

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Office of Licensure and Certification
Staff Analysis

April 9, 2020

Chesapeake Regional Medical Center (4/7/2020)

Chesapeake, Virginia

Temporarily add 123 Beds at Chesapeake Regional Medical Center

Hospital

Chesapeake Regional Medical Center (“Chesapeake Regional”) is a general acute care hospital located in the City of Chesapeake, Virginia. The Chesapeake Hospital Authority, chartered by an Act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1966, is the non-taxable parent company of Chesapeake Regional. Chesapeake Regional opened in 1976 and currently provides a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient healthcare services. Chesapeake Regional is located 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.

Per the 2018 data provided by Virginia Health Information, Chesapeake Regional operates an inventory of 310 beds.

Chesapeake Regional 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

Chesapeake Regional 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, Chesapeake Regional requests authorization to temporarily add 123 licensed beds; 40 ICU beds

and 83 medical/surgical beds. The requested beds will be located within the existing hospital and the Jennings Outpatient Center on the Chesapeake Regional campus. The resulting bed configuration at Chesapeake Regional is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Chesapeake Regional's Requested Temporary Bed Inventory

Bed Type	Existing Licensed Beds	Requested Additional Beds	Resulting Available Beds
Adult ICU	28	40	68
Med/Surg	242	83	325
Obstetric	32	0	32
Pediatric	8	0	8
Total	310	123	433

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:

Chesapeake Regional 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 with exceptions and as provided below.

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

Chesapeake Regional 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 surgery will be used to staff the additional intensive care beds and provide care in a safe and effective environment of care. Chesapeake Regional plans to cross-train and re-deploy staff from elective areas and surgical services within the hospital and outpatient locations to support COVID-19 patients or existing operations. Chesapeake Regional will also utilize staffing from its resource pool, has extended current agency nursing contracts, and has requested additional contract.

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

Chesapeake Regional has made assurances that it has sufficient access to available medical supplies and personal protection equipment in the facility. Chesapeake Regional contends that personal protection equipment will be addressed by continuing to source products as available, utilizing CDC conservation strategies such as recycling N95 masks as well as through donations. Cloth isolation gowns have been put into circulation and industrial washer and dryers have been purchased to launder onsite thus decreasing turnaround time. In addition, personal protection equipment supplies will be sourced from procedural areas no

longer doing elective cases. 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:

Chesapeake Regional requests authorization to temporarily add 123 beds; 40 ICU beds and 83 medical/surgical beds. The requested beds will be located within the existing hospital and the Jennings Outpatient Center on the Chesapeake Regional campus. The beds will be utilized as needed to care for COVID-19 patients directly or to supplement existing operations when existing beds need to be used for COVID-19 patients, as assessed on an ongoing basis. Chesapeake Regional has already temporarily postponed surgical cases when possible.

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

Chesapeake Regional intends to locate the requested beds within the existing hospital and the Jennings Outpatient Center on the Chesapeake Regional campus. Specifically, Chesapeake Regional provided the following breakdown for the locations of the additional beds; 21 medical/surgical beds in the Surgical Assessment unit on the second floor, 31 ICU beds in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) on the second floor, 3 medical/surgical beds in the Stepdown Unit on the third floor, 9 ICU beds in the Cath Holding Unit on the first floor, 6 medical/surgical beds in the Radiology Holding Unit on the first floor, 3 medical/surgical beds in converted space that is presently a gym located on the second floor, 30 medical/surgical beds located in converted space in the Physical Therapy Department on the first floor, and 20 medical/surgical beds in converted space in the Jennings Outpatient Center. Chesapeake Regional contends that both the hospital and Jennings Outpatient Center meet current life safety code requirements for existing I-2 institutional occupancy. The buildings incorporate appropriate smoke compartmentalization, are fully sprinkled, and have 24/7 monitored central fire alarm systems.

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

Per the 2018 data provided by Virginia Health Information (VHI), there are 2,850 licensed inpatient beds in PD 20. There are currently 343 licensed intensive care unit beds in PD 20, and 1,932 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 Chesapeake Regional's and the area's capacity to treat patients, thereby jeopardizing the quality of care for residents of PD 20. Chesapeake Regional's proposal increases their bed capacity by 39.7%, and is a 4.3% increase in bed capacity in the planning district.

7. Other alternatives to adding bed capacity:

As discussed, given that the applicant has already provided assurances that they have suspended all of 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 4,042 cases of COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, and 109 deaths.¹ To date, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed 395,011 cases in the United States, with 12,754 deaths.² At the time of this writing there were 101 cases of COVID-19 positive patients in the Chesapeake Health District with another 318 in the surrounding jurisdictions.

DCOPN Findings and Conclusions

Chesapeake Regional requests authorization to temporarily add 123 beds; 40 ICU beds and 83 medical/surgical beds. The requested beds will be located within the existing hospital and the Jennings Outpatient Center on the Chesapeake Regional campus. Chesapeake Regional 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.

DCOPN Staff Recommendations

The Division of Certificate of Public Need recommends the **approval** of Chesapeake Regional Medical Center's request to temporarily add 123 beds at Chesapeake Regional Medical Center. DCOPN's recommendation is based on the following findings.

1. Chesapeake Regional has demonstrated that, due to the reasonable expectation of a sudden and overwhelming increase in acute care patients resulting from COVID-19 infection, Chesapeake Regional has an immediate need to temporarily add 123 licensed inpatient beds.
2. Chesapeake Regional's plan for training and shifting ambulatory staff is a reasonable solution for staffing the additional beds.
3. Chesapeake Regional's plan and ability to obtain equipment and supplies is reasonable within the confines of the current crisis.
4. Chesapeake Regional'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.

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

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