgent care center?
- What is your capacity rate and your diversion rate at the Milford ED?
- Is Bayhealth a part of Delaware's trauma system?

Criterion V: The immediate and long-term viability of the proposal in terms of the applicant's access to financial, management and other necessary resources.

Bayhealth's application stated the Route 9 FED will emphasize a collaborative, team-based approach to care including board-certified emergency medicine physicians, advanced practice clinicians, registered nurses, and other trained personnel. As one of Delaware's largest employers, Bayhealth does not anticipate encountering any challenges in recruiting and retaining the necessary clinical, administrative, and management staff to operate the Route 9 FED. Bayhealth intends to finance the Proposed Project, with an estimated capital expenditure of \$16,500,000, through cash reserves.

Beebe's application stated in 2018, Beebe Healthcare retained the firm, Freeman White, to complete an evaluation of the need for emergency medicine in Sussex County. Their study included an evaluation of how best to meet the emergency medicine needs of the population in Beebe's Primary Service Area. It is expected the Georgetown Emergency Medicine Department can operate at a net surplus annually. Though the Georgetown emergency department is expected to earn more revenue than direct expenses, this surplus will not translate directly to increased operating margin for Beebe Healthcare due to a variety of capital investments the health system is making to improve access and service to its patients and changes to reimbursement. Beebe's long-range financial forecasts indicate that the health system's operating margins will remain stable between 2.9% and 3.6%. It is the positive operations, experienced management team, strong market performance in the Primary Service Area, and the projected growth of the population, that will support Beebe's strategy to issue a tax exempt bond in early 2019 to borrow the capital needed for this project.

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion V. The following question was sent to Bayhealth:

- What are Bayhealth's projected operating margins for the new ED for FY 2021, 2022 and 2023?

Criterion VI: The anticipated effect of the proposal on the costs of and charges for health care.

The Review Committee reviewed Schedule 4 Statement of Revenue and Expenses for Bayhealth and Beebe both applications.

Bayhealth's application stated the Proposed Project is not anticipated to materially impact existing individual costs or charges related to delivering emergency care. Emergency care can be costly not only to those individuals seeking such care, but also to the healthcare delivery system as a whole. In keeping with Bayhealth's mission of "strengthening the health of our community, one life at a time," the Proposed Project will be implemented with the objective of reducing the burden of emergency care on the community, as well as enhancing the local economy. By providing emergency care closer to home, the Route 9 FED will reduce the significant financial, logistical, and emotional burden that the lack of convenient access to an ED places on individuals from the region.

By improving the accessibility of emergency care for residents and visitors in the area, the Route 9 FED will also function to reduce the utilization of EMS in an area where such services are already operating at maximum capacity. Approximately 23 percent of responses by Sussex County EMS ("SCEMS") in 2017 were dispatched from Lewes and Georgetown locations<sup>2</sup>. According to SCEMS' 2017 report to the Delaware Emergency Medical Services Oversight Council (DEMSOC)<sup>3</sup>, the Milton community, which neighbors the Route 9 FED location, is a priority for increasing emergency services capacity. The Route 9 FED will reduce the time that local EMS providers invest in transporting patients to other emergency departments, thereby reducing the overall cost of care as well as the non-productive time required of the EMS provider.

Bayhealth's application also stated it is currently the only health system in Sussex County to employ its emergency physicians. As employees of Bayhealth, emergency physicians, including those to be hired for the Route 9 FED, are expected to abide by the system's values of compassion, accountability, respect, integrity, and teamwork. In order to align physicians with these values, each physician's salary is partly dependent upon their performance relative to established quality of care metrics. Bayhealth's commitment to enhancing the local economy is best evidenced by its efforts to improve the accessibility of high-quality healthcare services available to employers and residents of the region. As the only health system in Sussex County that employs board-certified occupational medicine physicians and operates community-based occupational health centers,

Bayhealth is prepared to serve the region's growing economy by providing dedicated services targeting a healthy workforce.

Beebe's application stated they do not anticipate any direct impact on individual charges related to delivering emergency treatment at the Georgetown Emergency Department. Over time, increased competition by healthcare providers of emergency services may reduce charge rates to insurers as new contracts are negotiated. It is possible that more residents in the Georgetown area will seek emergency care who would have previously not done so because care was not convenient, and this increased use of services would increase direct costs. However, these same individuals may be avoiding higher costs later by seeking care early and not allowing conditions to worsen or become more complicated.

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<sup>2</sup> 2017 Delaware Emergency Medical Services Oversight Council (DEMSOC) Annual Report.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

As the Robert Wood Johnson study states, those who frequently use emergency services are also frequent users of lower cost services like primary care, and represent a complex mix of people with high need. Beebe Healthcare's mission is to meet this need for healthcare services, as cost-effectively as possible, providing essential services to Delawareans in the Georgetown community. Beebe Healthcare would welcome a partnership with the state to promote primary care and walk-in utilization to Medicaid and state beneficiaries. Such efforts would continue the positive trends Beebe has demonstrated on its own to minimize unnecessary emergency care.

It was stated that the State of Delaware Employee Benefits Committee voted on plans to increase the ER copay effective July 1, 2019. It was also discussed that the cost of services for ER are more expensive than urgent care services.

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion VI. The following question was sent to Bayhealth and Beebe:

- It is the understanding that patients who receive ED services generate two claims: physician claim and facility claim. Please confirm if these (2) claims will be billed for the new ED. If so, is their consideration for a new payment model?
- The schedules submitted in the Beebe application are listed with the "specialty surgical hospital" heading. Please confirm that the schedules in the application pertain to the new emergency department in Georgetown. Also please provide a revised copy of the schedules with the emergency department heading.
- What is your average wait time at the Bayhealth Dover and Milford ED compared to the ED in Smyrna?
- Bayhealth discusses a DEMSOC report showing a need for a paramedic unit near Milton. How does your plan for an ED address this need?

Criterion VII: The anticipated effect of the proposal on the quality of health care.

Bayhealth's application stated the proposed FED will reduce the time and distance that patients travel in order to receive time-sensitive emergency medical care. The Route 9 FED will allow for earlier detection and treatment of potentially life-threatening emergent medical conditions. For patients whose conditions require a higher-level of care, the Route 9 FED will serve as an important point for stabilizing treatment prior to transfer to the appropriate healthcare facility. The Route 9 FED will also enhance the accessibility of critically-important behavioral health and substance abuse care in Sussex County, where deaths associated with opioid overdoses have increased significantly year-over-year. As part of Bayhealth's vision of "delivering the nation's best healthcare to their communities here at home," Bayhealth-employed physicians and independent community providers have joined forces to develop the Bayhealth Physician Alliance ("BPA") to encourage the sharing of information and best practices across the region. Recognizing the importance of caring for each patient's mind, body, and spirit, Bayhealth has incorporated the Planetree patient-focused model of care across its network of facilities and providers. Bayhealth is Delaware's first health system to earn the Bronze Merit designation from Planetree, an international non-profit organization that partners with health care providers across the continuum of care to personalize, humanize, and demystify the health care experience through a structured process that enables and inspires caregivers to transform the health care experience they provide.

Beebe's application stated the factor that most influences positive outcomes for patients experiencing medical emergencies is timely access to care. By building an Emergency Medicine Department in Georgetown, Beebe Healthcare will be shortening the time to care for residents and visitors in the Georgetown region. Timely access to care for patients experiencing medical emergencies saves lives and reduces the negative outcomes due to delayed access to care. Timely access to care is also a focus of Beebe's Emergency Medicine program once patients arrive in the department. How quickly patients are triaged and treated by a medical professional and how quickly they are discharged measure this. With the expansion of emergency services in South Coastal, and the proposed emergency department in Georgetown, Beebe expects throughput to improve at the Lewes ED as volume shifts to the other centers.

For those patients who experience a medical emergency who also have behavioral health needs, the Georgetown Emergency Medicine Department will offer tele-health psychiatric evaluations, just as it does in the Lewes Emergency Medicine Department. Tele-psychiatric evaluations offer a cost-effective manner for providing this specialty services, and ensures that patients with psychiatric needs are receiving appropriate treatment for behavioral health. The new emergency center will be built within immediate proximity to the Sun Behavioral Health psychiatric hospital enabling rapid transition to more acute behavioral health services for those who need them. The Georgetown Emergency Medicine Department will seek recognition by the state under the Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) program as a Delaware Pediatric Emergency Care Facilities—Level 3. Beebe's Lewes Emergency Medicine Department already has this recognition. In addition, the Georgetown Emergency Medicine Department will deploy the tele-health connection to A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children when consults are necessary with pediatric specialists. This system is already in place in the Lewes Emergency Department.

The Review Committee further evaluated information stated in both applications regarding criterion VII. The following question was sent to Bayhealth

- Does the Joint Commission on Accredited of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO) accredit Bayhealth?

### **Other Review Criteria**

Bayhealth and Beebe applications addressed how their FEDs will improve the delivery of service, enhance efficiency in meeting the health care needs of the population and employing energy conservation principles. Bayhealth and Beebe will construct their FEDs in accordance to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

It was stated the Review Committee might want to keep in mind that the Governor signed Executive Order 25, establishing health care spending and quality benchmarks. One of the goals of the Executive Order is set to reduce ED utilization rates.

### ***Next Steps***

Staff will send the follow up questions discussed in the meeting to both Bayhealth and Beebe. A public hearing and a second review committee meeting will be determined. The Review Committee and both applicants will be notified of those dates.

### ***Adjourn***

The meeting adjourned at 3:45pm

***Guests Attended***

John Van Gorp

Alice Rausch

Stacy Massaconi

Alex Sydnor

Marc

Megan Williams

Bayhealth

Bayhealth

Bayhealth

Beebe

Beebe

Delaware Healthcare Association