

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Office of Licensure and Certification
Staff Analysis

April 17, 2020

Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center, LLC (4/16/2020)

Norfolk, Virginia

Temporarily add 83 Beds at Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center

Hospital

Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center, LLC (DePaul Medical Center) is located in the city of Norfolk, Virginia, in Planning District (PD) 20, Health Planning Region (HPR) V.

Background

On March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency throughout Virginia in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Subsequent to this declared state of emergency, on March 20, 2020, Governor Northam signed Executive Order 52 (EO 52) providing that notwithstanding the provisions of Article 1.1 of Chapter 4 of Title 32.1 of the Code of Virginia the State Health Commissioner (Commissioner), at his discretion, may authorize any general hospital or nursing home to increase licensed bed capacity as determined necessary by the Commissioner to respond to increased demand for beds resulting from COVID-19. Such beds authorized by the Commissioner under EO 52 would, notwithstanding Virginia Code § 32.1-132, constitute licensed beds that do not require further approval or the issuance of a new license.

According to Virginia Department of Health licensure data, DePaul Medical Center has an inventory of 199 beds (**Table 1**). DePaul Medical Center is taking all reasonable efforts to reduce inpatient census to free beds to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, including complying with the March 25, 2020 Order of Public Health Emergency 2.

Request

DePaul Medical Center cites an emergent need to expand bed capacity due to the sudden and overwhelming increase in acute care cases resulting from COVID-19 infection. Specifically, DePaul Medical Center requests authorization to temporarily add 83 beds; 22 ICU beds and 61 medical/surgical beds. The requested beds will be located within the existing hospital's post anesthesia care unit (PACU), pre-op/post-up phase II area, endoscopy area, labor and delivery area, nursery area, midwifery area, and the wound care treatment and holding area. The resulting bed configuration at DePaul Medical Center is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: DePaul Medical Center’s Requested Temporary Bed Inventory

Bed Classification	Licensed Beds	Requested Additional Beds	Resulting Available Beds
Adult ICU	24	22	46
Med/Surg	133	61	194
Obstetric	23	0	23
Unknown	19	0	19
Total	199	83	282

Source: VHI (2018)

Considerations

In determining whether a need exists for the requested additional bed capacity, the State Health Commissioner established the following factors for consideration, when applicable.

1. Ongoing efforts to increase the availability of existing beds, such as suspension of elective procedures:

DePaul Medical Center has made assurances that, in an effort to free up existing capacity, and in compliance with the March 25, 2020 Order of Public Health Emergency 2, they have suspended all elective procedures that, if delayed, are not anticipated to cause harm to the patient.

2. The availability of professional and ancillary staff to provide care in the additional beds:

DePaul Medical Center has made assurances that it has the necessary professional staff to provide care in the additional beds. Staff temporarily displaced by the curtailing of non-essential and elective surgery will be used to staff the additional beds. In addition, DePaul Medical Center intends to cross-train and redeploy additional clinical staff from other elective and outpatient areas. Finally, DePaul Medical Center will work with members of the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, if ultimately necessary dependent on the response demanded by a potential surge COVID-19 positive patients.

3. The availability of medical supplies and personal protection equipment in the facility:

DePaul Medical Center has made assurances that it has sufficient access to available medical supplies and personal protection equipment (PPE) in the facility. As part of Bon Secours Mercy Health, DePaul Medical Center works with sister facilities in Hampton Roads, Richmond, and nationwide for access to necessary medical supplies and PPE. The Virginia Disaster Medical Advisory Committee (VDMAC) has suggested moving toward the adoption of crisis standards of care to, in part, preserve available supplies.

4. The specific plan for increasing bed capacity:

DePaul Medical Center requests authorization to temporarily add 83 beds. The beds will be located within existing hospital space. DePaul Medical Center has already made plans to reclassify some of its licensed medical/surgical bed capacity to intensive care status. Inpatient beds that were historically used to house many short-stay post-surgical patients are now available due to curtailing of non-emergent and elective inpatient surgical procedures. In addition, many of the current private rooms at DePaul Medical Center were originally double occupancy, but there are now plans to resume double occupancy as necessary.

5. Where the beds will be located and the life safety code considerations of the location:

DePaul Medical Center intends to locate the requested beds within the existing hospital. The 16 ICU beds will be located within the PACU, 25 medical/surgical beds will be located in the pre-op/post-up phase II area, six ICU beds will be located in the endoscopy area, 11 medical/surgical beds will be located in the now vacant labor and delivery area, seven medical/surgical beds will be located in the now vacant nursery, six medical/surgical beds will be located in the midwifery area, and the remaining 12 medical/surgical beds will be located in the wound care treatment and holding area. The beds will be located in existing parts of DePaul Medical Center that are already in use for patient care, therefore the space already meets life safety code requirements for the type of patients expected to occupy the space.

6. The availability of beds at other community hospitals and nursing homes in the community:

Per the 2018 data provided by VHI, there are 2,850 licensed inpatient beds in PD 20, of which 343 are intensive care unit beds and 1,932 are medical/surgical beds. The overall bed capacity data does not inherently take into account the extent to which, due to the rapid rate of infection of COVID-19, how many new cases may arise, and thereby overwhelm DePaul Medical Center's and the area's capacity to treat patients, thereby jeopardizing the quality of care for residents of PD 20. DePaul Medical Center's proposal increases their bed capacity by 42%, and is a 2.9% increase in bed capacity in the planning district.

7. Other alternatives to adding bed capacity:

As discussed, given that DePaul Medical Center has already provided assurances that they have suspended all elective procedures, as well as the difficulty in anticipating how many cases of COVID-19 may arise in PD 20, the addition of beds in an existing medical care facility space represents the best option.

8. The current state of COVID-19 in the community:

At the time of this writing, the Virginia Department of Health reports that Virginia has 7,491 cases of COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, and 231 deaths.¹ To date, the Centers for

¹ <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed 632,548 cases in the United States, with 31,071 deaths.² Norfolk City Health District currently has 108 cases of COVID-19 positive patients, with another 553 patients in the surrounding jurisdictions.

Findings and Conclusions

DePaul Medical Center requests authorization to temporarily add 83 beds; 22 ICU beds and 61 medical/surgical beds. The requested beds will be located within the existing hospital's PACU, pre-op/post-up area phase II area, endoscopy area, labor and delivery area, nursery area, midwifery area, and the wound care treatment and holding areas. DePaul Medical Center has demonstrated that the rapid rise in COVID-19 cases has created an emergent need for a temporary increase in bed capacity. In the absence of a temporary increase to bed capacity in the planning district, it is conceivable that the continued rise of COVID-19 cases could overwhelm the hospital's capacity to treat patients, thereby jeopardizing the quality of care for residents of PD 20, and limit the ability of health care providers to adequately treat and limit the spread of the virus.

Staff Recommendations

The Division of Certificate of Public Need recommends the **approval** of Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center, LLC's request to temporarily add 83 beds at Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center. This staff recommendation is based on the following findings.

1. DePaul Medical Center has demonstrated that, due to the reasonable expectation of a sudden and overwhelming increase in acute care patients resulting from COVID-19 infection, DePaul Medical Center has an immediate need to temporarily add 83 licensed inpatient beds.
2. DePaul Medical Center's plan for training and shifting ambulatory staff is a reasonable solution for staffing the additional beds.
3. DePaul Medical Center's plan and ability to obtain equipment and supplies is reasonable within the confines of the current crisis.
4. DePaul Medical Center's plan to expand bed capacity in existing hospital space throughout the campus assures patient safety is maintained from a fire and life safety code perspective.

² https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-in-us.html